МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ
ПРИКАРПАТСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ
ІМЕНІ ВАСИЛЯ СТЕФАНИКА
ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ
КАФЕДРА АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ

The Guide to the Collection of Short Stories
TREADING ON DREAMS

Навчально-методичний посібник
для розвитку навичок аналітичного читання
за збіркою оповідань
TREADING ON DREAMS

Івано-Франківськ
2022

УДК 821.111: 82.0 (075.8)
ББК 83.3 (4 Англ)
А 86

Рецензенти:

Дойчик О.Я., доцент кафедри англійської філології факультету іноземних мов Прикарпатського національного університету імені Василя Стефаника, кандидат філологічних наук, доцент

Нісевич С.І., завідувач кафедри декоративного мистецтва Косівського інституту прикладного та декоративного мистецтва Львівської національної академії мистецтв, кандидат філологічних наук, доцент

Рекомендовано до друку
Вченою радою факультету іноземних мов
Прикарпатського національного університету
імені Василя Стефаника

А 86 Билиця У.Я., Павлюк І.Б The Guide to the Collection of Short Stories TREADING ON DREAMS. Івано-Франківськ, 2022. 113 с.

А 86 Bylytsia U.Ya., Pavliuk I.B. Навчально-методичний посібник для розвитку навичок аналітичного читання за збіркою оповідань TREADING ON DREAMS. Ivano-Frankivsk, 2022. 113 p.

Метою даного навчально-методичного посібника є формування навичок читання, розуміння та інтерпретації оригінальних англомовних художніх текстів у студентів І –го курсу, спеціальність 035 Філологія, 035.041 Германські мови та літератури (переклад включно) (перша – англійська) та спеціальність 014 Середня освіта 014.02 Середня освіта (англійська мова і література). Запропоновані завдання спрямовані на збагачення лексичного запасу у студентів, закріплення граматичного матеріалу та розвиток навичок мовлення та письма. Запитання до тексту допоможуть вдосконалити комунікативні навички та перевірити знання твору, а завдання до написання листів та ессе сприятимуть покращенню вмінь виражати свої думки у письмовій формі. Матеріал посібника можна використовувати у вищих навчальних закладах на парах з аналітичного читання для студентів вищих навчальних закладів.

CONTENTS

Mr Sing My Heart's Delight

BRIAN FRIEL

Retold by Clare West

On the west coast of Ireland there are wild, lonely places, where few visitors come. A boy on his yearly visit to his grandmother tells a tale of the simple life, when a travelling salesman from a faraway land finds a kindness he did not expect. . .

In the first day of every new year, I made the forty-five-mile journey by train, post van, and foot across County Donegal to my grandmother's house. It sat at the top of a cliff above the wild and stormy Atlantic, at the very end of a village called Mullaghduff. This yearly visit, lasting from January until the end of March, was made mostly for Granny's benefit; during these months Grandfather went across the water to Scotland to earn enough money to keep them going for the rest of the year. But it suited me very well too: I missed school for three months, I got away from strict parents and annoying brothers and sisters, and in Granny's house everything I did was right.

The house consisted of one room, in which Granny and Grandfather lived and slept. It was a large room lit by a small window and a door which could be left open for most of the day, because it faced east and the winds usually blew from the west. There were three chairs, a table, a bed in the corner, and an open fire, over which stretched a long shelf. All the interesting things in the house were on this shelf – a shining silver clock, two vases, a coloured photograph of a racehorse, two lifelike wooden dogs, and three sea-shells sitting on matchboxes covered with red paper. Every year I went to Granny's, these pieces were handed down to me, one by one, to be inspected, and my pleasure in them made them even more precious to Granny.

She herself was a small, round woman, who must once have been very pretty. She always wore black – a black turning grey with so much washing. But above the neck she was a surprise of strong colour: white hair, sea-blue eyes, and a quick, fresh face, browned by the sun. When something delighted her, she had a habit of shaking her head rapidly from side to side like a child, and although she was over sixty then, she behaved like a woman half her age. She used to challenge me to race her to the garden wall or dare me to go beyond her along the rocks into the sea.

Even on the best day in summer, Mullaghduff is a lonely, depressing place. The land is rocky and bare, and Granny's house was three miles from the nearest road. It was a strange place for a home. But Grandfather was a hard, silent man, who had married Granny when she was a girl of seventeen with a baby daughter (later to become my mother) but no husband. He probably felt he had shown enough kindness by offering to marry her, and the least she could do was accept the conditions of his offer. Or perhaps he was jealous of her prettiness and sense of fun, and thought that the wide ocean behind her and three miles of bare land in front of her would discourage any search for adventure. Whatever his reasons, he had cut her off so completely from the world that at the time of her death, soon after my thirteenth birthday, the longest journey she had ever made was to the town of Strabane, fifty-two miles away.

She and I had wonderful times together. We laughed with one another and at one another. We used to sit up talking until near midnight, and then instead of going to bed, perhaps suddenly decide to eat fish fried in butter or the eggs that were supposed to be our breakfast the next day. Or we would sit round the fire and I would read stories to her from my school reading-book — she could neither read nor write. She used to listen eagerly to these, not

missing a word, making me repeat anything she did not understand. After reading, she often used to retell the story to me (‘Just to see did I understand right’).

And then suddenly she would lose interest in the world outside Mullaghduff and jump to her feet, saying, ‘Christ, son, we nearly forgot! If we run to the lower rocks, we’ll see the fishing boats from Norway going past. Hurry, son, hurry! They’re a grand sight on a fine night. Hurry!’

She had no toys or games for me to play with, but she had plenty of ideas for making my stay with her more interesting. We often got up before sunrise to see wild birds flying north through the icy air high above the ocean. Or we sat for hours on the flat rocks below her house watching the big fish attacking smaller ones in the shallow water. Or we went down to the rock pools and caught fish with our bare hands. I know now that these were all simply Granny’s ways of entertaining me, but I am also certain that she enjoyed them every bit as much as I did.

Sometimes we used to watch a great passenger ship sail past, its lights shining like stars. Granny would fill the ship with people for me: ‘The men handsome and tall, the ladies in rich silks down to their toes, and all of them laughing and dancing and drinking wine and singing. Christ, son, they’re a happy old crowd!’

There was a February storm blowing in from the sea the evening the packman fought his way uphill to our door. I watched him through the kitchen window, a tiny shape in the distance, which grew to a man, and then a man with a case as big as himself. When he was a stone’s throw from the door, I saw that he was coloured. In those days, packmen were quite common in country areas. They went from house to house with their cases of clothes and bedsheets and cheap jewellery, and if a customer had no money to buy, the

packmen were usually willing to take food instead. They had a name for being dishonest.

The sight of this packman put the fear of God into me, because Mother had taught us to keep away from all packmen, and I had never seen a coloured man before in my life. I led Granny to the window and hid behind her.

'Will he attack us?' I whispered fearfully.

'Christ, and if he does, we'll attack him back!' she said bravely and threw open the door. 'Come in, man,' she shouted into the storm. 'Come in and rest, because only a fool like yourself could have made the climb up here today.'

He entered the kitchen backwards, dragging his huge case after him. He dropped into a chair near the door, gasping for breath, too exhausted to speak.

I took a step closer to examine him. He was a young man, no more than twenty, with a smooth brown skin. His head was wrapped in a snow-white turban. His shoulders were narrow, and his feet as small as my younger sister's. Then I saw his hands. They were fine and delicate, and on the third finger of his left hand was a gold ring. It was made to look like a snake, holding a deep red stone between its mouth and its tail. As I watched, the stone seemed to change colour: now it was purple, now rose-pink, now black, now blood-red, now blue. I was still staring at its magic when the packman slid to his knees on the floor and began saying in a fow, tuneless voice,

'I sell beau-ti-ful things, good lady, everything for your home. What is it you buy? Silks, sheets, beau-ti-ful pictures for your walls, beau-ti-ful dresses for the lady. What is it you buy?'

As he spoke, he opened his case and removed all that it contained, painting the floor with yellows and greens and whites and blues. It seemed to me he owned all the riches of the world.

‘You buy, good lady? What is it you buy?’ He spoke without interest, without enthusiasm, too exhausted to care. His eyes never left the ground and his hands spread the splashes of colour around him until he was an island in a lake of brightness.

For a moment, Granny said nothing. There was so much to look at, and it was all so colourful, that she felt quite confused. At the same time she was trying desperately to catch what he was saying, and his accent was difficult for her. When at last words came to her, they broke from her in a sort of cry.

‘Ah Christ, sweet Christ, look at them! Look at them! Ah God, how fine they are!’ Then rapidly to me, ‘What is he saying, son, what? Tell me what it is he’s saying.’ Then to the packman, ‘Ah Christ, mister, they’re grand things, mister, grand.’

She knelt down on the floor beside him and gently stroked the surfaces of the clothes. She was silent in amazement, and her mouth opened. Only her eyes showed her delight.

‘Try them on, good lady. Try what I have to sell.’

She turned to me to check that she had heard correctly.

‘Put on the things you like,’ I said. ‘Go on.’

She looked at the packman, searching his face to see if he was serious, afraid that he was not.

‘I have no money, Mr Packman. No money.’

The packman seemed not to hear. He went on rearranging his colours and did not look up. Only routine kept him going. ‘Try them on. They arebeau-ti-ful. All.’

She hesitated over the limitless choice.

‘Go on,’ I said impatiently. ‘Hurry up.’

‘Everything for the good lady and her home,’ said the packman tiredly

to the floor. ‘Try what I have to sell.’

She made a sudden movement, picking up a red dress and holding it to her chest. She looked down at it, looked to see what we thought of it, and smoothed it out against her, while her other hand pushed her hair back from her face. Then she was absolutely still, waiting for our opinion.

‘Beau-ti-ful,’ murmured the packman automatically. ‘Beautiful,’ I said, anxious to have everything tried on and finished with.

‘Beautiful,’ echoed Granny, softly, slowly. The word seemed new and strange to her.

Then suddenly she was on her feet, dancing wildly around the kitchen. ‘Christ!’ she screamed. ‘You’d make me as much of a fool as you two are. Look at me! See me in a palace, can you?’ Then she went crazy. She threw the dress on the floor, and tried on one thing after another – a green hat and then white gloves and then a blue jacket, all the time singing or dancing or waving her arms, all the time shaking her head, delighted, ashamed, drunk with pleasure.

But soon she grew tired and threw herself, exhausted, on the bed. ‘Now, mister, you can take all the damn things away,’ she said breathlessly, ‘because I have no money to buy anything.’ Again the packman did not hear her, but said tiredly, ‘This you like, good lady.’ He opened a tiny box, and inside lay six little silver spoons. ‘The box to you, good lady, for half price.’

‘Shut your mouth!’ she cried, with sudden bitterness, sitting up on the bed. ‘Be quiet, Packman! We are poor people here! We have nothing!’

The packman’s head bent lower to the ground and he started to gather his things, ready to go out into the darkness.

At once she was sorry for her bad temper. She jumped off the bed and began building up the fire. ‘You’ll eat with us, Packman, you’ll be hungry.

We can offer you ...' She paused and turned to me. 'Christ, son, we'll cook the goose that was to be Sunday's dinner! That's what we'll do!' She turned to the packman. 'Can your stomach hold a good big meal, Packman?'

'Anything, good lady. Anything.'

'A good big meal it'll be, then, and Sunday be damned!'

She took out knives and forks from a drawer. 'Tell me, Packman, what do they call you, what?'

'Singh,' he said.

'What?'

'Singh,' he repeated.

'Christ, but that's a strange name. Sing. Sing,' she said, feeling the sound on her tongue. 'I'll tell you what I'll call you, Packman. I'll call you Mr Sing My Heart's Delight! A good big mouthful. Mr Sing My Heart's Delight!'

'Yes,' he said, quietly accepting her name for him.

'Now, Mr Sing My Heart's Delight, go to sleep for an hour, and when I call you, there'll be a good meal before your eyes. Close your eyes and sleep, you poor exhausted man, you.'

He closed his eyes obediently and in five minutes his head had fallen on his chest.

We ate by the light of an oil lamp. It must have been a month since the packman had last eaten, because he ate fast, like a wild animal, and did not lift his eyes until his plate was cleared. Then he sat back in his seat 3tid smiled at us for the first time. 'Thank you, good lady,' he said. 'A beau-ti-ful meal.'

'You're welcome,' she said. 'Where do you come from, Mr Sing My Heart's Delight?'

'The Punjab,' he said.

‘And where might that be?’

‘India, good lady.’

‘India,’ she repeated. ‘Tell me, is India a hot country, is it?’ ‘Very warm. Very warm and very poor.’

‘Very poor,’ she said quietly, adding the detail to the picture she was making in her mind. And oranges and bananas grow there on trees, and the fruit and flowers have all the colours of the rainbow in them?’

‘Yes,’ he said simply, remembering his own picture. ‘It is very beau-ti-ful, good lady. Very beau-ti-ful.’

And the women,’ Granny went on, ‘do they wear long silk dresses to the ground? And the men, are the men dressed in purple trousers, and black shoes with silver buckles?’

He spread his hands in front of him and smiled.

And the women walk under the orange-trees with the sunlight in their hair, and the men raise their hats to them as they pass ... in the sun ... in the Punjab ... in the Garden of Eden . . .’

She was away from us as she spoke, leaving us in the bare kitchen, listening to the wind beating on the roof and the ocean crashing below us. The packman’s eyes were closed.

‘The Garden of Eden,’ said Granny again. ‘Where the land isn’t bare and so rocky that nothing will grow in it. And you have God’s sun in that Punjab place and there is singing and the playing of music and the children ... yes, the children ...’ The first drops of rain came down the chimney and made the fire spit.

‘Christ!’ she said, jumping to her feet. ‘Up you get, you fools, you, and let me wash the dishes.’

The packman woke with a start, and bent to pick up his case. ‘And

where are you going?' she shouted to him. 'Christ, man, a wild animal wouldn't be out on a night like this! You'll sleep here tonight. There – in front of the fire. Like a cat,' she added, with a shout of laughter. The packman laughed too.

By the time we had washed the dishes, it was bedtime. Granny and I undressed quickly in the shadowy end of the room, and jumped into the big bed which we always shared.

'Blow out the lamp, Mr Sing My Heart's Delight,' said Granny, 'and then place yourself on the floor there. You'll find a bit of carpet near the door if you want to lie on that.'

'Good night, good lady,' he said. 'Very good lady.'

'Good night, Mr Sing My Heart's Delight,' she replied.

He put the old piece of carpet in front of the fire and stretched himself out on it. Outside, the rain beat against the roof, and inside, the three of us were comfortable and warm.

It was a fine morning the next day. The packman looked young and bright, and his case seemed lighter too. He stood outside the door, smiling happily as Granny directed him towards the villages where he would have the best chance of selling his things. Then she wished him goodbye, in the old Irish way.

'God's speed,' she said, 'and may the road rise with you.'

'To pay you I have no money, good lady,' he said, 'and my worthless things I would not offer you, because . . .'

'Go, man, go. There'll be rain before dinnertime.'

The packman still hesitated. He kept smiling like a shy girl.

'Christ, Mr Sing My Heart's Delight, if you don't go soon, you'll be here for dinner anckyou ate it last night!'

He put his case on the ground and looked at his left hand. Then, taking off the ring with his long, delicate fingers, he held it out to her. ‘For you,’ he said very politely. ‘Please accept from me ... I am grateful.’

Even as it lay on his hand, the stone changed colour several times. It had been so long since Granny had been offered a present that she did not know how to accept it. She bent her head and whispered, ‘No. No. No.’

‘But please, good lady. Please,’ the packman insisted. ‘From a Punjab gentleman to a Donegal lady. A present. Please.’

When she did not come forward to accept it, he moved towards her and took her left hand in his. He chose her third finger and put the ring on it. ‘Thank you, good lady,’ he said.

Then he lifted his case, and turned towards the main road. The wind was behind him and carried him quickly away.

Neither of us moved until we could no longer see him. I turned to go round to the side of the house; it was time to feed the chickens and milk the cow. But Granny did not move. She stood looking towards the road with her arm and hand still held as the packman had left them.

‘Come on, Granny,’ I said crossly. ‘The cow will think we’re dead.’

She looked strangely at me, and then away from me and across the road and up towards the mountains in the distance.

‘Come on, Granny,’ I said again, pulling at her dress.

As she let me lead her away, I heard her saying to herself, ‘I’m thinking the rain will get him this side of Crolly bridge, and then his purple trousers and silver-buckled shoes will be destroyed. Please God, it will be a fine day. Please God it will.’

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. **Find the following words and word combinations in the text:**

- влаштовувати кого-небуть;
- втекти;
- дорогоцінний;
- мати звичку;
- кидати виклик;
- відрізати від світу;
- триматися на відстані від кого-небуть;
- збентежений;
- нечесний;
- обдурити кого-небуть;
- змучений, виснажений.

Use these words and word combinations in sentences of your own.

II. Complete the sentences by writing the correct adjective in each space:

brave, generous, grateful, grumpy, honest, independent, jealous, lively, mature, patient, popular, proud, reliable, sensible, warm, weird

1. She is the most... person in the village. Everybody likes her.

2. He is very ... . If he says he'll do something, then he'll do it.

3. The woman is very ... as she never complains about the pain she is in all the time.

4. She always tells the truth. She's very ....

5. He is a very ... person. He doesn't get annoyed even when he has to repeat something several times.

6. They were very ... when we said they could stay in our house while

we were away.

7. He never drinks and drives. He is too ... to do something stupid like that.

8. She's going to travel around the world for six months on her own. She must be very...

9. She always has fun at parties because she's so bright and ....

10. He never smiles and always looks .... I don't know what his problem is.

11. The girl is only 17 but she seems much older. She is very ... for her age.

12. He makes her ... when he looks at other girls.

13. She looks .... Why does she always wear such strange clothes?

14. They are very rich but they are also really ... with their money. They give wonderful presents.

15. He got 100 % on every test. His parents are really ... of him.

16. She is always ... and friendly. You always feel welcome at her house.

III. Use either Past Continuous or used to.

1. My granny ... (make up) fairy tales for me when I was a little girl.

2. Farmers in this area ... (buy) chemical fertilizers until the 1970s.

3. Ann didn't see me wave to her, she was ... (look) in the other direction.

4. Travelling ... (be) much slower and less comfortable in the old days.

5. We have never been to the cinema for ages. I... (go) a lot.

6. I asked the driver to slow down. He ... (drive) too fast.

7. When I was a child, I... (have) a lot of bad dreams.

8. When he started a new job, he ... (come) late. Now he always comes on time.

9. During the trek in Nepal I... (sleep) in the tent.

10. “Do you do any sports?” – “ No, but I... (play) volleyball.”

IV. Insert prepositions if necessary.

1. Granny’s house was situated ... the top ... a cliff... the Atlantic,... the end ... the village.

2. I was happy to miss ... school... three months and to get my parents.

3. Even ... the best day ... summer the village was a gloomy place.

4. The grandfather was jealous ... her prettiness and cut... the grandmother... the world.

5. She had no toys or games ... me to play ..., but she always tried to find a way....

6. Packmen went... house ... house ... their cases full... different goods.

7. Granny was silent... amazement when she looked ... the bright things.

8. Granny was interested ... the clothes people wore ... India.

9. She wished ... him goodbye ... the old Irish way.

10. He took ... his ring and held it her as he was thankful ... her ... her kindness.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Where did the narrator go every year?

2. Where was his grandmother’s house situated?

3. How long did the boy’s visit last? Why?

4. Did the boy like to stay at his granny’s?

5. What did her house look like?

6. What kind of woman was the granny?

7. How did they spend their time together?

8. Who came to their house one day?

9. What was remarkable about the man?

10. What impression did the goods the packman had produce on the old woman?

11. Did she buy anything?

12. What did she ask the packman to do?

13. Where was he from?

14. How did the granny imagine India?

15. What did the man offer the granny for her kindness?

16. What worried the woman when the packman had gone away?

II. Discuss the following points:

1. What king of life did the woman lead?

2. Why did the boy like to visit his granny?

3. What is the "kindness the packman did not expect"? (How does it characterize the woman).

III. Speak about:

1) the boy's visit to his granny;

2) the granny and her life;

3) the packman.

Use the adjectives from Ex. II, p. 1.

IV. Retell the story in the name of:

1) the granny; 2) the boy's mother, 3) the boy's grandfather.

Written Practice

Write a letter from the boy to his family. Describe the packman's visit.

Irish Revel

EDNA O'BRIEN

Retold by Clare West

The Irish are said to be good at parties, noisy revels with drinking, singing, and dancing late into the night. But Mary, seventeen and living on a lonely farm, has no experience of them, and as she cycles down the mountain road to her first party in the town, she is full of hopes and dreams and expectations ...

Mary hoped that the ancient front tyre on the bicycle would not burst. Twice she had to stop to put more air in it, which was very annoying. For as long as she could remember, she had been putting air in tyres, carrying firewood, cleaning out the cow shed, doing a man's work. Her father and two brothers worked for the forestry company, so she and her mother had to do everything, and there were three children to take care of as well. Theirs was a mountainy farm in Ireland, and life was hard.

But this cold evening in early November she was free. She rode her bicycle along the road, thinking pleasantly about the party. Although she was seventeen, this was her first party. The invitation had come only that morning

from Mrs Rodgers, owner of the Commercial Hotel. At first her mother did not wish Mary to go; there was too much to be done, soup to be made, and one of the children had earache and was likely to cry in the night. But Mary begged her mother to let her go.

‘What use would it be?’ her mother said. To her, all such excitements were bad for you, because they gave you a taste of something you couldn’t havet'But finally she agreed.

‘You can go as long as you’re back in time to milk the cows in the morning, and don’t do anything foolish,’ she said. Mary was going to stay the night in town with Mrs Rodgers. She had washed and brushed her hair, which fell in long dark waves over her shoulders. She was allowed to wear the black evening dress that an uncle had sent from America years ago. Her mother said a prayer to keep her safe, took her to the top of the farm road, warned her never to touch alcohol, and said goodbye.

Mary felt happy as she rode along slowly, avoiding the holes in the road, which were covered with thin ice. It had been very cold all day. At the bottom of the hill she got off and looked back, out of habit, at her house. It was the only one on the mountain, small and white, with a piece of land at the back which they called the vegetable garden. She looked away. She was now free to think of John Roland. He had appeared two years before, riding a motorbike daringly fast, and stopped to ask the way. He was staying at the Commercial Hotel and had come up to see the lake, which was famous for the way it changed colour at different times of day. When the sun went down, the water was often a strange reddish-purple, like wine.

‘Down there,’ she said to the stranger, pointing to the lake below. Rocky hills and tiny fields of bare earth dropped steeply towards the water. It was midsummer and very hot; the grass was tall and there were wild flowers,

blood-red, close to their feet.

'What an unusual sight,' he said, looking at the lake.

She had no interest in views herself. She just looked up at the high sky and saw that a bird had stopped in the air above them. It was like a pause in her life, the bird above them, perfectly still. Then her mother came out to see who the stranger was. He introduced himself, very politely, as John Roland, an English painter.

She did not remember- exactly how it happened, but after a while he walked into their kitchen with them and sat down to tea.

Two long years had passed since that day, but she had never stopped hoping. Perhaps this evening she would see him. The postman had said someone special in the hotel expected her. It seemed to her that her happiness somehow lit up the greyness of the cold sky, the icy fields going blue in the night, the dark windows of the small houses she passed. Suddenly her parents were rich and cheerful, her little sister had no earache, the kitchen fire did not smoke. Sometimes she smiled at the thought of how she would appear to him – taller and more womanly now, in a dress that could be worn anywhere. She forgot about the ancient tyre, jumped on the bicycle and rode on.

The five street lights were on when she entered the small town. There had been a cattle market that day, and drunken farmers with sticks were still trying to find their own cattle in dark corners of the main street.

As she reached the Commercial Hotel, Mary heard loud conversation inside, and men singing in the bar. She didn't want to go in through the front door, in case someone saw her and told her father she'd gone into the public bar. So she went to the back door. It was open, but she knocked before entering.

Two girls rushed to the door. One was Doris O'Beirne. She was famous

for being the only Doris in the whole town, and for the fact that one of her eyes was blue and the other dark brown.

‘God, I thought it was someone important,’ she said when she saw Mary standing there, blushing, pretty, and with a bottle of cream in her hand. Another girl! There were far too many girls in the town. Girls like Mary with matching eyes and long wavy hair.

‘Come in, or stay out,’ said Eithne Duggan, the second girl, to Mary. It was supposed to be a joke but neither of the town girls liked Mary. They hated shy mountainy people.

Mary came in, carrying the cream, which her mother had sent to Mrs Rodgers as a present. She put it on the table and took off her coat. The girls whispered to each other and giggled when they saw her dress. The kitchen smelt of cattle and fried food.

Mrs Rodgers came in from the bar to speak to her.

‘Mary, I’m glad you came, these two girls are no use at all, always giggling. Now the first thing to do is to move the heavy furniture out of the sitting room upstairs, but not the piano. We’re going to have dancing and everything.’

Quickly Mary realized she was being given work to do, and she blushed with shock and disappointment. She thought of her good black dress and how her mother wouldn’t even let her wear it to church on Sundays. She might tear it or dirty it.

‘And then we have to start cooking the goose,’ Mrs Rodgers said, and went on to explain that the party was for Mr Brogan, the local Customs Officer, who was leaving his job.

‘There’s someone here expecting me,’ Mary said, trembling with the pleasure of being about to hear his name spoken by someone else. She

wondered which room was his, and if he was likely to be in at that moment. Already in her imagination she was knocking on his door, and could hear him inside.

‘Expecting you!’ Mrs Rodgers said, looking puzzled for a moment. ‘Oh, that young man from the factory was asking about you – he said he saw you at a dance once. A strange one, he is.’

‘What man?’ Mary said, as she felt the happiness leaking out of her heart.

But Mrs Rodgers heard the men in the bar shouting for her to refill their empty glasses, and she hurried out without replying.

Upstairs Doris and Eithne helped Mary move the heavy furniture out of the sitting room. The two town girls shared jokes with each other, giggled at Mary behind her back, and ordered her around like a servant. She dusted the piano and cleaned the floor. She’d come for a party! She wished she were at home – at least with cattle and chickens it was clean dirt.

Then Eithne and Doris told Mary to get the glasses ready, and they went away to drink a secret bottle of beer in the bathroom.

‘She’s crying like a baby in there,’ Eithne told Doris, giggling.

‘God, she looks an eejit in that dress,’ Doris said.

‘It’s her mother’s,’ Eithne said.

‘What’s she crying about?’ wondered Doris.

‘She thought some boy would be here. Do you remember that boy who stayed here the summer before last, with a motorbike?’

‘The boy with the big nose?’ said Doris. ‘God, she’d frighten him in that dress. Her hair isn’t natural, either.’

‘I hate that kind of long black hair,’ Eithne said, drinking the last of the beer. They hid the bottle under the bath.

In the room with the piano Mary got the glasses ready. Tears ran down her face, so she did not put on the light. She saw what the party would be like. They would eat the goose, the men would get drunk and the girls would giggle. They would dance and sing and tell ghost stories, and in the morning she would have to get up early and be home in time for milking. She looked out of the small window at the dirty street, remembering how once she had danced with John on the farm road to no music at all, just their hearts beating, and the sound of happiness.

On that first day at tea, her father had suggested that John should stay with them, and he stayed for four days, helping with the farm work and the farm machinery. Mary made his bed in the morning and carried up a bowl of rainwater every evening, so that he could wash. She washed his shirt, and that day his bare back burnt in the sun. She put milk on it. It was his last day with them. After supper he gave each of the older children a ride on the motorbike. She would never forget that ride. She felt warm from head to foot in wonder and delight. The sun went down, and wild flowers shone yellow in the grass. They did not talk as they rode; she had her arms round his stomach, with the delicate and desperate hold of a girl in love. However far they went, they always seemed to be riding into a golden mist. The lake was at its most beautiful. They stopped at the bridge and sat on a low stone wall. She took an insect off his neck and touched the skin where there was a tiny drop of blood. It was then that they danced, to the sound of singing birds and running water. The air was sweet with the smell of the grass in the fields, lying green and ungathered. They danced.

‘Sweet Mary,’ he said, looking seriously into her brown eyes. ‘I cannot love you because I already have a wife and children to love. Anyway, you are too young and too innocent.’

Next day, as he was leaving, he asked if he could send her something in the post. It came eleven days later – a black-and- white drawing of her, very like her, except that the girl in the drawing was uglier.

'That's no good for anything!' said her mother, who had been expecting a gold bracelet or necklace. They hung it on the kitchen wall for a while and then one day it fell down. Someone (probably her mother) used it, with a brush, for collecting dirt from the floor. Mary had wanted to keep it, to put it safely away in a drawer, but she was ashamed to. Her family were hard people, and it was only when someone died that they ever cried or showed much feeling.

'Sweet Mary,' he had said. He never wrote. Two summers passed. She had a feeling that he would come back, and at the same time a terrible fear that he might not.

In the upstairs room of the hotel the men were taking off their jackets and sitting down to eat. The girls had carried the goose up from the kitchen, and it lay in the centre of the table. Mrs Rodgers had closed the public bar, and now she was cutting meat off the goose and putting it onto plates. She kept Mary busy, serving the potatoes and passing the food around. Mr Brogan, as chief guest, was served first, with the best cuts of goose.

Mary was surprised that people in towns seemed so coarse. When one of the men, Hickey, tried to take her hand, she did not smile at all. She wished she were at home. She knew what her family were doing there – the boys learning their lessons, her mother baking bread, her father rolling cigarettes and talking to himself. In another hour they'd say their prayers and go up to bed. The routine of their lives never changed. The fresh bread was always cool by morning.

O'Toole, the young man who worked at the factory, had bright green

eyes and hair so blond it was almost white.

‘No one’s offered me any food yet,’ he said. ‘A nice way to behave.’

‘Oh God, Mary, haven’t you given Mr O’Toole anything to eat yet?’ Mrs Rodgers said, and she gave Mary a push to hurry her up. Mary gave him a large plateful, and he thanked her, saying they’d dance later. To him she was far prettier than those good-for-nothing town girls – she was tall and thin like himself.

And he liked a simple-minded girl with long hair. Maybe later on he’d persuade her to go into another room, and they’d have sex. She had lovely eyes when you looked into them, brown and deep.

The fifth woman at the party was Crystal, the local hairdresser, who had bright red hair, and who did not like the undercooked goose. She and Mrs Rodgers were talking together when Brogan unexpectedly began to sing.

‘Let the man sing, can’t you,’ O’Toole said to Doris and Eithne, who were giggling over a private joke.

Mary felt cold in her thin dress. There hadn’t been a fire in that room for years, and the air had not warmed up yet.

‘Would any of the ladies care to sing?’ asked O’Toole, when Brogan finished. ‘I’m sure you can sing,’ he said to Mary.

‘Where she comes from, they can only just talk,’ Doris said.

Mary blushed. She said nothing, but she felt angry. Her family ate with a knife and fork, she thought proudly, and had a cloth on the kitchen table, not a plastic one like this, and kept a tin of coffee in the cupboard in case strangers came to the door.

‘Christ, boys, we forgot the soup!’ Mrs Rodgers said suddenly, and hurried out with Doris to fetch it from the kitchen.

After the soup, O’Toole poured out four glasses of whiskey, making

sure that the level in each glass was the same. There were bottles of beer as well. The ladies had gin and orange.

'Orange for me,' said Mary, but when her back was turned, O'Toole put gin in her orange. They all raised their glasses and drank to Brogan's future. Long John Salmon, the fourth man at the party, asked Brogan about his plans, and Brogan began to talk about the things he wanted to do to his house and garden.

'Come on, someone, tell us a joke,' said Hickey after a while. He was bored with gardening talk.

'I'll tell you a joke,' said Long John Salmon.

'Is it a funny joke?' Brogan asked.

'It's about my brother Patrick,' Long John Salmon said.

'Not that old thing again,' said Hickey and O'Toole, together.

'Oh, let him tell it,' said Mrs Rodgers, who had never heard it.

Long John Salmon told a story about his brother, who died, but came back a month later as a ghost, walking through walls and around the yard.

'Ah God, let's have a bit of music,' said Hickey, who had heard that story nine or ten times. It had neither a beginning, a middle, nor an end.

They put a record on, and O'Toole asked Mary to dance. Brogan and Mrs Rodgers were dancing too, and Crystal said that she'd dance if anyone asked her.

Mary felt strange – her head was going round and round, and in her stomach there was a nice feeling that made her want to lie back and stretch her legs. A new feeling that frightened her. O'Toole danced her right out of the room and into the cold passage beyond, where he kissed her clumsily.

Inside the room, Crystal had begun to cry, sitting at the table with her head on her arms. Gin and orange always made her cry. 'Hickey, there is no

happiness in life,' she cried bitterly.

'What happiness?' said Hickey, who was full of drink.

Doris and Eithne sat on either side of Long John Salmon, talking sweetly to him. He was a strange man, but he owned a large fruit farm and he was still single. Brogan, breathless from dancing, was now sitting down, with Mrs Rodgers sitting on his knees. The record finished, and Mary ran in from the dark passage, away from O'Toole, who followed her in, laughing.

O'Toole was the first to cause trouble. He became offended when Mrs Rodgers prevented him from telling a rude joke.

'Think of the girls,' Mrs Rodgers said.

'Girls!' O'Toole said nastily. He picked up the bottle of cream and poured it over the few remaining bits of goose.

'Christ, man!' Hickey said, taking the bottle of cream away.

Mrs Rodgers said it was time everyone went to bed, as the party seemed to be over. All the guests were staying the night at the hotel. The four girls were going to share one room.

In the bedroom Mary sighed. Before they could go to bed, they had to move the heavy furniture back to the sitting room. She could hear O'Toole shouting and singing in another room. There had been gin in her orange, she knew now, because she could smell it on her breath. She had broken her promise to her mother; it would bring her bad luck.

'Ah girls, girls,' O'Toole said, pushing their bedroom door open. 'Where's my lovely Mary? Come out here with me, Mary!'

'Go to bed, you're tired,' Mary said. He caught her hand and started trying to drag her out of the room. She let out a cry.

'I'll throw this flowerpot at you if you don't leave the girl alone,' Eithne called out.

‘Stupid cows, the lot of you!’ said O’Toole, but he dropped Mary’s hand and took a step backwards. The girls rushed to shut the door and push a heavy chest against it, to keep him out.

They all got into the one big bed, two at the top and two at the bottom. Mary was glad to have the other girls with her.

‘I was at a party. Now I know what parties are like,’ she said to herself, as she tried to force herself to sleep. She heard a sound of water running, but it did not seem to be raining outside. At sunrise she woke up. She had to get home in time for milking, so she put on her dress and shoes and went downstairs.

There was a strong smell of beer. Someone, probably O’Toole, had turned on the fdps in the bar, and beer had flowed out of the bar and into the kitchen. Mrs Rodgers would kill somebody. Mary picked her way carefully across the room to the door. She left without even making a cup of tea.

She found her bicycle, but the front tyre was flat, so she walked rapidly, pushing the bicycle. The frost lay on the sleeping windows and roofs. It had magically made the dirty streets look white and clean. She did not feel tired, but simply pleased to be outside, as she breathed in the beauty of the morning.

Mrs Rodgers woke at eight and got out of Brogan’s warm bed. She smelt disaster instantly, and ran to call the others. The girls were made to get up and help clean the floors. Hickey, who had by then come downstairs, said what a shame it was to waste good drink. O’Toole, the guilty one, had left early.

‘And where’s the girl in the black dress?’ Hickey asked.

‘She ran off, before we were up,’ Doris said. They all agreed that Mary was useless and should never have been asked.

‘And she was the one who encouraged O’Toole, and then disappointed

him, so he got angry,' added Doris.

'I suppose she's home by now,' Hickey said.

Mary was half a mile from home, sitting on the grass. If only I had a boy, someone to love, something to hold onto, she thought, as she broke some ice with her shoe and watched the crazy pattern it made. The poor birds could get no food as the ground was frozen hard. There was frost all over Ireland, frost on the stony fields, and on all the ugliness of the world.

Walking again, she wondered if and what she would tell her mother and her brothers, and if all parties were as bad. She was at the top of the hill now, and could see her own house, like a little white box at the end of the world, waiting to receive her.

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- гулянка;
- попередити;
- за звичкою;
- відомий;
- хіхікати;
- червоніти від збентеження;
- бути спантеличеним,
- здивований;
- грубий;
- перешкодити щось зробити;
- порушити обіцянку;
- до того часу.

Make up your own sentences.

II. Write the correct word in each space to complete each sentence:

adventurous, ambitious, confident, immature, moody, nosy, obstinate, strict, sympathetic, talented, timid, violent

1. They shouldn't get married at 18. They are far too ... to make such an important decision.

2. John is having another exhibition of his paintings. He is a very ... person.

3. Tina is so .... If I have a problem, she always listens and tries to help me.

4. At the party, she stood in a comer and didn't speak to anyone. She is very quiet and ....

5. We've given her lots of good advice but she won't listen. She is very ....

6. Jackie is so ... : one minute she's laughing and the next she's sulking.

7. He's a ... man. He was arguing with Tom last night and he ended up pushing him against the wall and shaking him.

8. She enjoys hot air ballooning and parachute jumping. She is very ....

9. He wasn't nervous about starting his new job. In fact he was very ... and felt sure that he would do it well and enjoy it.

10. Michael already owns three cafes but he intends to own a chain of them by the time he's 35. He is very....

11. Her parents are pretty ... . She is 17 but she has to be home by ten o'clock, even on weekends.

12. He's always asking me questions about my family and job. He is very ....

III. Insert prepositions where necessary:

1. The men worked ... the forestry company, so the women had to do everything... the house.

2. They lived ... a mountainy farm ... Ireland.

3. The mother asked Mary to be ... time to milk the cows ... the morning.

4. She put... the black evening dress that her uncle had sent... America.

5. ... the bottom... the hill she got... and looked back ... their farm.

6. The lake was famous ... the way it changed colour... different times ... day.

7. He walked ... the kitchen ... them and sat down ... tea.

8. Mary put the cream ... the table and took... her coat.

9. She blushed ... shock to realize that she was invited ... the party to do work.

10. The two town girls shared jokes ... each other and giggled ... Mary ... her back.

IV. Insert articles where necessary:

1. ... life was hard for... mountainy people.

2. She rode her bicycle along ... road thinking about... party.

3. She had ... long hair which fell in ... long dark waves over her shoulder.

4. She looked at... farm out of... habit.

5. There had been ... cattle market that day.

6. When she reached... Commercial Hotel she went to ... back door.

7. Mary's mother didn't let her wear... dress to... church on ... Sunday.

8. The girls went away to drink ... secret bottle of... beer in ... bathroom.

9. After... supper John gave each of... older children ... ride on ... motorbike.

10. They stopped at... bridge and sat on ... low stone wall.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Where did Mary live?
2. Where did she go one day?
3. Why was her mother reluctant to let her go to the party?
4. When was Mary to return?
5. What did the girl feel on the way to the party?
6. Whom did she hope to see that day?
7. How was she greeted in the hotel?
8. Why was she really invited?
9. Who was waiting for her there?
10. Why was Mary disappointed?
11. Did she enjoy the party?
12. Why did Mary get up so early the next day?
13. What did she think about on the way home?
14. Was her first party a success?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. What kind of girl was Mary? Was her life easy?
2. Why did Doris and Eithne treat her with contempt?
3. Do you agree that if you look forward to something very much, you often become disappointed?

III. Speak about:

1) Mary; 2) John Roland; 3) Mary's mother; 4) Mrs Rodgers.

Use the adjectives from Ex. 2, p. 4.

IV. Retell the story in the name of:

1) Mary; 2) Mary's mother; 3) Mrs Rogers.

Written Practice

Suppose that Mary keeps a diary. What can she write about her first party after returning home?

The Third Party

WILLIAM TREVOR

Retold by Clare West

In law, the third party is a person involved in a situation in addition to the two main people involved. A third party quite often appears in cases of divorce, for example.

However, all threesomes are different. And in some of them it is not always clear which of the three people actually is the third party...

The two men met by arrangement in the bar of Buswell's hotel, at half past eleven. 'I think we'll recognize each other all right,' the older man had said. 'I expect she's told you what I look like.'

He was tall, his face pinkish-brown from the sun, his fair hair turning grey. The man he met was thinner, wearing glasses and a black winter coat – a smaller man, whose name was Lairdman.

‘Well, we’re neither of us late,’ Boland said a little nervously. ‘Fergus Boland. How are you?’ They shook hands. Boland took out his wallet. ‘I’ll have a whiskey myself. What’ll I get you?’ ‘Oh, just a lemonade for me, Fergus, this time of day.’ Boland ordered the drinks and they stood by the bar. Boland held out a packet of cigarettes. ‘Do you smoke?’

Lairdman shook his head. He placed an elbow tidily on the bar. ‘Sorry about this,’ he said.

They were alone except for the barman, who put their two glasses in front of them. Boland paid him. ‘I mean I’m really sorry,’ Lairdman went on, ‘crying this to anyone.’

‘Good luck,’ Boland said, raising his glass. He had softened the colour of the whiskey by adding twice as much water. ‘You never drink this early in the day, I suppose?’ he said, carefully polite. ‘Well, that’s very sensible, I always think.’

‘I thought it might not be an occasion for drinking.’

‘I couldn’t talk to you without a drink inside me, Lairdman.’ ‘I’m sorry about that.’

‘You’ve stolen my wife from me. It’s not an everyday event.’ ‘I’m sorry—’

‘It’d be better if you didn’t keep saying that.’

Lairdman made no protest at Boland’s sharpness. ‘The whole thing’s awkward, I must confess. I didn’t sleep at all last night.’

‘You’re from Dublin, she tells me,’ Boland said, still politely. ‘You’re in the wood business. There’s money in that, no doubt.’ Lairdman was offended. She’d described her husband as clumsy, but had added he wouldn’t hurt a fly. Already, five minutes into the difficult meeting, Lairdman wasn’t so sure.

‘I don’t like Dublin,’ Boland continued. ‘To be honest, I never have. I’m a small-town man, but of course you’ll know that.’ He imagined his wife telling her lover about the narrowness of his experience. She liked to tell people things; she talked a lot.

‘I want to thank you,’ Lairdman said, ‘for taking all this so well. Annabella has told me.’

‘I don’t see that I have any choice.’

Lairdman’s lips were very thin, his mouth a line that smiled without any obvious effort. I wonder why he doesn’t have a funny little moustache, like so many Dubliners, thought Boland.

‘I thought you might hit me when we met,’ Lairdman said. ‘But Annabella said you weren’t like that at all.’

‘No, I’m not.’

‘That’s what I mean by taking it well.’

‘All I want to know is what your plans are.’

‘Plans?’

‘I’m just asking if you’re thinking of marrying her, and what your arrangements are. I mean, have you a place that’s suitable for her? I’ll have another whiskey,’ he said to the barman.

‘We were hoping that – if you agree — she would move into my place more or less at once. It’s suitable all right – a seven- room flat in Wellington Road. But in time we’ll get a house.’ ‘Thanks,’ Boland said to the barman, paying him.

‘It was my turn to pay,’ Lairdman protested, just a little late. She wouldn’t care for meanness, Boland thought, when it began to have an effect on her, which it would, in time.

‘But marriage?’ Boland said. ‘It isn’t easy, you know, to marry another

man's wife in Ireland.'

'Annabella and I would naturally like to be married one day.' 'That's what I wanted to ask you about. How are you thinking of getting a divorce? She doesn't really know much about it – we talked about it for a long time.'

'Thank you for that. And for suggesting we should meet.' 'You two have given me good reasons for a divorce, Lairdman, but it's no damn use to me. A divorce will take years.'

'It wouldn't take so long if you had an address in England. Then we could get a divorce over there.'

'But I haven't an address in England.'

'It's only a thought, Fergus.'

'So she wasn't exaggerating when she said you wanted to marry her?'

'I don't think I've ever known Annabella exaggerate,' Lairdman replied stiffly.

Then you don't know the most important thing about her, Boland thought – that is, she can't help telling lies, which you and I might politely describe as exaggerating.

'I'm surprised you never got married,' he said. He really was surprised, because in his experience self-confident little men like Lairdman very often had a good-looking woman in their life.

'I've known your wife a long time,' Lairdman said softly, trying not to let his smile show. 'As soon as I first saw Annabella, I knew she was the only woman I'd ever want to marry.'

Boland stared into his whiskey. He had to be careful about what he said. If he became angry for a moment, he was quite likely to ruin everything. The last thing he wanted was for the man to change his mind. He lit a cigarette, again offering the packet to Lairdman, who again shook his head. In

a friendly, conversational way Boland said, ‘Lairdman’s an interesting name.’

‘It’s not Irish – French maybe, or part of it anyway.’

When she had said her lover’s name was Lairdman, Boland had remembered it from his schooldays, and in Buswell’s bar he had immediately recognized the face. At school Lairdman had been famous for an unexpected reason: his head had been held down a toilet while his hair was scrubbed with a toilet brush. The boys who had done this were older and bigger than him. Called Roche and Dead Smith, they took pleasure in punishing small boys whose faces and habits they found annoying.

‘I think we were at school together,’ Boland said.

Lairdman almost gave a jump, and this time it was Boland who tried not to smile. Clearly this had come as a shock to Lairdman.

‘I don’t remember a Boland,’ Lairdman said.

‘I’d have been a little older than you. I hated the damn place.’ ‘Oh, I quite liked it,’ Lairdman said.

‘You day boys went home in the evenings and at weekends, we boarders had to stay there all the time.’

‘I suppose that made a difference.’

‘Of course it did.’

For the first time Boland felt annoyed. Not only was her lover mean, he was stupid as well. If he had any common sense at all, he’d realize he’d be mad to buy a house for Annabella, because no one could ever be sure she would do what she had promised.

‘I’ve always thought, actually, it gave an excellent education,’ Lairdman was saying.

The awful little Frenchman who couldn’t make himself understood. The history teacher who gave the class a history book to read while he wrote

letters.The mathematics man who couldn't solve the problems he presented. The head teacher who enjoyed causing as much physical pain as possible.

'Oh, a great place,' Boland agreed. 'A fine school.'

'I'm sorry I don't remember you.'

'I wouldn't expect you to.'

'We'll probably send our children there. If we have boys.' 'Your children?'

'You wouldn't mind? Oh dear, no, why should you? I'm sorry, that was a silly thing to say.'

'I'm having another whiskey,' Boland said. 'How about you?' 'No, I'm OK, thanks.'

This time Lairdman didn't mention, even too late, that he should pay. Boland lit another cigarette. So she hadn't told Lairdman? She had let the poor man imagine that in no time at all the seven-room flat wouldn't be big enough for all the children they were going to have. Boland could almost hear her telling Lairdman that her husband was to blame for their childless marriage. In fact, she'd discovered before they got married that she couldn't have children; in a quarrel long after the wedding she confessed that she'd known and hadn't told him.

'Naturally,' Lairdman continued, 'we'd like to have a family.' 'You would, of course.'

'I'm sorry that side of things didn't go right for you.'

'I was sorry myself.'

'The thing is, Fergus, is it OK about the divorce?'

'Are you saying I should agree to be the guilty party?'

'It is what men in your situation usually do, actually. But if you don't like the idea of it—'

‘Don’t worry, I’ll agree to be the guilty party.’

‘You’re being great, Fergus.’

His wife used to say, ‘I think I’ll go up and stay with Phyllis,’ saying it more often as time went by. Phyllis was a woman she knew in Dublin. But of course Phyllis had just been a name she’d used, a friend who would tell lies for her if necessary. ‘Phone me,’ he used to say, and obediently his wife phoned him, telling how Dublin looked and how Phyllis was. No doubt she’d been sitting on the edge of a bed in the seven-room flat in Wellington Road.

‘It’s really good of you to come all this way,’ Lairdman said, sounding eager to end the meeting. ‘I’ll ring Annabella this afternoon and tell her all about it. You won’t mind that, Fergus?’ ‘Not at all.’

Boland had often interrupted such a telephone conversation. He would come home and find her sitting on the stairs, talking on the phone. As soon as he came through the door, she’d wave a greeting and start to whisper secretively into the phone.

The trouble with Annabella was that sooner or later everything in the world bored her. ‘Now I want to hear every single thing that’s happened since the moment you left home this morning,’ she would soon say to Lairdman. And the poor man would begin a long story about catching the bus and arriving at work and having a cake with his coffee. Later, in a quarrel, she would throw it all back at him. ‘Who could possibly want to know about your damn cake?’ she’d scream wildly at him, her fingers spread out in the air so that her blood-red nail varnish would dry evenly.

‘I’ll be able to say,’ Lairdman was saying, almost proudly, ‘that neither of us got angry. She’ll be pleased about that.’

Boland couldn’t imagine his wife being pleased, since she hardly ever was. He wondered what it was that she liked about Lairdman. When he’d

asked her, she'd said her lover was amusing, that he had what she called a fantastic sense of fun.

'I wonder what became of Roche and Dead Smith,' he said.

He didn't know why he said it, why he couldn't accept that the business between them was over. He should have shaken hands with Lairdman and left it at that, perhaps saying there were no hard feelings. He would never have to see the man again; once in a while he would simply feel sorry for him.

'I don't remember either of them,' said Lairdman, shaking his head. 'I'll say goodbye, Fergus. I'm grateful, I really am.'

'They were the boys who had the bright idea of washing your hair in a toilet bowl.'

Boland had said to himself over and over again that Lairdman was welcome to her. He looked ahead to an easy life, living alone. The house she had filled with her moods and her lies for the last twelve years would be as silent as a peaceful sleep. He would clear out the memories of her, because naturally she wouldn't do that herself — the old fashion magazines, the empty medicine bottles, the clothes she had no further use for, the curtains torn to pieces by her cats. He would cook his own meals, and Mrs Couglan would still come to clean every morning. Mrs Couglan wouldn't exactly be sorry to see her go, either.

'I don't know why you keep going on about your schooldays,' Lairdman said.

'Let me get you a real drink before you go. Two big ones,' Boland called to the barman.

'No, really,' Lairdman protested. 'Really now.' He had put on his coat and a pair of black leather gloves.

'Oh, go on, man. We're both in need of it.'

Finger by finger Lairdman took one of the gloves off again, and unwillingly picked up the new glass. They drank.

‘I only mentioned the school,’ Boland said, ‘because that was the other thing that you and I shared.’

‘As I said, I think we’d maybe send the children there.’

‘You don’t remember it?’ Boland asked.

‘What’s that?’

‘The toilet thing.’

‘Look here, Boland—’

‘I’ve offended you. I didn’t mean that at all.’

‘Of course you haven’t offended me. It’s just that I see no reason to keep going on about things like that.’

‘We’ll talk of something else.’

‘Actually, I’m getting late.’ The second glove was pulled on again, the coat buttons were checked to see that all was well for the street. The glove was removed again when Lairdman remembered there’d have to be a handshake.

‘Thanks for everything,’ he said.

For the second time, Boland surprised himself by being unable to let the matter rest. ‘You mention your children,’ he heard himself saying. ‘Would theseTe your and Annabella’s children?’ Lairdman’s mouth dropped open and he stared at Boland. ‘What other children are there?’ he asked, shaking his head in a puzzled way.

‘She can’t have children, Lairdman.’

‘Oh now, look here—’

‘That’s a medical fact. The unfortunate woman is incapable of being a mother.’

‘I think you’re drunk. One whiskey after another you’ve had. Annabella’s told me a thing or two about you, you know.’

‘She hasn’t told you about the cats she’s going to bring with her. She hasn’t told you she can’t have children. She hasn’t told you she gets so bored that her face turns white with anger. It’s best not to be near her then, Lairdman. Take my advice on that.’ ‘She’s told me you can’t stay sober.’

‘Except for occasions like this, I hardly ever drink. I drink a lot less than Annabella does, I can promise you.’

‘You’ve been unable to give Annabella children. She’s sorry for you, she doesn’t blame you.’

‘Annabella was never sorry for anyone in her life.’

‘Now look here, Boland—’

‘Look nowhere, man. I’ve had twelve years of the woman. I’m ready to let you take my place. But there’s no need for this talk of divorce, I’m just telling you that. She’ll come and live with you in your seven-room flat; she’ll live in any house you like to buy, but if you wait for ever you won’t find children coming along. All you’ll have is two cats that want to bite the legs off you.’ ‘You’re being most unpleasant, Boland.’

‘I’m telling you the truth.’

‘You seem to have forgotten that Annabella and myself have talked about all this. She knew there’d be bitterness. Well, I understand that. I’ve said I’m sorry.’

‘You’re a mean little wooden man, Lairdman. Your head belongs in a toilet bowl. Were you all wet when they let go of you? I’d love to have seen it, Lairdman.’

‘Will you keep your damn voice down? And stop trying to quarrel with me! I won’t stand here and listen to this.’

‘I think Dead Smith went on to become a—’

‘I don’t care what he became.’

Suddenly Lairdman was gone. Boland didn’t even turn his head. After a moment he lit a fresh cigarette. For half an hour he remained alone, where his wife’s lover had left him, thinking about his schooldays and Lairdman.

He had lunch in the dining room of the hotel, ordering soup and fish. He imagined himself, one day in the future, entering the silence of his house. He’d actually been born in it. Opposite O’Connor’s garage, it was the last one in the town, yellow-painted and ordinary, but a house he loved.

‘Did you say the fish, sir?’ the waitress enquired.

‘Yes, I did.’

He’d got married in Dublin, as Annabella’s family lived there. His friends and neighbours had been delighted when he brought her to live among them. They stopped him in the street and told him how lucky he was. But those same people would be delighted when she left. The terrible bitterness that filled her, because of not being able to have children, eventually turned her beauty into a kind of madness. That’s what had happened, nothing else.

Slowly he ate his fish. Nobody would mention it much; they’d know what had happened and they’d say to one another that one day, probably, he’d marry again. He wondered if he would.

He ordered a slice of apple cake with cream, and later coffee came. He was glad it was- aii over. Now he had accepted the truth; it had been necessary to hear it from someone other than his wife. When first she’d told him, he’d wondered if it was all just another of her lies.

He paid his bill and went out to the car park. It was because there hadn’t been enough for her to do, he thought, as he drove out of Dublin through the heavy city traffic. A childless woman in a small town had all the

time in the world. She had changed the furniture around, and had chosen the wallpaper that her cats had later damaged. But she hadn't joined any clubs or made any friends. He'd driven her to Dublin as often as he could, before she'd started going there alone to visit Phyllis. For years he'd known she wasn't happy, but until she told him he'd never suspected she had become involved with a man.

Lairdman would have telephoned her by now, perhaps to say, 'Why don't you drive up this afternoon?' Maybe all day she had been packing, knowing the meeting at Buswell's was nothing to worry about. The little white Volkswagen he'd bought her might be on the road to Dublin already. He was on the open road now, looking out for the Volkswagen coming towards him. If she passed him, would she greet him with a touch on the horn? Or would he greet her? He didn't know if he would. Better to wait.

But over the next fifty miles or so there was no sign of his wife's car. And of course, he told himself, there was no reason why there should be. It was only his own idea that she might depart that afternoon, and surely she'd need more than a day to pack all her things. The more he thought about it, the less likely it was that she would be capable of completing the move alone.

He turned the radio on, and heard a song called 'Dancing in the dark'. It reminded him of the world he supposed his wife and Lairdman belonged to, the excitement of secret love, dancing close together in the darkness. 'Poor Annabella,' he said aloud, while the music still played. Poor girl, to have married a small town businessman like himself. It was lucky, really, that she had met self-confident little Lairdman. He imagined them in each other's arms, and then their shared smile before they held each other close again. As the dull third party, he had no further part to play.

But as Boland reached the first few houses on this side of his home

town, he knew none of that was right. The little white car had not carried her to Lairdman today. It would not do so tomorrow or the next day. It would not do so next month, or after Christmas, or in February, or in spring. It would never do so. It hadn't mattered reminding Lairdman of what he had suffered as a schoolboy; it hadn't mattered telling him she was in the habit of lying, or even calling him mean. That kind of unpleasant talk was more or less expected in the situation they found themselves in, and might simply be the result of a few whiskeys. But something had driven Boland to go further. Little men like Lairdman always wanted children. 'That's a total lie,' she'd have said already on the telephone, and Lairdman would have pretended to believe her. But pretending wasn't going to be enough for either of them.

Boland turned the radio off. He stopped the car outside Donovan's pub and sat there for a moment, before going in. At the bar he greeted men he knew, and stood drinking with them, listening to talk of horses and politicians. They left after a few more drinks, but Boland stayed there for a long time, wondering why he hadn't been able to let Lairdman take her from him.

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- залучати;
- зустрітися за домовленістю;
- шкодувати за чимось;
- випадок/подія (2);
- незграбний;
- і мухи не скривдить;

- придатний, підходящий;
- розлучитися;
- перебільшити;
- передумати;
- звинувачувати когось у чомусь;
- нагадати про щось

Make up your own sentences using these phrases.

II. Insert prepositions if necessary.

1. Boland took ... his wallet and paid ... the drinks.

2. Boland couldn't talk ... Lairdman ... a drink ... him.

3. Lairdman was ... Dublin. He was ... the wood business.

4. Annabel la was to move ... Lairdman's place ... once.

5. He became angry ... a moment but he thought he had to be careful... what he said.

6. Lairdman said that it was good ... him to agree to divorce ... Annabella.

7. He looked ... an easy life ... Annabella's moods and lies.

8. He paid ... the bill and went the car park.

9. He was ... the open road now, looking... her car.

10. Boland turned ... the radio and listened ... the song called "Dancing in the dark".

III. Choose either say or tell. Use the verb in the correct tense form.

1. George couldn't help me. He ... me to ask Kate.

2. Kate... she had many pets at home.

3. Ann ... goodbye to me and left.

4. Sam... me that Robert didn't like porridge.
5. I asked him... the truth.
6. Don't just stand there!... something.
7. I ... Jim not to shout.
8. Mother... her son to go to the dentist
9. ... us about your holidays, please! Did you have a nice time?
10. My cousin ... he could ski well.
11. She ... us her knowledge of French was good.
12. Don't... anybody what I It's a secret between us.
13. What did you ... the police?
14. He ... he had just heard the news.
15. They ... it is good for health to go jogging.

IV. Fill in a suitable form of a verb from the list: say, tell, talk, speak.

1. She ... she might be late.
2. I'm going ... something to the neighbours about the noise.
3. She ... us about her travels around the world.
4. The clock... it's five past ten.
5. The newspaper... there has been a hijacking.
6. Have you anything to ... in your defense?
7. I've never... a lie in my life.
8. Let's... about the problem.... me what you need.
9. She often ... about her days as a student.
10. The lecturer is going ... about the modem art.
11. He ... me to close the door.
12. The letter... we've won the first prize.
13. I didn't do it – somebody has been ... tales.

14. The teacher...: “Don’t... during the lesson.”
15. I can’t... when Bill went away.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Why did the two men meet in the bar of Buswell’s Hotel?
2. What did they discuss?
3. What was Lairdman?
4. What plans did he have?
5. Was it easy to get a divorce in Ireland?
6. Did Boland want to divorce?
7. Had he met Lairdman before?
8. What did he think of his wife’s lover?
9. What didn’t Lairdman know about Annabella?
10. Why did Boland tell Lairdman all the things about Annabella?
11. Had he been happy with her?
12. Why had Annabella become bitter?
13. Where did Boland go after the meeting with Lairdman?
14. Would his wife leave him?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. What kind of man was Boland?
2. Why did he agree to divorce Annabella?
3. Why did he fail to let Lairdman take her from him after all?
4. What do you think would happen next?

III. Speak about:

1) Boland; 2) Lairdman; 3) Annabella.

IV. Retell the story paying attention to direct speech (turn it into Indirect speech). Use different verbs to introduce direct speech: (to tell; to inform; to warn; to inquire; etc.)

Written Practice

Before the meeting with Lairdman Boland could write a letter to his wife. What kind of letter can it be?

Delivery

LORCAN BYRNE

Retold by Clare West

In her house outside the town, Mrs Kennedy writes her diary, paints the views from her windows, and finds no comfort in the world.

Every week Charlie Blue delivers a box of groceries to her door, but she never appears. It is now one year since the accident. . .

In Thursdays, after the last delivery of the long day, which was to the mad Kennedy woman, Charlie Blue was allowed to keep the van for the night. He could drive home to his mother, proud behind the wheel of the yellow van, waving to any of the boys from his schooldays he might happen to see in their long gardens, playing with their children or cutting their midsummer grass. The arrangement suited his mother. She would have the dinner ready for him and then, after watching their favourite TV programme Coronation Street

together, he would drive her into town to Horan's Hotel for her weekly game of cards. Tommy Horan also owned the grocery store and she thought he was a great man, a generous man to let her son have the van so that she could get to her game of cards. Charlie said nothing, but knew Tommy Horan to be a bit of a bollocks, selling his tired vegetables and soft tomatoes and eggs that were no longer fresh. He said nothing because his mother could become as nasty as her twelve-year-old dog, which she allowed to sit on her knees while she fed it with the better bits of meat from her dinner plate.

There was a light shower of rain as Charlie was driving to Mrs Kennedy's. The sun appeared strongly again from behind the clouds, the road shone blackly, and the smells of fresh-cut grass and warm earth rose from the fields and came in through the open window of the van. With one hand Charlie took out a cigarette from a packet and lit it with his Horan's Hotel cigarette lighter. He felt lucky. Lucky to have his driver's licence, lucky to have his mother still alive, lucky to be working for Tommy Horan, even if he was an old bollocks.

A month already. A day just as lovely as that day, the clouds low over the hills. Light seed balls blowing across the land like a first snow. And I hate this beauty because Bobby cannot see it. I paint it but I hate it. With their sharp wings the birds cut open the sky and I am delighted to see it bleed. From my window I can see the gate and the red wallflowers, staining the stones with their blood. At night, the screams of hunted animals comfort me. I am not the only one in pain. In the morning I cannot bear to dress, and prefer to wear only shadows. I go to each of my fifteen windows and decide which view to paint today. I might eat, if my body lets me, and then I move to my chosen window and start to paint.

Charlie drove carefully around the last bend before the Kennedy house.

It was a year to the day, he realized, since poor old Foley lost control of his tractor on this very bend and killed Mrs Kennedy's young son. Bobby was his name, only four or five years of age. He and his mother were planting flowers at the foot of the big stone pillars either side of the gate, when around the corner came Foley, shouting about the brakes. The front of the tractor was already too close to the pillar on the left, throwing up grass and earth into the sky. Mikey Tuohy, who saw the whole thing from his field libove the road, told the police in detail what happened. His story earned him free beer in the pub for a long time afterwards. He said the screams of the mother nearly stopped his heart. She picked up the boy's body before Tuohy could get there, and she ran all the way up the long driveway to the big house, screaming the whole time as the boy's head dropped lifelessly against her arm and shoulder. Poor old Foley sat on the grass and put his head in his hands and didn't even recognize Tuohy when he reached him. Tuohy said Foley shouldn't have been allowed on the road, not even on a bike, because the old boy was half blind.

Horan's got somebody new to deliver the groceries. I recognized him: Charles Cullen. He knocked and stood at the door and stared out for a long time, out beyond the fields. At what, I don't know. He stretched his arms out wide like Christ on the cross, to take the whole world to his heart, perhaps. Then he yawned and knocked again. He lifted his T-shirt and scratched his stomach. With his toe he pushed the box nearer the wall, and left slowly, looking back occasionally at the door. While I was emptying the box afterwards I discovered a box of chocolates I hadn't asked for. I must remember not to pay for that.

Now, at the end of summer, the land is bled dry and colours are slowly returning to brown.The cooler air moves against my skin like long grass. When the night enters the house, I look for Bobby. I want to run a bath and

pour warm water over his small, smooth back. I want to turn back his soft sheet and lift him into bed and bring the edge of the sheet to his chin. I want to kiss his eyelids as he sleeps. Instead, the darkness tears at my own.

Once, last autumn, as darkness was falling, Charlie saw an owl standing on the right-pillar of Mrs Kennedy's gate. It didn't move as Charlie edged the van past the ruined left pillar and wall, and then past the gate still on its side since the accident. At first he thought it was a shadow. He had stopped by the pillar and quietly rolled down the window, when the top of the fat, dark shape turned towards him. From the centre of two wide circles two eyes stared evenly at him, daring him to move, and then with two or three movements of its surprisingly wide wings it slowly, coldly, flew off low over the field towards the trees. Charlie remembered feeling uncomfortable, judged in some way.

October 9

Charles still brings the groceries. For the same reason, I both hate and love him being at my door each week. He reminds me of a better life. I so clearly remember Charles in my class, tall and clumsy at his desk. I had to let him stand in the end. He was freer that way. And the day I decided he had a gift, it comes back so clearly. (I hate the way I can remember every detail of my life before Bobby and Bobby's death!) He brought his finished painting up to my desk and at first I was disappointed. 'A Beach in Summer' it was called, but everything in Charles's painting was a different shade of blue, not just the sea: blue sand, blue hills, blue boat, and what I thought was a blue sun. I asked Charles why he hadn't used other colours, and he said in that frightened way he had, 'Well, Miss, it's a beach at night-time, you see.' Charlie Blue they called him after that. Maybe he still paints. I hope so.

When the police arrived, Mrs Kennedy wouldn't let them into the

house, Tuohy said. Nor the priest either. In the end the police had to break a window and get in that way. They found her upstairs washing the child in the bath. The bloodstained water went everywhere, over the walls and the mirror, wetting the priest and the doctor as they forced the dead boy out of her arms. Dr Murphy phoned his wife, who came over and stayed in the house. Mrs Kennedy didn't come out of the bathroom until the next morning. She came downstairs still covered in blood and told Mrs Murphy to kindly leave her house. Hasn't been seen outside her house and garden since the child was buried. From the high field Tuohy says he sometimes sees her sitting all day at one of her windows. Or walking naked to the woodpile or throwing bits of food out for her cats. As Charlie drove the van up the driveway, he looked around for her, as he always did. He threw the end of his cigarette out of the window, thinking to himself that he had only two cigarettes left and that the old bollocks wouldn't be paying him until tomorrow evening. He'd better save them. He looked up at the high field behind Mrs Kennedy's and guessed that Tuohy was probably spending a lot more time up there than he needed to.

December 25

I found a Christmas cake I hadn't ordered in the box of groceries yesterday.

Sometimes a man comes to the gate and stands there, staring up at the house. Who is he? I wonder. He was there last week and again today.

I feel Bobby's presence strongly today. I fetched the Christmas tree from the cellar and put it in the front room, with coloured lights and pretty glass balls on it. I write in its red and blue and green light. I have wrapped his favourite toys and placed them under the tree. I close my eyes and he is there, lying on the carpet by the tree, opening his presents, turning his blond head around to smile up at me, not minding a bit that they're the same presents as

last year. I drink my wine and eat a piece of Christmas cake. Too rich for you, Bobby, too rich.

Charlie couldn't imagine his former art teacher naked. Every other woman in town had spent time naked in his dreams, even Mrs Simpson in the post office. Mrs Kennedy was older than her but not by a million years, she could only be forty or so, and she had had a good shape back then during his time at school, even if it was hidden by long dresses and colourful baggy jackets. He had liked her. She hadn't laughed at him for being stupid. She had put up a painting he had done of a beach at night-time, right up beside the board where everybody could see it. That was good. It was worth being called Charlie Blue for that.

February 18

This week Charlie hid a couple of oranges in the box. I love him for these small presents, the only kisses I receive.

Today the stranger walked up the driveway to the door. I saw him clearly through the glass, tall, blond-haired, blue-eyed. Serious. He just stood there for a long time, unmoving. One of the cats scratched at the kitchen window and I looked away for a moment. When I looked back, he was gone.

Snow fell again today but a hard sun drove it into the hungry grass.

Charlie felt sorry for the thin grey mother cat. She came up to him as he pulled back the side door of the van. He reached down to scratch her head and she replied by rubbing her whole body against the leg of his jeans. It's not much of a life for you, Charlie said, not like you used to have, anyway.

He was halfway to the front door when he saw last week's box exactly where he had left it. A busy line of black ants led from the box to a hole in the front wall of the house. Confused, he walked up and down for a while, looking at the front door and windows. He put the box he was carrying back

into the van, lifted his T-shirt and scratched his stomach. Near the corner of the house he saw a torn egg-box and a pile of clean chicken bones.

April 28

I feel so heavy. As the world outside grows lighter and fills with hope, I become heavier. My paintings are still in winter, almost colourless. I paint from one window now, from Bobby's room, which gives the best view of the gate.

My handsome stranger is making good progress. He began by laying out the stones in rows and writing numbers on them. Sometimes he stood up and looked back up at me, serious as always, his blond hair not quite visible from where I sit.The wall is finished. All that remains are the pillar and the gate.

Charlie smoked a cigarette, then knocked on the door for the first time since he began deliveries to Mrs Kennedy nearly a year before. Just leave the box by the door and she'll bring the groceries in herself, Horan had said. But Charlie couldn't just drop the new box down beside the old one and let the ants run all over it. When he knocked, the door opened. It hadn't been properly shut.

'Mrs Kennedy?' he called into the shadowy hall.

When Charlie knocked, the door opened. It hadn't been properly shut. 'Mrs Kennedy?' he called into the shadowy hall.

May .21

Charlie still leaves his small-offerings. Yesterday it was a packet of sweets. I cannot eat them but I feel grateful and that feeds me.

I heard the owl call again last night. Closer this time. In my head I could see his long brown body diving from the sky, the terrified movements of the small animal he caught, the slow beat of his wings as he rose into the

night-time trees.

The pillar is almost finished.The gate lies on its side on the grass, ready to be put back in place.

Charlie felt cold. These thick-walled country houses were impossible to heat, from a single wood fire, anyway. His eyes got used to the darkness.

‘Mrs Kennedy?’ he called again. He went into the front room. There was a painting she had been working on, and others standing against a wall which was papered in a flower pattern. An untidy pile of silver knives and forks on the carpet. He closed the door and moved towards the back of the house, where the kitchen was, he supposed. This door was open. He switched on the light. There was a fridge in the corner, still working. Three bananas blackened in a glass bowl. He could see that rats had been here; they had eaten into the bread and the butter and there were even tooth marks in a piece of pink soap in a dish. Charlie went back out into the hall and stood at the bottom of the stairs. He felt colder than ever.

‘Mrs Kennedy?’ he called and started up the stairs.

June 20

The days are like children, unwilling to come in from their play, and tonight the sky is a gentle purple, as smooth and as tight as the skin of an aubergine.

I have washed all my brushes for the last time. Each one left its own history of colour on my hands. I emptied the wooden knife-and- fork box and put them into it, along with all my paints. My present to you, Charlie Blue.

Tomorrow I will walk through the gate.

The smell of paint-cleaner hangs in the air.

While Charlie waited for O’Reilly the policeman and Dr Murphy to finish inside, he smoked his last cigarette, leaning against the side of the van,

looking out over the trees to the distant, darkening hills. A yellow light came from the open doorway and upstairs window of the house. He had just finished his cigarette when O'Reilly came out and handed him a small wooden box, told him to go on home, that the ambulance could take over an hour to get there from Ballinasloe and that there was no point in waiting. O'Reilly would see him tomorrow. Ambulances never hurry for the already dead.

Charlie drove back into town and parked outside Horan's Hotel. The bollocks could keep his van. Through the hotel window he could see his mother at her card game, the dog at her feet. She must have asked a neighbour to bring her into town. The dog sensed his presence, looked out but did not move.

He reached into the van and took out Mrs Kennedy's box of brushes and paints from the passenger seat. Shutting the door with his shoulder, he put her present under his arm and walked on, out past the last lights of the town and into the blue shadows of the moonlit countryside, feeling nervous but welcomed, like a stranger at home in what was once a foreign land.

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- знаходити розраду;
- нещасний випадок;
- втратити контроль;
- доставляти продукти;
- підношення;
- з тієї ж причини;
- звикнути до чогось;

- не було сенсу;
- відчути щось.

Use them in sentences of your own.

II. Insert articles where necessary.

1. Every Thursday Charlie delivered ... box of ... groceries to his former teacher.

2. Mikey Tuohy's story earned him ... free beer in ... pub for ... long time afterwards.

3. Charles was ... tall clumsy boy who had ... gift for ... painting.

4. She fetched ... Christmas tree from ... cellar and put it in ... front room.

5. ... that week Charlie hid ... couple of oranges in ... box.

6. Mrs Kennedy wrote in her diary that... stranger she saw from ... time to ... time was making ... good progress.

7. Charlie smoked ... cigarette and knocked on ... door for ... first time since he began deliveries to Mrs Kennedy.

8. In ... kitchen he switched on ... light: there was ... fridge in ... comer, still working.

9. Charlie drove back into ... town and parked outside ... Horan's Hotel.

10. He took ... box with paints and brushes which Mrs Kennedy had left for him and walked into ... blue shadows of... moonlit countryside.

III. Study the idioms below and do the exercise after that.

1) coach potato – ледар, лежень;

2) the apple of one's eye – зіниця ока;

3) cool as a cucumber – незворушна, спокійна людина;

4) it's another cup of tea – це зовсім інше питання, зовсім інша

справа;

5) to be half-baked – непродуманий, «сирий» план, ідея;

6) a hard nut to crack – міцний горішок;

7) in a nutshell – коротко, двома словами;

8) make one's mouth water – «слинки течуть»;

9) sell like hot cakes – розпродуватись як гарячі пиріжки;

10) take smth with a pinch (grain) of salt – ставитись із сумнівом, не приймати на віру;

11) be like chalk and cheese – нічого спільного.

1. The new books of this author sell quickly, like ...

2. It’s impossible to persuade Max from doing it. He is ...

3. When I see this picture I want to eat it, it...

4. My brother spends all the time lying on the coach and watching TV! He doesn’t even go outside! He is a real...

5. Mary loves her son very much, he is ...

6. As she had only few minutes, she told us the story ...

7. I must admit that my project failed as it...

8. When I went to England, I realized that the life there was completely different from what I was used to, it was ...

9. Though many students were nervous before the exam, Tom was ...

10. Mary is always telling lies. Take her stories ...

11. I don’t know how Sam and Ann get on well. They are...

IV. Describe Charlie or Mrs Kennedy using the idioms from Exercise III.

V. Choose the correct variant.

1. The apples taste sweet / sweetly. Help yourself.

2. Charlie felt happy / happily driving his van to Mrs Kennedy.

3. He suggested discussing this idea serious / seriously.

4. He looked upset / upsetlv. He had smoked his last cigarette.

5. It rained very heavy / heavily that night.

6. He opened the door quiet / quietly and entered the house.

7. She looked angry / angrily at Charlie when she saw him through the window.

8. It was a warm day and the sun was shining bright / brightly.

9. Charlie drove careful / carefully around the last bend to Mrs Kennedy's house.

10. Charlie is painting seemed strange / strangely.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Why did Charlie go to Mrs Kennedy every Thursday?

2. What did she think of Charlie?

3. What had happened to Mrs Kennedy's son the year before?

4. What was her reaction to the accident?

5. What did Charlie usually put into the box of groceries?

6. Why did he consider himself to be lucky?

7. Why was he called Charlie Blue?

8. What was Charlie's attitude to his former teacher?

9. What did Mrs Kennedy feel all the time?

10. What was she painting?

11. What happened to Mrs Kennedy?

12. What did she leave for Charlie? Why?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. Why did Mrs Kennedy find no comfort?
2. In her diary she wrote that she saw a stranger. Who could it be?
3. What would Charlie do next from your point of view?

III. Retell the story in the name of:

a) Charlie; b) Mrs Kennedy; c) O'Reilly, the policeman.

Written Practice

Suppose Mrs Kennedy wrote a letter to Charlie. What could she tell him about in her last letter?

My Oedipus Complex

FRANK O'CONNOR

Retold by Clare West

When you are aged about five or six, you are the most important person in your world and, naturally, you expect your parents to understand this and to follow your wishes in everything. But young Larry has a lot of trouble getting his parents to behave in the right way. . .

Father was in the army all through the war — the First y World War, I mean – so up to the age of five, I never saw much of him, and what I saw did not worry me. Sometimes I woke and there was a big figure in uniform staring down at me. Sometimes in the early morning I heard the front door bang and heavy footsteps marching away down the street. These were

Father's entrances and exits. Like Santa Claus, he came and went mysteriously.

In fact, I rather liked his visits, although there wasn't much room between Mother and him when I got into the big bed in the early morning. He smoked a pipe, which gave him a pleasant smell, and shaved, an interesting activity I had never seen before. Each time he left a few more souvenirs behind – buttons and knives and used bullets – packed carefully away in a box. When he was away, Mother used to let me play with these things. She didn't seem to think as highly of them as he did.

The war was the most peaceful time of my life. The window of my room faced south-east. I always woke at first light, and felt I was rather like the sun, ready to light up the world and be happy. Life never seemed so simple and clear and full of possibilities as then. Lput my feet out from under the blankets – I called them Mrs Left and Mrs Right – and invented situations for them. They discussed what Mother and I should do during the day, what Santa Claus should give me for Christmas, and what steps should be taken to brighten the home. There was that little matter of the baby, for example. Mother and I could never agree about that. Ours was the only house in the road without a new baby, and Mother said we couldn't afford one until Father came back from the war, because they were expensive. That showed how silly she was being. The Geneys up the road had a new baby, and everyone knew they didn't have much money. It was probably a cheap baby, and Mother wanted something really good, but I felt she was being too choosy. The Geneys' baby would have been fine for us.

Having arranged my plans for the day, I got up, went into Mother's room and climbed into the big bed. She woke and I began to tell her what I had decided. The bed was so nice and warm that I usually fell asleep beside

her, and woke again only when I heard her below in the kitchen, making the breakfast.

After breakfast we went into town, said a prayer for Father at the church, and did the shopping. Mother had all her friends praying for Father, and every night, before going to bed, I asked God to send him back safe from the war to us. It's a pity I didn't know what I was praying for!

One morning I got into the big bed, and there, sure enough, was Father. As usual, he'd arrived like Santa Claus. But later he put on his best blue suit instead of his uniform, and Mother looked very pleased. I saw nothing to be pleased about, because, out of uniform, Father was far less interesting. But she only gave a big smile and explained that our prayers had been answered. We all went off to church to thank God for bringing Father safely home.

Well, I couldn't believe what happened next. When we came back, he sat down and began to talk seriously to Mother, who looked anxious. Naturally, I disliked her looking anxious, because it destroyed her good looks, so I interrupted him.

'Just a moment, Larry!' she said gently.

But when I went on talking, she said impatiently, 'Do be quiet, Larry! Don't you hear me talking to Daddy?'

This was the first time I had heard these awful words, 'talking to Daddy', and I couldn't help feeling that if this was how God answered prayers, he wasn't listening to them very carefully.

'Why are you talking to Daddy?' I asked.

'Because Daddy and I have business to discuss. Now don't interrupt again!'

In the afternoon, at Mother's request, Father took me for a walk. I discovered that he and I had quite different ideas of what a walk in town

should be. He had no interest in trains, ships, or horses, and the only thing he seemed to enjoy was talking to men as old as himself. When I wanted to stop, he simply went on, dragging me behind him by the hand; when he wanted to stop, I was forced to stop too. I tried pulling him by the coat and trousers, but he was amazingly good at paying no attention to me. Really, it was like going for a walk with a mountain!

At teatime, 'talking to Daddy' began again, made worse by the fact that he now had an evening newspaper. Every few minutes he told Mother some news out of it. I didn't feel this was fair. I was ready to do battle with him any time for Mother's attention, but using other people's ideas gave him an unfair advantage. Several times I tried to talk about something else, but with no success.

'You must be quiet while Daddy's reading, Larry,' Mother said. It was clear that either she really liked talking to Father better than talking to me, or else he had some terrible power over her.

'Mummy,' I said that night in bed, 'do you think, if I prayed hard, God would send Daddy back to the war?'

'No, dear,' she said with a smile. 'I don't think he would.' 'Why wouldn't he, Mummy?'

'Because there isn't a war any longer, dear.'

'But, Mummy, couldn't God make another war?'

'He wouldn't like to, dear. It's not God who makes wars – it's bad people who do it.'

'Oh!' I said, disappointed. I began to think that God wasn't quite as wonderful as people said he was.

Next morning I woke at my usual hour, feeling ready to burst with ideas and plans for the day. I put out my feet and invented a long

conversation. Mrs Right talked of the trouble she had with her own father until she put him in the Home. I didn't quite know what the Home was, but it sounded the right place for Father. Then I got up, went into the next room and in the half-darkness climbed into the big bed. Father was taking up more than his fair share of the bed, so I gave him several kicks. Mother woke and put out a hand to me. I lay comfortably in the warmth of the bed with my thumb in my mouth.

'Mummy!' I said loudly and happily.

'Sssh, dear!' she whispered. 'Don't wake Daddy!'

This was a new development, which threatened to be even more serious than 'talking to Daddy'. Life without my early- morning discussions was unthinkable.

'Why?' I asked crossly.

'Because poor Daddy is tired.'

This seemed to mie a very poor reason. 'Oh!' I said lightly. 'Do you know where I want to go with you today, Mummy?'

'No, dear,' she sighed.

'I want to go to the river to catch some fish, and then—'

'Don't-wake-Daddy!' she whispered angrily, holding her hand across my mouth.

But it was too late. He was awake. He reached for his matches, lit one and stared in horror at his watch.

'Like a cup of tea, dear?' asked Mother nervously.

'Tea?' he cried angrily. 'Do you know what the time is?'

'And after that I want to go up the Rathcooney Road,' I said loudly, afraid I'd forget something in all these interruptions.

'Go to sleep at once, Larry!' she said sharply.

I began to cry. Father said nothing, but lit his pipe and smoked it, looking out into the shadows away from Mother and me. It was so unfair. Every time I had explained to her the waste of making two beds when we could both sleep in one, she had told me it was healthier like that. And now here was this man, this stranger, sleeping with her without the least care for her health!

He got up early and made tea, but although he brought Mother a cup, he brought none for me.

'Mummy,' I shouted, 'I want a cup of tea, too.'

'You can drink from my saucer, dear,' she said patiently.

That was the end. Either Father or I would have to leave the house. I didn't want to drink from Mother's saucer; I wanted to be considered an equal in my own home. So I drank it all and left none for her. She took that quietly too.

But that night when she was putting me to bed, she said gently, 'Larry, I want you to promise me that you won't come in and disturb poor Daddy in the morning. Promise?'

That awful 'poor Daddy' again! 'Why?' I asked.

'Because poor Daddy is worried, and doesn't sleep well.' 'Why doesn't he, Mummy?'

'Well, you know that, while he was at the war, Mummy got our money from the post office? Now, you see, there's no more money for us at the post office, so Daddy must go out and find us some. You know what would happen if he couldn't?'

'No,' I said, 'tell me.'

'Well, I think we might have to go out and beg, like the old woman outside the church. We wouldn't like that, would we?' 'No,' I agreed. 'We

wouldn't.'

'So you'll promise not to come in and wake him?'

'Promise.'

I really meant it. I knew money was a serious matter and I didn't want to have to beg, like the old woman. So when I woke the next morning, I stayed in my room, playing with my toys for what seemed like hours. I was bored, and so very, very cold. I kept thinking of the big, deep, warm bed in Mother's room.

At last I could bear it no longer. I went into the next room and got into the bed. Mother woke at once with a start.

'Larry,' she whispered, 'what did you promise?'

'But I was quiet for ever so long!' I said miserably.

'Oh dear, and you're so cold!' she said sadly. 'Now if I let you stay, will you promise not to talk?'

'But I want to talk, Mummy,' I cried.

'That has nothing to do with it,' she said, with a firmness that was new to me. 'Daddy wants to sleep. Do you understand?'

I understood only too well. I wanted to talk, he wanted to sleep – whose house was it, anyway?

'Mummy,' I said with equal firmness, 'I think it would be healthier for Daddy to sleep in his own bed.'

That seemed to surprise her, because she was silent for a while. Finally she said, 'Now, you must be perfectly quiet or go back to your own bed. Which is it to be?'

The unfairness of it made me angry. I gave Father a kick, which she didn't notice, but which made him open his eyes.

'Go to sleep again, Mick,' she told him calmly. 'Now, Larry,' she said

to me, getting out of bed, ‘you must go back.’

This time, in spite of her quiet air, I knew she meant it, and I knew I had to fight back, or lose my position in the home. As she picked me up, I gave a scream loud enough to wake the dead.

‘That damn child!’ said Father. ‘Doesn’t he ever sleep?’ He turned to the wall, and then looked back over his shoulder at me, with nothing showing except two small, mean, dark eyes.

I broke free from Mother’s hold and ran to the furthest corner, screaming wildly. Father sat up in bed.

‘Shut your mouth, you young dog!’ he said violently.

I was so surprised that I stopped making a noise. Never, never had anyone spoken to me like that before.

‘Shut your mouth yourself!’ I shouted, mad with anger. ‘What’s that you said?’ shouted Father, jumping out of bed. ‘Mick!’ cried Mother. ‘Don’t you see he isn’t used to you?’

‘I see he’s better fed than taught! I’ll smack his bottom!’ ‘Smack your own!’ I screamed furiously. ‘Smack your own!’ At this he lost his patience and started smacking me. I was so shocked at being hit by someone I considered a complete stranger that I nearly went crazy. I screamed and screamed, and danced in my bare feet. Father, looking clumsy and hairy in nothing but a short army shirt, stared down at me like a mountain ready for murder. It was then that I realized he was jealous, too. And there stood Mother, crying – we seemed to be breaking her heart.

From that morning on, my life was a hell. Father and I were openly enemies. There were many battles between us, he trying to steal my time with Mother, and I trying to steal his. When she was sitting on my bed telling me a story, he pretended he needed her to find a pair of his boots. While he was

talking to Mother, I played loudly with my toys. One evening when he came in from work, he found me playing with his souvenirs, and became terribly angry. Mother took the box away from me.

'You mustn't play with Daddy's toys, Larry,' she said firmly. 'Daddy doesn't play with yours.'

Father looked at her, quite shocked. 'Those are not toys,' he said crossly. 'Some of them are very valuable.'

I just couldn't understand why Mother was interested in him. In every possible way he was less likeable than me. He had a workman's accent and made noises while drinking his tea. I thought it might be the newspapers that she liked, so I invented some news of my own to read to her. I tried walking round with his pipe in my mouth, until he caught me. I even made noises while drinking tea, but Mother said I sounded horrible. It seemed to be connected with that unhealthy habit of sleeping together, so I spent a lot of time in their room, but I never saw anything unusual going on. In the end I stopped trying. Perhaps i.t depended on being grown up and giving people rings. I would just have to wait to find out.

But I didn't want him to think he had won. One day I said, 'Mummy, do you know what I'm going to do when I grow up?' 'No, dear,' she replied. 'What?'

'I'm going to marry you,' I said quietly.

Father gave a great noisy laugh, but I knew he must be worried. And Mother was pleased. She was probably glad to know that, one day, Father's hold over her would be broken.

'Won't that be niceP' she said with a smile.

'It'll be very nice,' I said confidently. 'Because we're going to have lots and lots of babies.'

‘That’s right, dear,’ she said calmly. ‘I think we’ll have one soon, and then you’ll have someone to play with.’

I was really pleased about that. It showed that in spite of being in Father’s power, she still considered my wishes. And anyway, it would show the Geneys that we could have a new baby too.

But the reality was very different. What a disaster it was! Sonny’s arrival destroyed the peace of the whole house, and from the first moment I disliked him. Fie was a difficult child, and demanded far too much attention. Mother was simply silly about him, and thought he was wonderful. As ‘someone to play with’ he was worse than useless. He slept all day, and I had to be quiet all the time to avoid waking him. It wasn’t any longer a question of not waking Father — now it was ‘Don’t-wake- Sonny!’ I couldn’t understand why the child wouldn’t sleep at the proper time, so whenever Mother’s back was turned, I woke him.

One evening, when Father came in from work, I was playing trains in the front garden. I pretended I hadn’t noticed him, and said loudly, ‘If another damn baby comes into this house, I’m going to leave.’

Father stopped at once and looked at me.

‘What’s that you said?’ he asked sternly.

‘I was only talking to myself,’ I replied quickly, a little afraid. ‘It’s private.’

He turned and went inside without a word. I intended it to be a serious warning, but its effect was quite different. Father started being nice to me. I could understand that, of course. Mother was quite sickening about Sonny. Even at mealtimes she’d get up and look lovingly at him in his little bed, with a foolish smile, and tell Father to look too. He was polite about it, but he looked puzzled – you could see he didn’t know what she was talking about. It

was painful to see how silly Mother was. Father wasn't good-looking, but he had a fine intelligence. He knew that Sonny was nothing but trouble, and now he realized I knew that, too.

One night I woke with a start. There was someone beside me in my bed. For one wild moment I felt sure it must be Mother – she had understood what was best for her and left Father for ever. But then I heard Sonny screaming in the next room, and Mother saying, 'It's all right, dear, it's all right, Mummy's here.' So I knew it wasn't her. It was Father. He was lying beside me, completely awake, breathing hard and angry as hell.

After a while I realized what he was angry about. What had happened to me had just happened to him. He had pushed me out of the big bed, and now he himself had been pushed out. Mother had no consideration for anyone except that unpleasant child, Sonny I couldn't help feeling sorry for Father. I had been through it all myself, and even at that age I was prepared to forgive and forget. I began to stroke his back and say, 'It's all right, dear, it's all right.' He didn't seem to like it much.

'Aren't you asleep either?' he said in an angry whisper.

'Ah, come on, put your arm around me, can't you?' I said, and he did, in a sort of way. Cautiously, I suppose, is how you'd describe it. He was very bony, but better than nothing.

At Christmas he made a big effort and bought me a really nice model railway.

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- бути високої думки про когось;
- вжити заходи;

- на чиєсь прохання;
- мати владу над кимось;
- розбірливий;
- турбувати;
- штовхати;
- втратити терпіння;
- шуміти;
- бути уважним до когось;
- не міг не поспівчувати;
- пройти через щось.

Use them in sentences of your own.

II. Complete the sentences using the verbs *make, do or take* in the correct form.

1. They are ... a lot of noise, but so far they haven't... any progress.

2. The company is ... a large profit, but in the meantime they are ... a lot of damage to the environment.

3. She was asked to ... a quick speech, but in fact her speech was extremely long.

4. After we've ... our homework, let's ... tea.

5.. .. a look at all these mistakes you have ....

6. Should we ... a taxi or go by subway?

7. At first he ... a great effort to read books, but then he ... an interest in reading.

8. This is a photograph I... of some friends when we were on vacation.

9. She told me to ... a seat, and then went to ... some phone calls.

10. The conference will... place in January.

11. We had to ... a lot of work before we began to ... any money.

12. After I had ... the bed, he lay down and ... his medicine.

Make up 10 sentences using the verbs to take, to do, to make.

III. Insert prepositions where necessary.

1. Larry wanted his mother to follow ... his wishes ... everything.

2. He liked to get... his mother's bed ... the early morning.

3. ... breakfast they went... town and said a prayer ... Father ... the church.

4. ... the afternoon,... Mother's request, Father took Larry ... a wolf.

5. ... Larry's opinion, his father was amazingly good ... paying no attention ... him.

6. One day Larry, getting ... his mother's bed, gave ... his father several kicks.

7. It was unthinkable ... Larry to live ... his early-morning discussions.

8. When she was putting the boy ... bed, she explained ... him, that he shouldn't disturb ... Father.

9. He stayed ... his room, playing ... toys ... some time.

10. Father got angry ... Larry, jumped bed and smacked him.

11. Once Larry told ... his mother that when he grew he would marry ... her.

12.. .. a while Father started being nice ... Larry.

13. Larry was sorry ... Father as he understood what his father was angry

14.. .. Christmas Father bought a present... Larry.

IV. Insert articles where necessary.

1.. .. Larry’s father was in ... army all through ... war.

2. He smoked ... pipe, which gave him ... pleasant smell.

3. He left ... few souvenirs behind – ... buttons, ... knives and ... used bullets – packed carefully away in ... box.

4. The boy woke at... first light and he felt he was rather like ... sun.

5. They all went off to ... church to thank God for bringing ... Father safely ... home.

6. Larry and his father had ... different ideas of what ... walk in ... town should be.

7. At... teatime Father had ... evening newspaper.

8.. .. life without... morning discussion was impossible.

9. He gave ... scream loud enough to wake ... dead.

10. What... bad luck it was when ... new baby appeared in ... family.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. How old was Larry when his father was in the army?

2. Did he like the father’s visits? Why?

3. How did Larry spend his mornings?

5. How did his life change?

6. How did he try to attract his mother’s attention?

7. What were the relations between Larry and his father?

8. What did his father do one day when Larry woke him up?

9. What did it lead to?

10. What happened when Sonny appeared in the family?

11. Did Larry like his brother? Why?

12. Did the appearance of the baby influence his relations with his

father?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. What kind of boy was Larry? Why did he behave like that?
2. What do you think of his father's behaviour?
3. Why was Larry sorry for his father at the end of the story?
4. Is it a typical situation in the family? Why?
5. What could happen next?

III. Speak about:

a) Larry; b) Larry's mother; c) Larry's father.

IV. Retell the story in the name of:

a) Larry's mother; b) Larry's father.

Written Practice

Write a short essay on the problem of family relations.

Men and Women

CLAIRE KEEGAN

Retold by Clare West

Children see more than their parents realize. They may not always understand what they see, but they have sharp eyes and long ears. They also know when things aren't right.

The daughter of this house is young enough to believe in Santa Claus at

Christmas – but old enough to want to fight on her mother's side . . .

My father takes me with him to places. He has artificial /f*hips, so he needs me to open gates. To reach our house, you have to drive up a long narrow road through a wood, open two lots of gates and close them behind you so the sheep won't escape to the road. I'm good at that sort of thing. I get out of the Volkswagen, open the gates, my father drives through, I close the gates behind him and jump back into the passenger seat. To save petrol, he lets the car roll downhill, then starts the engine and we're off to wherever my father is going on that particular day.

He's always looking for a bargain, so sometimes we go to a garage for a cheap spare part for the car. Sometimes we end up in a farmer's dirty field, pulling up young plants we've bought, to take home and grow on our land. On Saturdays my father goes to the market and examines sheep for sale, feeling their bones, looking into their mouths. If he buys a few sheep, he puts them in the back of the car, and it's my job to keep them there. Da often stops for a meal on the way home. Usually he stops at Bridie Knox's, because Bridie kills her own animals and there's always meat there. The handbrake doesn't work, so when Da parks outside her house, I get out and put a stone behind the back wheel.

I am the girl of a thousand uses.

Bridie lives in a smoky little house, without a husband, but she has sons who drive tractors around the fields. They're small, ugly men whose rubber boots have been mended many times. Bridie wears red lipstick and face powder, but her hands are like a man's.

'Have you a bit of food for the child, missus? There's no food at home,' Da says, making me feel like a starving African child.

'Ah now,' says Bridie, smiling at his old joke. 'That girl looks well-fed

to me. Sit down and I'll make some tea.'

'To tell you the truth, missus, I wouldn't say no to a drop of something. I've come from the market, and the price of sheep is shocking, so it is.'

He talks about sheep and cattle and the weather and how this little country of ours is in a terrible state, while Bridie cuts big, thick slices off a large piece of meat. I sit by the window and keep an eye on the sheep in the car. Da eats everything in sight, while I build a little tower of biscuits, lick the chocolate off and give the rest to the sheepdog under the table.

When we get home, I clean out the back of the car where the sheep have been.

'Where did you go?' Mammy asks.

I tell her all about our travels while she and I carry heavy buckets of cattle feed across the yard. Da milks the cow. My brother sits in the sitting room beside the fire and pretends he's studying for his exams next year. My brother is going to be somebody, so he doesn't open gates or clean up dirt or carry buckets. All he does is fead and write and do mathematics. He is the intelligent one of the family. He stays in there until he is called to dinner.

'Go and tell Seamus his dinner's on the table,' Da says.

I have to take off my rubber boots before going in.

'Come and have your dinner, you lazy bollocks,' I say.

'I'll tell Da,' he says.

'You won't,' I say, and go to the kitchen, where I put small, sweet garden peas on his plate, because he won't eat boring winter vegetables like the rest of us.

In the evenings, I do my homework on the kitchen table, while Ma watches the television we hire for the winter. On Tuesdays she never misses the programme where a man teaches a woman how to drive a car. Except for a

rough woman living behind the hill who drives tractors, no woman we know drives. During the advertising break her eyes leave the screen and travel to the shelf above the fireplace, where she has hidden the spare key to the Volkswagen in an old broken teapot. I am not supposed to know this. I sigh, and continue drawing in the River Shannon on my map.

The night before Christmas, I put up signs. I write THIS WAY SANTA on large pieces of paper. I'm always afraid he will get lost or not bother coming because the gates are too much trouble. I attach the signs to a post at the end of the road, to both gates, and to the door of the sitting room. I put a glass of beer and a piece of cake on the table for him.

Daddy takes his good hat, with a feather in it, out of the cupboard, and puts it on. He looks at himself in the mirror and pulls it on further, to hide his baldness.

'And where are you going?' Mammy asks. 'It's Christmas Eve, a time to stay at home with the family.'

'Going to see a man about a dog,' he says and bangs the door.

I go to bed and have trouble sleeping. I am the only person in my class Santa Claus still visits. But every year I feel there's a greater chance that he won't come, and then I'll be like the others.

I wake early and Mammy is already lighting the fire, smiling. There's a terrible moment when I think maybe Santa didn't come because I said 'you lazy bollocks', but he does come. He leaves me the Tiny Tears doll I asked for, wrapped in the same wrapping paper we have. Santa doesn't come to Seamus any more. I suspect he knows what Seamus is really doing all those evenings in the sitting room, reading magazines and drinking the red lemonade out of the drinks cupboard, not using his intelligence at all.

Only Mammy and I are up. We're the early birds. We make tea, then I

help her with the cooking. Sometimes we dance round the kitchen. Seamus comes down to investigate the parcels under the Christmas tree. He gets a dartboard as a present. He and Da throw darts, while Mammy and I put on our coats and feed the cattle and sheep and look for any newly laid eggs.

'Why don't they do anything to help?' I ask her.

'They're men, that's why,' she says simply.

Because it's Christmas morning, I say nothing. I come inside and a dart flies past my head.

'Ha! Ha!' says Seamus.

'Bulls-eye,' says Da.

The day before New Year, it snows. It is the end of another year.

I eat some left-over Christmas food for breakfast and fall asleep watching a film on the television. I get bored playing with my Tiny Tears doll, so I start playing darts with Seamus. When I get a good score, he calls it lucky.

I've had enough of being a child. I wish I was big. I wish I could sit beside the fire and wait to be called to dinner. I wish I could sit behind the wheel of a car and get someone to open the gates for me. Vroom! Vroom! I'd drive away fast.

That night, we get ready for the village dance. Mammy puts on a dark-red dress. She asks me to fasten her pearl necklace for her. She's tall and thin, but the skin on her hands is hard. I wonder if some day she'll look like Bridie Knox, part man, part woman.

Da doesn't make any effort. I have never known him take a bath or wash his hair. He just changes his hat and shoes. Seamus wears a pair of tight black trousers and boots with big heels to make him taller.

'You'll fall over in your high heels,' I say.

We get into the Volkswagen, Seamus and me in the back. Although I washed the inside of the car, I can still smell sheep- dirt. I hate this smell that drags us back to where we come from. Because there are no doors in the back of the car, it's Mammy who gets out to open the gates. I think she's beautiful, with her pearls around her neck and her red skirt flying out as she turns around. I wish Da would get out. I wish the snow would fall on him, not on Mammy in her good clothes. I've seen other fathers holding their wives' coats, holding doors open for them. But Da's not like that.

The village hall stands in the middle of a car park. Inside there's a slippy wooden floor, and benches around the walls, and strange lights that make white clothes seem very bright.

I think Mammy is beautiful, with her pearls around her neck and

her red skirt flying out as she turns around.

Everyone we know is there, including Bridie with her red lipstick, and Sarah Combs, who only last week gave my father a glass of wine and took him into the sitting room to show him her new furniture.

There's a band playing dance music, and Mammy and I are first on the floor. When the music stops and restarts, she dances with Seamus. My father dances with the women he knows from his trips. I wonder how he can dance like that, and not be able to open gates. Old men in their thirties ask me to dance.

They tell me I'm light on my feet. 'Christ, you're like a feather,' they say.

After a while I get thirsty and Mammy gives me money for a lemonade and some raffle tickets. A slow dance begins, and Da walks across to Sarah Combs, who rises from her bench and takes her jacket off. Her shoulders are bare; she looks half naked to me. Mammy is sitting with her handbag on her

knees, watching. There is something sad about Mammy tonight; it's all around her, like when a cow dies and the men come to take it away. Something I don't fully understand is happening; a black cloud seems to hang in the air. I offer her my lemonade, but she just drinks a little and thanks me. I give her half my raffle tickets, but she doesn't care. Da has his arms round Sarah Combs, dancing close and slow. I go to find Seamus, who's smiling at a blonde I don't know.

'Go and dance with Sarah Combs instead of Da,' I say.

'Why would I do that?' he asks.

'And you're supposed to be intelligent,' I say. 'Bollocks.'

I walk across the floor and tap Sarah Combs on the back. She turns, her wide belt shining in the light.

'Excuse me,' I say, like when you ask someone the time.

She just giggles, looking down at me.

'I want to dance with Daddy,' I say.

At the word 'Daddy' her face changes and she loosens her hold on my father. I take over and dance with him. He holds my hand tight, like a punishment. I can see my mother on the bench, reaching into her bag for a handkerchief. Then she goes to the Ladies' toilets. There's a feeling like hatred all around Da. I get the feeling he's helpless, but I don't care. For the first time in my life I have some power. I can take over, rescue, and be rescued.

There's a lot of excitement just before midnight. Everybody's dancing, knees bending, handbags waving. The band-leader counts down the seconds to New Year and then there's kissing all round.

My parents don't kiss. In all my life, back as far as I remember, I have never seen them touch. Once I took a friend upstairs to show her the house.

‘This is Mammy’s room, and this is Daddy’s,’ I said.

‘Your parents don’t sleep in the same bed?’ she said in amazement. That was when I suspected our family wasn’t normal.

The hall’s main lights are switched on, and nothing is the same. People are red-faced and sweaty; everything’s back the way it is in everyday life. The band-leader calls for quiet, and says the raffle is about to take place. He holds out the box of tickets to the blonde that Seamus was smiling at.

‘Dig deep,’ he says. ‘First prize is a bottle of whiskey.’

She takes her time, enjoying the attention.

‘Come on,’ he says. ‘Christ, girl, it’s not a million pounds we’re offering!’

She hands him the ticket.

‘It’s a – what colour would ye say that is? It’s a pink ticket, number seven two five and 3X429H. I’ll give ye that again.’

It’s not mine, but it’s close. I don’t want the whiskey anyway; I’d rather have the box of Afternoon Tea biscuits that’s the next prize. There’s a general searching in pockets and handbags. He calls out the numbers a few times and is just going to get the blonde to pick another ticket, when Mammy rises from her seat. Head held high, she walks in a straight line across the floor. A space opens in the crowd; people step to one side to let her pass. I have never seen her do this. Usually she’s too shy, gives me the tickets and I run up and collect the prize.

‘Do ye like a drop of whiskey, do ye, missus?’ the band-leader asks, reading her ticket. ‘Sure, it’d keep you warm on a night like tonight. No woman needs a man, if she has a drop of whiskey. Isn’t that right? Seven two five, that’s the one.’

My mother is standing there in her beautiful clothes and it’s all wrong.

She doesn't belong up there.

'Let's see,' he says. 'Sorry, missus, the rest of the number's wrong. The husband may keep you warm again tonight.'

My mother turns and walks proudly back, with everybody knowing she thought she'd won. And suddenly she is no longer walking, but running, running in the bright white light towards the door, her hair flowing out like a horse's tail behind her.

Out in the car park it's been snowing, but the ground is wet and shiny in the headlights of the cars that are leaving. Moonlight shines down on the earth. Ma, Seamus, and I sit in the car, shaking with cold, waiting for Da. We can't turn on the engine to heat the car because Da has the keys. My feet are as cold as stones. A cloud of steam rises from the window of the chip van. All around us people are leaving, waving, calling out 'Goodnight!' and 'Happy New Year!' They're buying their chips and driving off.

The chip van has closed down and the car park is empty when Da comes out. He gets into the driver's seat, starts the engine and we're off.

'That wasn't a bad band,' he says.

Mammy says nothing.

'I said, there was a bit of life in that band.' Louder this time.

Still Mammy says nothing.

Da begins to sing 'Far Away in Australia'. He always sings when he's angry. The lights of the village are behind us now. These roads are dark. Da stops singing before the end of the song.

'Did you see any nice girls in the hall, Seamus?'

'Nothing I'd be mad about.'

'That blonde was a nice little thing.'

I think about the market, with all the men looking at the sheep and

cattle. I think about Sarah Combs and how she always smells of grassy perfume when we go to her house.

We have driven up the road through the wood. Da stops the car. He is waiting for Mammy to get out and open the gates.

Mammy doesn't move.

'Have you got a pain?' he says to her.

She looks straight ahead.

'Can't you open your door or what?' he asks.

'Open it yourself.'

He reaches over her and opens her door, but she bangs it shut.

'Get out there and open that gate!' he shouts at me.

Something tells me I shouldn't move.

'Seamus!' he shouts. 'Seamus!'

None of us moves.

'Christ!' he says.

I am afraid. Outside, one corner of my THIS WAY SANTA sign has come loose; the sign is hanging from the gate.

Da turns to my mother, his voice filled with hate.

And you walking up there in your best clothes in front of all the neighbours, thinking you won first prize in the raffle.' He laughs unpleasantly and opens his door. 'Running like a fool out of the hall.'

He gets out and there's anger in his walk. He sings, 'Far Away in Australia!' He is reaching up to open the gate, when the wind blows off his hat. The gate opens. He bends to pick up his hat, but the wind blows it further away. He takes another few steps, but again it is blown just a little too far for him to catch it. I think of Santa Claus using the same wrapping paper as us, and suddenly I understand. There is only one obvious explanation.

My father is getting smaller. The car is rolling, slipping backwards. No handbrake, and I'm not out there, putting the stone in position. And that's when Mammy gets behind the wheel. She moves into my father's seat, the driver's seat, and puts her foot on the brake. We stop going backwards.

And then Mammy starts to drive. There's a funny noise in the engine for a moment, then she gets it right, and we're moving. Mammy is taking us forward, past the Santa sign, past my father, who has stopped singing, through the open gate. She drives us through the snow-covered woods. When I look back, my father is standing there watching our tail-lights. The snow is falling on him, on his bare head, on the hat that he is holding in his hands.

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- ремовнувати (латати);
- вигідна покупка;
- доглядати за кимось;
- рекламна пауза;
- прикріплювати;
- бути на ногах;
- дослідити;
- відбуватися;
- брати напрокат;
- не поспішати;
- тремтіти від холоду.

II. Translate into English.

1. Зазвичай ми купували кілька овець на ринку, а дорогою додому

зупинялися перекусити.

2. Мама приготувала обід і веліла покликати Сімуса.

3. Сімус не робив жодної роботи по дому.

4. Їй довелося зняти черевики, перш ніж увійти.

5. Мама ховала ключ від машини у чайнику на полиці над каміном.

6. Дівчинка прикріплювала вивіски до стовпа наприкінці дороги, щоб Санта Клаус не заблукав.

7. Сімус не робив жодних зусиль, щоб допомогти сестрі.

8. Мама була у темно-червоній сукні напередодні Нового року і виглядала ошатною.

9. Батько практично не переодягся на Новорічний бал, а Сімус одягнув вузькі чорні штани та черевики на високих підборах, які робили його вищим.

10. Мама відмовилася виходити з машини, щоб відчинити ворота.

III. Choose the correct answer to complete the sentences.

1. At the market the father examined sheep for ... (sale – sell).

2. He gave me some very useful... (advise – advice).

3. There is a programme where a man ... (learns – teaches) a woman to drive.

4. Da put on his good hat to hide his ... (boldness – baldness).

5. He liked working there. It was a good ... (job – work).

6. From the top of the hill, we can admire a marvellows ... (view – scenery) of the town.

7. I ... (offered – suggested) my mother my lemonade.

8. There is a lot of... (exciting – excitement) just before midnight.

9. She sat by the window and watched the sun ... (rise – raise).

10. My mother ... (felt – fell) ill at ease at the party.

11. 1 have always been ... (worried about – afraid of) spiders and snakes.

12. Seamus was a ... (sensible – sensitive) boy: he got upset very easily.

13. His voice ... (rose – raised) in anger.

14. When I... (rose – raised) my head, I saw tears in my mother's eyes.

15. In the morning Mammy and I had to feel the ... (kettle – cattle).

16. The snow was falling on his ... (bear – bare) head.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Where did the narrator's father take her?
2. Why did the girl have to open the gates?
3. What was her brother's occupation?
4. What kind of relations were there between brother and sister?
5. What was her Mother's favourite programme on TV?
6. Did the girl like Christmas? Why?
7. Where did the whole family go to celebrate New Year?
8. What did the girl think of when they went to the party?
9. What happened at the party?
10. How did the girl try to protect her mother?
11. Did she enjoy the party?
12. What made the mother leave the room?
13. What happened when the family was on the way home?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. Were they a happy family? Why?

2. What are the reasons why a daughter might want “to fight on her mother’s side”?

3. What do you think could happen when the girl’s father returned home?

III. Speak about:

a) the girl; b) her mother; c) her father.

IV. Retell the story in the name of:

a) the girl’s mother; b) the girl’s father.

Written Practice

The girl still believed in Santa Claus. She could write a letter to him. What could she ask him about?

Lord McDonald

EAMONN SWEENEY

Retold by Clare West

Irish music is well known throughout the world. From Sydney to Buenos Aires, from London to New York, you can hear an Irish song, dance to a reel, and take a drop of Irish whiskey.

It is a sad thing, though, to see an Irishman far from home who is too fond of his glass . . .

My name is Michael Coleman and they say I am the finest /fffiddler that ever lived. They say I put a twist to a tune – I add something to it that no

one else can. I have never been sure of where the twist comes from. I play that way because it is the only way I know. I play because I have to. I do not know where it comes from or what it is going towards.

My home is a small room in the South Bronx in New York, where the tall buildings shut out the sky. I don't understand the place at all. Two of my nieces passed through the city last week, on their way to look for work. We tried to talk about home but I could not, nor about here either. I picked up the i fiddle and played a couple of tunes, and then there was no distance between me and them or The Bronx or Killavil in Ireland where I was born. That's what I have been able to do all my life.

I could talk to you for ever, and still say less than you'd hear from the first few seconds of a tune called 'Lord McDonald'.

It was a calm, bright summer evening. I got the fiddle back once again — I'd had to pawn it because I needed the money. Times were hard, as they have been for years. I remember the days when we musicians were paid a working man's weekly wage for half a morning in the recording studio.

An Irish cop had hired me to play the fiddle at his daughter's birthday party. He had done well for himself since coming to the USA. Not only did he have money, he was also said to be honest. I spent the week before the party drinking to his honesty. A lot of money had been mentioned.

It was a short walk to his house, in good weather. As I went up the wide grey steps to the front door, there was an uneasy feeling in my stomach, the same anxious feeling I always have before I start to play.

Some nights I sit up and play and then I notice the sun has come up and is shining in the street outside. Then I find my face is wet with tears. 'Lord McDonald' is the tune I play.

I knocked at the cop's door, and a beautiful young woman in a blue

dress opened it. She looked at me with a face full of puzzlement. There were holes in the elbows of my jacket. Nothing was said for a while.

'I'm Michael Coleman the fiddler. I'm here to play at the birthday party.'

The girl still said nothing, only looked me up and down for a few more moments. Then she turned and ran back inside.

I still remember the face of that cop. It was the face of a man who'd take terrible offence if you weren't enjoying yourself enough at his father's funeral party. A big man, nearly two metres tall, still the colour of a man who's spent many a long summer working on the farm. In a good suit and expensive shoes. He had more of the American accent than he should have had. I could never manage that trick, although I'm not sure I missed much.

The cop rushed across the hall and tried to catch me by the throat. I stepped to one side and he dropped his hands. His right hand was opening and closing; he couldn't keep it still. There was no sound in the neat and tidy evening street. He was so angry that his tongue hit his teeth as he spoke.

'Well, Mickeen Coleman, the great fiddler. Ye dare to show your face here!'

I didn't know what was annoying the man at all.

'My daughter's birthday was this day last week. I had a hundred and fifty people waiting for ye. Damn it, where were ye?'

It's bad when you start making that sort of mistake. I really needed the money he'd have paid me.

'Well, Coleman, where were ye?'

'I made a mistake. I thought it was today I was supposed to be here.'

He banged his hand on the wall by the door. The man was nearly dancing with temper. There were a pair of young women standing in the hall

behind him now. They were laughing at his shouting, and that was making him even angrier.

'I'll tell ye why ye weren't here, Mickeen. It's because ye were falling drunk around the South Bronx somewhere. I got plenty of warnings about ye but I didn't take them, fool that I am. Yourself and your friends are a poor advertisement for us Irish, drinking and fighting and bringing our name down in front of the Americans. Ye think ye're something, but ye're nothing.'

'I never aimed to be an advertisement for anyone, only myself.'

'Ye may all be famous but did any of ye ever do anything to give us a good name, did ye, did ye?' On about the second 'did ye' he hit me in the chest with his right hand and sent me rolling down the steps. I was on my feet before I reached the bottom one. I was always able to land on my feet.

I didn't say anything to the cop. I never even said goodbye. It was a grand evening. There wasn't enough wind to move grass. I just walked off with the fiddle under my arm. Safe.

It cost people a lot more than their fare for the ship when they came over here. Some of them lost all sense of who they were. The cop wasn't the worst of them. A lot of them wouldn't let you near enough their house to be able to throw you off their steps. They'd be ashamed in case someone caught them listening to old Irish tunes like 'The Sligo Maid' or 'The Kerry man's Daughter'. The same people even tried to destroy their accent, cutting bits off it like a man trying to give a block of wood a new shape.

At one time there was always a place for us. A place for those who made others dance. Maybe people don't want to be reminded about what they came from. Because they're frightened they haven't moved as far away from it as they think they have.

The fiddle was pawned again, and I was in a bar. A quiet bar. Drinking

whiskey. I learned to drink at those dances where you'd accidentally break a string on your fiddle if they weren't refilling your glass quickly enough. I used to take my whiskey with friends and laughter then. Now I like to drink alone. The drink only makes me feel okay these days. Still, in bad times okay is good.

The twist. That's what they say I have, what I put into a tune that the others can't. You can't try to put the twist into your playing, it has to be part of it. Some days I think I know what the twist is, but I can never catch it because it is inside me.

It is what I am. The drinking, the way I could never stay in one place, the blackness I see in front of me some days, the dreams I have in the night. All there in my fiddle. Whatever it was that was wrong with me leaked out through my fingers, and they heard it as the twist.

And sometimes I think I have nothing to do with it at all. When the first records were sold, 78s they were called, I saw men and women dancing and laughing and crying at the same time. At my playing. I am a farmer's son from Killavil. How could it be me that did that? Maybe the fiddle wasn't the instrument at all.

I heard there were men at home who wouldn't eat for a couple of days so they could buy those records. Men who knew me did that! We had to come to America to record this Irish music to be sent back to Ireland for people there to buy, and yet we'll never see Ireland again. Things are wrong in this world, so they are.

I was never too eager for work. That was well known around the place at home. All I wanted to do was walk the countryside and play music. Some men will kill for land, others will die for a woman. I lived for the music of the dance, fast and slow, sad and sweet.

Everything else on the face of this earth was forgotten when I picked up a fiddle. The coldness of the city meant nothing to me when I was playing well. If I could hear the twist, it meant the life I was living was all right for me.

I'd only just got back to Killavil from London when I came to the USA. Big cars and bright lights, a law against drinking, theatres full of girls singing and dancing, and dollars. You couldn't feel right in it unless you were born in it. And even then you might not. You'll always look back at the place you came from and think it was better.

At home we started with an innocent life. Walking home from village dances across pale wet fields, looking at birds on the moonlit lake, playing a tune across the water in the early morning with no other sound in the clear cold air.

But it was a false life. False because it wasn't right to let people live a life like that if they weren't going to be allowed to stay in it, if they were already marked to go someplace else. It didn't prepare us for New York or London, Boston or Manchester.

There was bitterness and jealousy and hunger at home – that's true, I can't say it isn't. But is it fair to be punished with a slow death from a bleeding wound? I look at people's faces when they hear the names of tunes from home, 'The Boys of Ballisodare' and 'The Plains of Boyle', and I know they are dying inside.

The night the cop threw me down the steps, I called at Seamus Anderson's house. I was full of whiskey but I knew he had a fiddle in the house. I wanted to sit up and play music all night. I needed to feel that moment in the back of my head when I would know I'd got there. And then it would disappear before I could catch it, and I would have to try and create it

again.

Seamus owned a bar. Like the cop, he lived in a good house in a good area. I managed to open the garden gate, although I couldn't see straight. But I could hear a tune in my head that would cure me if I was only allowed to play it. I never played a tune badly in my life. The drink would change everything around in my head but I would still play the same as ever. The twist would always be there.

I knocked on Seamus Anderson's door. There was light inside but there was no answer. There were plenty of voices. A light came on in the hall, so I-'tried to concentrate and look sober. Seamus was a churchgoing man who was strongly opposed to drink, although that didn't stop him selling it.

I held my breath and tried to force my eyes to look in the one place at the one time. All it did was make my head go round. I fell against the door. A woman's voice shouted,

'Who's that at this hour of the night?'

'Michael Coleman, tell Seamus Michael Coleman is here to play a tune, to play "Lord McDonald", Michael Coleman has landed from Killavil!'

'Wait there,' she said, and walked away back into the house. I knew that if I didn't get into the light something awful was going to happen. There was a lot of noise inside. It seemed a long while before she came back.

'Seamus Anderson isn't home tonight, he's out of town.'

He had been out of town the last five times I'd been to the house. Still, he was a busy man. A businessman. I still felt bad, so I leaned against the door and hoped the black waves in front of my eyes would disappear. I could hear a man's voice inside the house.

'Is Coleman gone? That man is nothing but trouble when he has drink in him.'

The voice could have been Seamus Anderson's but I was not certain. I banged on the door and shouted for them to let me in. There was another voice. A harder one, with an unpleasant laugh.

'Get out of here, go on, get out of here!' And then to someone else, 'Ye only have to lift him and he'll fall.'

In a narrow back street. Me lying on a pile of rubbish. And a good number of rats. You'll always know rats because they sit up and look you straight in the eye to let you know that's how carefully they're watching you. I thought these were real rats, not the rats I see when I've had a couple of drinks. 'Lord McDonald' was playing in my head.

There was a cop walking towards me. I realized my nose had been bleeding for a while and the front of my jacket was covered in blood. The cop was cautiously tapping his stick against the inside of his left hand, as he walked slowly towards me.

I stood up and stepped out from the wall. Into the light.

'Officer, I was only taking a rest.'

They take drunks down to the police station and beat them unconscious. With sticks. Sometimes they kill them for the fun of it.

'Christ, it's Michael Coleman, Michael Coleman, the great fiddle player. We've got a whole pile of your 78s at home. What are ye doing here?'

'If I knew that, I wouldn't have to drink.'

He smiled and put a hand under my elbow to stop me falling.

'Good luck, Mr Coleman. It's good to meet ye. Ye're a great fiddler when ye're playing.'

And he walked off. A good Irishman. The rats were still there, so they were real rats. Not my rats. The night was lovely and warm and there was nothing to be afraid of.

The drink is like music. How can you explain it to someone who has not fallen in love with it? How it floods your head and pushes the blood three times faster through your body. The wonderful moment of the first one the morning after, when it starts to clear away the fear and anxiety it put there the night before. Drink makes the world a place of certainty. In every way.

I remember the day I played 'Lord McDonald'. I sat in a small recording studio in the South Bronx at midday. Played another tune for a couple of minutes and then it started. I played the whole of 'Lord McDonald' just once and I could feel something running through me. Every second was like an hour and the music was coming from a place so far back in myself that it was tearing me apart. I followed the music, chased the music, with colours going through my mind and Killavil and my dead brother and the man who taught me to play and the end of all this and the twist in myself and green and brown. It was bringing me somewhere and I finally got there.

I walked away out from the studio when I finished, and two men from the record company came out into the street after me. One of them pulled a huge roll of dollars from a deep trouser pocket.

'Here you are, Michael, a couple of hundred dollars for a special performance. No one ever heard anything like that before.'

The sun was shining the way it does in New York in the summer. The rest of the musicians were sitting in the usual bar, talking about work and spending money. They didn't know then they'd never have that sort of money again.

I tried to explain what had happened. My hand was shaking and the beer was spilling onto the floor. Sunshine was coming through the dark glass of the front window. Blue-coloured light with dust flying round in it. I had got there. I looked at my fingers and said there would be so many more tunes that

I would play like this.

But it never came again. Not that way. There was just that one day before it all finished for me. ‘Lord McDonald’ was the tune. My name is Michael Coleman and they say I am the finest fiddler that ever lived.

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- по всьому світу;
- особливість;
- закласти;
- зміряти поглядом;
- образитися;
- озиратися назад (згадувати);
- п'яниця.

II. Choose the correct answer to complete the sentences.

1. As he needed money he asked his friend to ... (lend – borrow) him 20$ until Monday.

2. The Irish cop ... (hired – fired) him to play the fiddle at his daughter’s birthday party.

3. The man was ... (laying – lying) on a pile of rubbish.

4. He was so ... (weak – absent)-minded that he forgot about the party.

5. They made him an excellent offer, but he ... (rejected – denied) it

6. Coleman admitted he had ... (done – made) a mistake.

7. Coleman’s words ... (raised – aroused) the cop’s anger.

8. The cop said that such people were a bad ... (advertising – advertisement) for the Irish.

9. Seamus Anderson went to ... (church – the church) regularly.

10. The policeman wished Coleman ... (a good – good) luck.

III. Insert articles where necessary.

1.. .. Irish music is known all over... world.

2. It was ... short walk to ... cop's house, in ... good weather.

3. When he knocked at... door, ... beautiful young woman in ... blue dress opened it.

4. He was never too eager for ... work, which was well known around ... place at... home.

5. ... night the cop threw him down ... steps, he called at ... Seamus Anderson's house.

6. He walked to sit up and play ... music all... night.

7. Seamus was ... churchgoing man who was strongly opposed to ... drink.

8. Sometimes ... policemen took ... drunks to ... police station and beat them unconscious.

9. He always had ... fun playing ... fiddle.

10. Michael Coleman was known as ... greatest fiddler who put ... twist to ... tune.

IV. Insert prepositions where necessary.

1. His nieces passed ... the city ... their way to look ... work.

2. The girl looked him ... and ... without saying anything.

3.. .. one time there was always a place ... musicians.

4. People always look ... at the place they come ....

5. Seamus Anderson lived ... a good house ... a good area.

6. He banged ... the door and shouted ... them to let him ....

7. His nose had been bleeding ... a while and the front ... his jacket was covered ... blood.

8. It was difficult to explain ... people that the drink was like music.

9. Coleman was told to get the place.

10. The two men ... the record company followed ... Coleman and gave ... him some money ... a special performance.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. What was Michael Coleman?
2. Where was he from?
3. Where did he live after leaving Ireland?
4. Did he like New York? Why?
5. What was Lord McDonald?
6. Why did an Irish cop ask Michael to play it?
7. Why was he angry with the fiddler?
8. Where did Coleman go after the cop had thrown him off?
9. What was unusual about his playing?
10. Why did the man drink so much?
11. What was his purpose in life?
12. Why did he recall the day when he had played Lord McDonald in a recording studio once?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. What kind of man was Michael Coleman?
2. Do you agree that it is typical of creative people to drink too much?

Why?

3. What do you think can happen to Michael Coleman in the future?

III. Retell the story. Characterize Michael Coleman.

Written Practice

Michael Coleman lives in New York. He might write letters home. What can he tell his relatives about his life in New York?

A Fishy Story

SOMERVILLE & ROSS

Retold by Clare West

The West of Ireland, with its rivers full of salmon, is a grand place to go fishing. Sinclair Yeates has been trying to catch salmon for three days, but without success. He starts his journey home, travelling by train, which in the early years of the twentieth century is an experience full of interest and surprises . . .

People say there is no smoke without fire. But that was not \/ true in the station waiting-room where I had to wait for my train. There was certainly plenty of smoke but the fire seemed quite dead.

When I complained to the stationmaster, he said that any chimney in

the world would smoke in a south-easterly wind. He was, however, sympathetic, and took me to his own fire in his office, where the steam rose in clouds from my wet boots. We talked of politics and salmon-fishing, and I had to confess that on my three-day trip I had not caught a single fish.

Before the signal for my train was received, I realized for the hundredth time the wonderful individuality of the Irish mind and the importance of the 'personal element' in Ireland. If you ask people for help, they will break rules, ignore official advice, make special arrangements – all just to please you.

I found a seat in a carriage, and the train dragged itself noisily out of the station. A cold spring rain – the time was the middle of a most unseasonal April – poured down as we came into the open. I closed both windows and began to read my wife's letter again. Philippa often says I do not read her letters, and as I was now on my way to join her and my family in England, it seemed sensible to study again her latest letter of instructions.

'Such bad luck that you haven't caught any salmon. If the worst comes to the worst, and you still haven't by the time you join us, couldn't you buy one?'

I hit my knee with my hand. I had forgotten about the damn fish! Philippa would say, 'Sinclair, I was right! You don't read my letters, do you!' It's a pity she never learns from these frequent experiences; I don't mind being called a fool, but then I should be allowed to forget things, as fools do. Without doubt, Philippa had written to Alice Hervey, whose house we were staying in for the next week, and told her that Sinclair would be only too delighted to bring her a salmon. And Alice Hervey, who was rich enough to find much enjoyment in saving money, would have already planned the meal down to the last fish bone.

Anxiously thinking about this, I travelled through the rain. About every

six miles we stopped at a station. At one, the only event was that the stationmaster presented a newspaper to the guard; at the next, the guard read aloud some interesting facts from it to the driver. The personal element was strong on this line of the Munster and Connaught Railway. Routine, hated by all artistic minds, was disguised by conversation.

According to the timetable, we were supposed to spend ten minutes at Carrig station, but it was fifteen before all the market people on the platform had climbed onto the train. Finally, the window of the carriage next to mine was thrown open, and an angry English voice asked how much longer the train was going to wait. The stationmaster, who was deep in conversation with the guard and a man carrying a long parcel wrapped in newspaper, looked round and said seriously,

'Well now, that's a mystery!'

The man with the parcel turned away and studied an advertisement, his shoulders shaking. The guard put his hand over his mouth.

The voice, even angrier now, demanded the earliest time its owner could get to Belfast.

'Ye'll be asking me next when I take me breakfast,' replied the stationmaster calmly.

The window closed with a bang, and the man on the platform dropped his parcel, which fell to the ground.

'Oh! Me fish!' cried the man, carefully picking up a remarkably handsome salmon that had slipped out of its wrapping.

Suddenly I had a bright idea. I opened my window and called to the stationmaster,

'Excuse me, would your friend sell me that salmon?'

There was a moment's lively discussion, and the stationmaster replied,

‘I’m sorry, sir, he’s only just bought it, in this little delay we have. But why don’t ye run down and get one for yourself? There are six or seven of them down at Coffey’s, selling cheap. There’ll be time enough. We’re waiting for the mail train to pass through in the other direction, and it hasn’t been signalled yet.’

I jumped from the carriage and ran out of the station at top speed, followed by a shout from the guard that he wouldn’t forget me. Congratulating myself on the influence of the personal element, I hurried through the town. On my way I met a red-faced, heated man carrying another salmon, who informed me there were still three or four fish at Coffey’s, and that he was running for the train himself.

‘Coffey’s is the house with the boots in the window!’ he called after me. ‘She’ll sell at tenpence a pound if ye’re stiff with her!’

‘Tenpence a pound,’ I thought, ‘at this time of year! That’s good enough.’

I saw the boots in the window, and rushed through a dark doorway. At that moment I heard, horrifyingly near, the whistle of the approaching mail train. The fat woman who appeared from a back room understood the situation at once, and in one rapid movement picked up a large fish from the floor and threw a newspaper round it.

‘Weighs eight pounds!’ she said. ‘Ten shillings!’

I realized she was charging more than tenpence a pound, but this was not the moment for stiffness. I pushed the coins into her fishy hand, took the salmon in my arms, and ran.

Needless to say, it was uphill, and at the steepest point I heard another whistle, and feared that the worst had happened. When I reached the platform, my train was already out of the station, but the personal element was still

working for me. Everybody in the station, or so it seemed to me, shouted loudly to the driver. The stationmaster put his fingers in his mouth and sent an unearthly whistle after the departing train. It took effect; the train slowed. I jumped from the platform and followed it along the rails; there were passengers' heads at all the windows, watching me with deep interest. The guard bent down and helped me up onto the train.

'Sorry, sir, the English gentleman going to Belfast wouldn't let me wait any longer,' he said apologetically.

From Carrig station came a delighted cry from the stationmaster: 'Ye told him ye wouldn't forget him!'

My very public return to my seat was greeted with great sympathy by the seven countrywomen who were now in my carriage. I was hot and out of breath, and the eyes of the seven women were fixed on me with deep and untiring interest. After a while one of them opened the conversation by supposing it was at Coffey's I got the salmon.

I said it was.

There was a silence, during which it was obvious that one question burnt in every heart.

'She's sure to have asked for ten pence!' said one woman.

'It's a beautiful fish!' I said bravely. 'Eight pounds weight. I gave her ten shillings for it.'

This confession produced a wave of shock and sympathy.

'Sure, and Eliza Coffey would rob her own mother!'

'How could an honest gentleman win a battle with her!'

'Eliza Coffey never paid a penny for that fish! Those boys of hers stole a whole lot of them last night.'

At the next station they climbed out. I helped them with their heavy

baskets, and in return they told me I was a fine man, and they wished me well on my journey. They also left me with the information that I was soon to present the highly respectable Alice Hervey with a stolen salmon.

The afternoon passed cheerlessly into evening, and my journey did not get any better. Somewhere in the grey half- light I changed trains, and again later on, and at each change the salmon lost some of its newspaper wrapping. I wondered seriously whether to bury it in my suitcase. At the next station we paused for a long time. Nothing at all happened, and the rain beat patiently on the carriage roof. I closed my eyes to avoid the cold stare of the salmon, and fell asleep.

I woke up in total darkness. The train was not moving, and there was complete silence. I could see a lamp at the far end of a platform, so I knew we were at a station. I lit a match and discovered from my watch thaf it was eleven o'clock, exactly the time I was supposed to board the mail train. I jumped down and ran along the platform. There was no one on the train; there was no one even in the engine, which was making sad little noises to itself in the silence. There was not a human being anywhere. The name of the station was just visible in the darkness. With a lighted match I went along it letter by letter, but it was so long that by the time I got to the end, I had forgotten the beginning. One thing I did realize, though, was that it was not Loughranny, the station where I had planned to catch the mail train.

For a moment I had the feeling that there had been an accident, and that I now existed in another world. Once more I investigated the station — the ticket office, the waiting room – and finally discovered, at some distance, the stationmaster's office. As I came closer, I could see a thin line of light under the door, and a voice was suddenly raised inside.

'Let's see ye beat that. Throw down your King!'

I opened the door with understandable violence, and found the guard, the stationmaster, the driver, and his assistant seated around a table, playing a game of cards.

I was angry, and with good reason, but I accepted what they said in their defence: they thought there was no one left on the train, a few minutes here or there wouldn't matter, they would soon get me to Loughranny, and the mail train was often late.

Hoping they were right about my chances of making the connection, I hurried back to my carriage, with the officials running enthusiastically ahead of me.

'Watch out for the goods train, Tim!' shouted the station- master to the driver, as he banged my door shut. 'She might be coming any time now!'

The answer travelled back proudly from the engine.

'Let her come! She'll have us to deal with!'

The train moved forward and gained speed rapidly. We had about fifteen miles to go, and we went as fast as the engine could manage. But it was no good – we arrived too late.

'Well,' said the guard, as I stepped onto the deserted platform of Loughranny station, 'that old mail is the most unpunctual train in Ireland! If ye're a minute late, she's gone, and maybe if ye were early, ye'd be half an hour waiting for her!'

On the whole, the guard did his best. He said he would show me the best hotel in town, although he feared it would be hard to get a bed anywhere because of the Feis. A Feis, it seems, is a festival of Irish songs and dances, where people compete for prizes. He picked up my case, he even carried the salmon, and as we walked through the empty streets, he explained to me how easily I could catch the morning boat from Rosslare, and how it was, in fact,

quite an improvement on my previous plan.

All was dark at the uninviting door of the hotel chosen by the guard. For five whole minutes we rang the bell hard. I suggested trying a different hotel.

'He'll come,' said the guard confidently. 'He'll come. It rings in his room, so it does.'

A boy, half awake, half dressed, opened the door. 'There's not a bed here,' he said, yawning, 'nor anywhere in the town either.'

'I'll sit in the dining room till the time for the early train,' I said.

'To be sure, there's five beds in the dining room,' he replied, 'and there's mostly two people in every bed.' His voice was firm, but he had a hesitating look in his eye.

'What about the billiard room, Mike?' said the guard helpfully.

'We have blankets on the billiard table at this minute, and the man that won first prize forf^els asleep on top of it!'

'Well, can't ye put some blankets on the floor under it?' said the guard, putting my case and the salmon in the hall. 'To be sure, there's no better place in the house! Now I must go home, before me wife thinks I'm dead and buried!'

His footsteps went lightly away down the empty street.

'Nothing troubles himV said the boy bitterly.

And I realized that only the personal element stood between me and a sleepless night on a cold, wet station platform.

It was in the dark of the early morning that I woke again to life and its troubles. A voice had woken me, the voice of the first prize for reels, descending through a pocket of the billiard table.

'Excuse me, sir, are ye going on the 5 o'clock train to Cork?'

‘No,’ I said crossly.

‘Well, if ye were, ye’d be late,’ said the voice.

I received this useful information in annoyed silence, and tried to wrap myself in a disappearing dream.

‘I’m going on the 6.30 meself,’ continued the voice, ‘and it’s unknown to me how I’ll put on me boots. Ye would not believe how me feet swelled up in me dancing shoes last night. Me feet are delicate like that, ye see.’

I pretended to be asleep, but the dream was gone. And so was any chance of further sleep.

The first prize for reels got down from the billiard table, presenting an extraordinary picture. He was wearing grass- green breeches, a white shirt, and pearl-grey stockings. He undressed, and put on ordinary clothes, including his painful boots. He then removed himself and his things to the hall, where he had a loud conversation with the boy. Meanwhile, I crawled out of my hiding-place to renew my struggle with life. Fortunately, the boy soon appeared with a cup of tea.

‘I’ve wrapped the salmon up in brown paper for ye, sir,’ he said cheerfully. ‘It’s safe to take across Europe with ye if ye like! I’ll just run up to the station now, with the luggage. Would ye mind carrying the fish yourself? It’s on the table in the hall.’ My train went at 6.15. The boy had put my case in one of the many empty carriages, and stayed with me, making pleasant conversation, until the train departed.

‘I’m sorry ye had a bad night, sir,’ he said, ‘and I must tell ye, it was only that Jimmy Durkan – he’s the first prize for reels, sir — had taken a few drinks. If he’d been sober, I’d have put a gentleman like ye on the billiard table instead of him. He’s a baker, ye know, in the town of Limerick. And he’s engaged to my sister. Well, any girl would be glad to marry him. He

dances with a beautiful straight back, and he makes grand bread!' Here the train started.

It was late that night when, stiff, dirty, with tired eyes blinded by the bright lights, I was taken by the Herveys' well-trained doorman into the Herveys' huge grand hall, and was told by another of the Herveys' beautifully dressed servants that dinner was over. I was just hoping I could go quietly upstairs to avoid meeting anyone, when a voice cried, 'Here he is!'

And Philippa, looking lovely in evening dress, came into the hall, followed by Alice Hervey, and my niece, whose wedding party this was, and by all the usual relations who hate to miss anything that's going on before a wedding.

'Is this a wedding present for me, Uncle Sinclair?' cried the future bride, in the middle of a flood of questions and sympathy.

As she spoke, she eagerly took hold of the brown-paper parcel that was still under my arm.

'I advise you not to open it!' I cried. 'It's a salmon!'

The future bride gave a little scream of distaste, and without a moment's hesitation, threw it at her best friend, a girl standing near her. The best friend gave an answering scream, and jumped to one side. The parcel that I had looked after with a mother's care across two countries and a stormy sea fell with a crash on the stone floor.

Why did it crash?

'A salmon!' cried Philippa, staring at the parcel. There was now a small pool around it, spreading over the floor. 'But that's whiskey! Can't you smell it?'

The servant came respectfully forward. He knelt down, and cautiously picked pieces of a broken glass bottle out of the brown paper. The smell of

whiskey became stronger.

‘I’m afraid the other things are ruined, sir,’ he said seriously, and pulled out of the parcel, one after the other, a very large pair of dancing shoes, two long grey stockings, and a pair of grass-green breeches.

They were greeted with wild enthusiasm, in doubtless much the same way as when they shared the success of Mr Jimmy Durkan at the Feis, but Alice Hervey was not amused.

‘You know, dear,’ she said to Philippa afterwards, ‘I don’t think it was very clever of dear Sinclair to take the wrong parcel. I had wanted that salmon.’

Vocabulary and Grammar Practice

I. Find the following words and word combinations in the text:

- зал очікування;
- начальник вокзалу;
- триденна подорож;
- знайти місце у вагоні;
- провідник;
- згідно з розкладом;
- поштовий поїзд;
- сісти на потяг;
- встигнути на поїзд;
- пересідати;
- локомотив.

II. Translate into English.

1. В Ірландії поїзди рідко ходять згідно з розкладом.

2. Синклеру не пощастило, він не впіймав жодного лосося.

3. На одній із станцій незадоволений англієць запитав, як довго поїзд буде стояти.

4. Сінклер зрозумів, що його обраховують, але він не мав часу сперечатися.

5. У поїзді він дізнався, що риба, яку він купив, була вкрадена.

6. Прокинувшись у темряві, Сінклер виявив, що поїзд не рухається, а навколо нікого немає.

7. Працівники вокзалу зробили все можливе, щоб доставити Сінклера до потрібної станції, але це їм не вдалося.

8. Провідник запропонував відвести Сінклера у найкращий готель міста.

9. Провідник запропонував Майку помістити Сінклера в більярдну кімнату.

10. Пакунок, за яким Синкле доглядав з материнською турботою, з тріском упав на підлогу.

III. Insert prepositions where necessary.

1. He found a seat ... a carriage, and the train dragged itself noisily … the station.

2. Sinclair was ... his way to join ... his family ... England.

3.. .. every six miles the train stopped ... a station.

4. The man ... the platform dropped his parcel, which fell ... the ground.

5. It turned ... that they were waiting ... the mail train to pass ... in the other direction.

6. ... that moment he heard the whistle ... the mail train which was approaching ... the station.

7. He had to jump ... the platform and follow ... his train ... the rails.

8. The man was breath and his fellow-passengers looked ... him ... sympathy.

9. He was to board ... the mail train but he was late ... his train.

10. He arrived ... his destination late ... night.

IV. Choose the correct answer to complete the sentences.

1. It was already midnight when he ... (felt – fell) asleep.

2. In the station master's office the steam ... (rose – raised) in clouds from Sinclair's boots.

3. People in Ireland ... (do – make) special arrangements if you ask them for help.

4. When Sinclair saw a remarkably handsome salmon ... (laying – lying) on the platform, he decided to buy it

5. Philippa looked ... (beautiful – beautifully) in her evening dress.

6. It wasn't very clever if Sinclair to ... (take – make) the wrong parcel.

7. The hotel boy ... (did – made) Sinclair a favour and let him stay in the billiard room.

8. Philippa wanted Sinclair to ... (bring – take) a salmon home.

9. It seemed sensible to ... (study – learn) her letter of instructions again.

10. Sinclair thought that his wife never ... (studied – learned) from past experiences.

Oral Practice

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Where did the events take place?

2. Was Sinclair's trip successful? Why?

3. Why did he read his wife's letter?

4. What did Sinclair decide to do when he saw a man carrying a parcel with a salmon in it?

5. Whom did he meet on the way to the shop?

6. What kind of salmon did he buy?

7. What did the man see when he got back to the station?

8. How did he manage to get on the train?

9. Why was his journey slow?

10. Why was Sinclair late for the mail train?

11. Where did he stay overnight? What kind of place was it?

12. Did he manage to bring his salmon to the Herveys?

II. Discuss the following points.

1. What kind of man was Sinclair Yeates? Was he an experienced traveller?

2. Was it easy to travel in Ireland? Why?

3. What makes a perfect trip?

III. Retell the story paying special attention to the description of Sinclair Yeates's journey.

Written Practice

Philippa Yeates wrote a letter to her husband. What kind of letter could it be?