



## Film Script

### CAST LIST

- **SEAN:** aged 13 – 14, Catholic, grows in confidence but fearful early on. **Adrian Cooke**
- **AMY:** 13 – 14, Protestant, confident until she has a ‘meltdown’. Both she and Sean are middle class with working class roots. **Lucy Bailie**
- **DOROTHY:** : 40 years old, working class Protestant **Tanja Jennings**
- **BRIDIE:** 50 years old; owner of a pub burned out by Loyalist mob. **Marina Hampton**
- **BILLY:** 14 year old, street wise, energetic, Loyalist **Glenn McGivern**
- **BESSY:** 13 years old, Billy’s sister, street wise, energetic, Loyalist. **Lorraine Brown**
- **SEAMY:** 14 – 15, street wise, Short Strand Catholic, rebel. **Andrew Hewitt**
- **DANNY:** 14 – 15, street wise, Short Strand Catholic, rebel. **Sam Mahadeo**
- **SAOIRSE:** 14 – 15, street wise, Short Strand Catholic, rebel. **Marina Hampton**
- **LOYALIST GUNMAN:** non- speaking. **TBC**
- **DOCTOR GRANT:** 60+, old style GP, dealing with injuries and illness all around **Robert McGregor**
- **OFFICER ARMSTRONG,** a ‘B-Special’. **Glenn McGivern**
- **TAGGART:** A police informer. **Sam Mahadeo**
- **SAMMY:** Dorothy’s husband, 40, shipyard socialist Prod, quick tempered, funny **Peter Millar**
- **PASTOR TOM:** 40 years old mission hall pastor, a ‘magical’ figure **Andrew McCracken**
- **RIOTERS and MOURNERS:** The cast

### SCENES

1. PRE FILM CONTEXT
2. OPENING CREDITS
3. INTERIOR OF CHURCH
4. ENTRANCE OF DOROTHY
5. SEAN FINDS NEWSPAPERS
6. FLAMES, RETURN OF DOROTHY, ENTRANCE OF BRIDIE
7. EXIT BRIDIE, ENTER STREET URCHINS
8. ENTER DOCTOR GRANT
9. ENTER B-SPECIAL
10. EXIT B SPECIAL, ENTER PASTOR TOM
11. ENTER SAMMY, DOROTHY’S HUSBAND
12. SAMMY THOMPSON’S FUNERAL
13. AMY AND SEAN LEAVE
14. CLOSING CAPTIONS

**Setting:** East Belfast. Winter day, 5.00 p.m. (dusk). Year: 2020 and 1922 and times unknown

1. **PRE FILM CONTEXT:** 90 - 120 second 'head and shoulders' talk by Trevor Gill
  
2. **OPENING CREDITS: STILL PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS. THE PLAY'S 'THEME MUSIC' PLAYS** (CAPTIONS PLAIN WHITE ON BLACK – EACH CAPTION / PHOTO FADES TO NEXT)
  - a) *COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL LOGO*
  - b) *STILL PHOTO: Colour shot of Mountpottinger NSP Church fades to B&W*
  - c) *STILL PHOTO: Albertbridge Road street sign*
  - d) *STILL PHOTO: 'Welcome to Short Strand' street sign*
  - e) *CAPTION: The Bright Umbrella Drama Co. (logo) presents*
  - f) *STILL PHOTO: Colour Glider bus fades to*
  - g) *STILL PHOTO: B&W 1920's Belfast Tram*
  - h) *CAPTION: Unholy War: A 1920s East Belfast Ghost Story by Philip Orr*
  - i) *STILL PHOTO: Colour Albert Bridge 2020 fades to*
  - j) *STILL PHOTO: B&W Albert Bridge 1920*
  - k) *Series of 1920's B&W photos interspersed with*
  - l) *STILL PHOTO (colour): Set of keys on ground being picked up by hand at dusk*
  - m) *STILL PHOTO: AMY and SEAN: letting themselves into Mountpottinger Church*

**3. INTERIOR OF CHURCH:** *Play's theme tune fading out. Dimly lit interior church hall. Camera pans. Tall stepladder in corner and a lectern under a drape. Black drapes. Some upturned pews. 2 large black blocks. A piano. A coffin concealed under a black drape. Camera focuses on entrance door. Enter AMY and SEAN teenagers played by older actors. She has a backpack. They whisper at first.*

**SEAN:** We shouldn't be in here, Amy. We're trespassing in a church!

**AMY:** It was your idea.

**SEAN:** I only said, 'let's see if the key fits', that's all. My mum calls this part of East Belfast the 'interface'. She says that it 'has bad memories for dad's family'. Can we turn some lights on?

**AMY:** We'd need to find a switch Sean. *Reaches into her backpack. And like any good explorer, I've come prepared. Has a torch, turns it locates the switch*

**SEAN:** There's a torch in your iPhone!

**AMY:** This torch is for my gran. *She shines it around.* She worries that there'll be a power cut some night and she'll need it to get safely across the landing to the loo.

**SEAN:** Who ever heard of a power cut these days!

**AMY:** Gran says it's a 'troubles thing'. Woooooo!!!!

*She shines her torch up on to her face and laughs*

**SEAN:** Hmmm. We should have been with her by now.

**AMY:** Looking forward to a wee cup of tea and my granny's digestive biscuits?

**SEAN:** I'm looking forward to watching the footie while you two have a chat.

**AMY:** Ah. There's a switch over there.

*He goes over and tries. It results in a dim 'old bulb' type, eerie light*

**SEAN:** Let there be light

**AMY:** What?

**SEAN:** It's from the Bible.

**AMY:** Oh, right

*They sit on one of the pews. AMY produces crisps and they eat them. Silence.*

**SEAN:** I bet this church has a few secrets.

**AMY:** It was gran's church when she was young. She says it stood here 'through both of the troubles.' I do wonder what she means by *both*?

**SEAN:** There were earlier ones. Mr Lyons mentioned them in history class. The 1920s.

**AMY:** I mustn't have been listening.

**SEAN:** Don't you remember Mr Lyons's favourite saying?

**AMY:** Which one?

**SEAN:** Those who forget the past....

**AMY:** *finishing off the saying with him* ....are condemned to repeat it.

**SEAN:** My dad refers to those 1920s troubles as 'the pogroms'.

**AMY:** Sounds like a pop band. 'The Pogroms'

**SEAN:** Wise up. A pogrom is a massacre. He says Catholics bore the brunt of it.

**AMY:** Maybe they did. I don't know. My family don't talk much about anything like that. I want to know more.

**SEAN:** Well, there wasn't much to see, was there? Our churches are a bit prettier than this. Come on, let's go. The Football Is starting.

**AMY:** Ah, there's plenty of time.

**SEAN:** *Startled* Hold on. What's that sound? *He's frightened*

**AMY:** I don't hear anything

**SEAN:** Listen again... *They listen intently. Nothing.*

**AMY:** Old buildings make strange noises.

**SEAN:** Listen! *They listen. Still no sound*

**AMY:** *whispering playfully.* It's probably rats under the floorboards.

**SEAN:** Don't joke about it. I have a phobia.

**AMY:** No matter where you are in Belfast, a rat is never more than ten metres away.

**SEAN:** It's gone. Thank God.

**AMY:** That looks like a room, up there. *She makes for the stairs*

**SEAN:** Stop. This place is weird - I didn't ask for a tour

**AMY:** You *are* afraid.

**SEAN:** I'm *cautious.*

**AMY:** Still believe in ghosts?

**SEAN:** – Maybe. Sometimes the spirits of the dead hang around where bad stuff happened. I've seen clips on YouTube. Anyway, it's not ghosts that worry me.

**AMY:** Yeah? What's bugging you?

**SEAN:** I'm a Fenian, that's what. *They both lough.* This place is for Prods

**AMY:** Don't use that word, Sean!

**SEAN:** What word?

**AMY:** Fenian. I *never* ever call you that.

**SEAN:** It's not OK if *you* say it, but it's OK if *I* say it. Like rappers using the n-word. But just remember, my parents grew up just across the road in the Short Strand. If a Loyalist hard man finds me here, all he'll have to do is look at me to know. *Mimes cutting his throat*

**AMY:** If they ask you for your name, invent one.

**SEAN:** Yeah? Like what?

**AMY:** *ponders* 'Wesley'.

**SEAN:** *incredulous.* Wesley the teenage burglar.

**AMY:** Sean, we found the keys, we didn't steal them. They were lying on the pavement. And we are doing a good turn, checking out the premises. *Brings out her smartphone, sets the key down.* I'll ring the police. In all the best stories we would get a reward.

**SEAN:** Stop. There it is again.

**AMY:** Imagination, Sean

**SEAN:** – Listen. *They look to the balcony. The sound is now audible- it's is faint 1920's music.*

**AMY:** – Let's see where its coming from. *Starts to climb up the stairs*

#### 4. INTERIOR: ENTRANCE OF DOROTHY

**SEAN:** – Stop! *As the music continues DOROTHY appears in curlers on balcony*

**DOROTHY:** : *In a whispery, hoarse smoker's voice.* What are you strangers doing round here at this hour?

**SEAN:** Sorry, missus.

**AMY:** We didn't realise there was anyone here.

**SEAN:** We'll leave right away. *He makes to go*

**DOROTHY:** Don't you know about the curfew?

**SEAN:** The curfew?

**DOROTHY:** Do ye want to get riddled with bullets?

**SEAN:** *beckons frantically to Amy but she is not for moving and shakes her head at him.*

**AMY:** – We found your key, ma'am.

**SEAN:** – *whispering loudly* Amy! Come on....

**DOROTHY:** – I keep my front door key under my pillow, till my man comes home. *She ponders, worried.* Oh my God. Just let me check. *She exits to look.*

**SEAN:** Let's go!

**AMY:** Wait till she comes back. And remember, if she asks.... It's 'Wesley'.

**SEAN:** I knew we'd get into trouble.

**AMY:** Sean would you ever man up?!

**DOROTHY:** *returns.* Must have been someone else's key. Here, you could try the other neighbours tomorrow.

**SEAN:** No, we couldn't.

**DOROTHY:** What's your name?

**AMY:** Amy

**DOROTHY:** And you?

**SEAN:** I am called Wesley.

**DOROTHY:** – Why are ye two walking round here in the dark? Don't you know wee Alec Thompson was killed the other night?

**AMY:** We are visiting somebody in Mount Street.

**DOROTHY:** Which number in Mount Street?

**AMY:** Twenty-five.

**DOROTHY:** Oh, right, I can see why you might want to call with them in the light of what happened. *To Sean* So, do you come from round here?

**SEAN:** Yes, I do.

**DOROTHY:** – Right? *Scrutinising Sean suspiciously.* Well, get home quick before the Specials see both of ye. They drove round the streets tonight, bellowing away at us -

**TANNOY:** CURFEW! CURFEW! IF YOU'RE CHALLENGED AND YE RUN AWAY, WE WILL OPEN FIRE

*Amy and Sean are shocked and frightened*

**DOROTHY:** : What are ordinary Protestant people to do? Oh, of course Sammy said his usual - Dorothy, 'just stay indoors.' Then he went off to do his nightshift and left me worrying. I hate it when the shooting starts

**SEAN:** This is crazy. What's happening here?!

**DOROTHY:** I just can't get over the death of young Alec. They say it was a grenade. .

**AMY:** I'll ask her again about the key. Give it to me.

**SEAN:** I don't have it.

**AMY:** Look in your pockets

**DOROTHY:** Doctor Grant gives me medicine for my chest, but I hate sending for him.

**SEAN:** I can't find it.

**AMY:** Did we set it down somewhere?

**DOROTHY:** But my big worry is Sammy. It's five o'clock in the morning and he's still not home from nightshift.

**SEAN:** Five o'clock in the morning? She's off her head.

**DOROTHY:** Sometimes he stops off at that pub in Mersey Street... The one that stays open all night. It's two years since the Troubles began and still the gunmen are hard at it. I'd watch out if I were ye. *She points to a mark on the banister.* Do you see that hole? Gunfire. It's lucky me and Sammy were in our bed. We heard the crack. The bullet's still there and there's no getting it out. And you know where it came from, don't ye? Themens in Short Strand. Just across the street. Sammy keeps saying 'There's as many decent people across the road as there are on our side'. But I tell him that those ones over there are loyal to the church of Rome and we are loyal to the Empire and the King. And never the two can mix. But. You can't argue with Sammy. Him being a socialist. If a bullet hits the like of me or ye, the gunmen don't care a fig.

**SEAN:** We've got to get out of here!

**AMY:** *Reaching for her phone again.* We should call the police

**SEAN:** No! Let's run for it.

**AMY:** We can't just 'run for it'.

**SEAN:** Why not?

**AMY:** I told you, I don't know where I put the key.

**SEAN:** Forget the key.

**AMY:** We can't.

**SEAN:** Why not?

**AMY:** I locked us in.

**SEAN:** What?! I don't believe it.

**AMY:** I was being *cautious*, right? Like my mum always says, it's an interface down here. I have my phone in the bag. Somewhere. Where's your phone anyway?

**SEAN:** At home.

**AMY:** Fat lot of good there.

*The sound of gunfire starts in the distance. Rifle fire and then eventually machine guns.*

**SEAN:** Listen.

**DOROTHY:** There ye are, they've started

**AMY:** Fireworks

**SEAN:** I don't think so. That sounds like gunfire.

**AMY:** Have you ever *heard* actual gunfire, Sean? Somebody is having a party.

**SEAN:** A party?! With guns?

**DOROTHY:** No, he's right. It's guns. And to think I believed the troubles were over last year when the south got their country and we got ours.

**SEAN:** 'Last year?' What century is she living in?

**DOROTHY:** *She points across the auditorium to a spot on the top of the stepladder*

You see that rooftop? *The children look.* That's where he waits. One of ours, ye know. Now, I don't approve, for it's up to the army and the police to protect us. But what else do you expect in times like these?

*The gunfire has been replaced by a sinister ambient, rising sound-effect. Both kids are scared now. A light on the top of the steps is very cold and eerie*

Once or twice tonight I looked out and the moon was coming up behind the clouds. I saw him looking out across the road, with his mask on, and his gun at the ready.

**SEAN:** Missus, can we borrow your key to get out of here, *please*?

**DOROTHY:** I was worried when Sammy was off fighting the Germans, but it's four years since then, and I still don't sleep a wink. Even if he goes to the pub, I worry. He argues with the men. They call him a 'rotten' Prod. It's come to fisticuffs many times and he was told last week if he didn't shut up he'd get shot.

*She disappears into her room*

## 5. INTERIOR: SEAN FINDS NEWSPAPERS

**SEAN:** Take deep breaths Sean. I am calm, I am calm...

**AMY:** Good. Glad to hear it.

**SEAN:** ....but I'm locked in a Protestant church with a crazy woman.

**AMY:** I feel sorry for that lady up there.

**SEAN:** Sorry?

**AMY:** I think she's one of the homeless ones you see on the streets, and the church has given her somewhere to stay for the night. I'm going to phone the police.

**SEAN:** No. We don't want a police car pulling up outside.

*Nonetheless, she reaches for the phone in her bag once again. The children speak in the next phase in a hushed tone and tend to hush each other up if they get too loud. It's because of the on-going 'indoors' presence of the mysterious Dorothy*

**AMY:** We're having an adventure

**SEAN:** A slightly better one than we thought.

**SEAN:** What about that gunfire?

**AMY:** I told you, that was fireworks. *She is fiddling frustratedly with her phone.*

**SEAN:** It was *not* bangers going off.

**AMY:** This is funny. My phone always works well at gran's... ..

**SEAN:** Here let me see. *He reaches for it*

**AMY:** *Cross* Us girls know how phones work, Sean, OK?

*She keeps working at it*

**SEAN:** Oh, getting short tempered, are we? *She tries the signal in a different direction.* Well? Still no signal?

**AMY:** The battery is dead.

**SEAN:** You should have charged it before we came out!

**AMY:** I did, that's the thing.... *She hands it to him and he can see that the screen is blank.*

If I turn it off and then on again.... *Silence*

**SEAN:** The gremlins have got it. Come on, let's just find that bloody key.

*She is preoccupied with her phone but manages to say... He proceeds to search, while she works at the phone, taking hold of the torch as he goes. He finds some newspapers.*

**SEAN:** What's this?

**AMY:** Found it?

**SEAN:** Nope.

**AMY:** Keep looking.

*Sean is intrigued by one of the newspapers*

**SEAN:** That's curious.

**AMY:** What is?

**SEAN:** The *Belfast Newsletter*.

**AMY:** Somebody's left it, lying around. So, what.

**SEAN:** This is the sports page.

**AMY:** And?

**SEAN:** They have the Irish League table in here. But it's weird. It mentions just six teams in the league table. Have I missed something in the last 24 hours? Like six teams being suddenly relegated?

**AMY:** Put that paper down, look for the keys!

**SEAN:** In here, they mention Linfield, Glentoran, Glenavon, Cliftonville, Distillery and Queens Island.....now who on earth Queens Island are, I don't know.

*He has used his fingers to count out the teams*

**AMY:** Wasn't that a place in the shipyard? *He turns over to the front page*

**SEAN:** Listen to this. *He reads aloud.* 'Ballymacarret was the scene last night of further violence, prompted by the death of thirteen-year old Protestant boy, Alexander Thompson. They 'double take' and look to the balcony. By midnight, St. Matthew's Chapel at Short Strand was once again at the centre of trouble. Crowds gathered on either side of the barricades, throwing stones. The men of the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Special Constabulary used their batons to push the crowds back and a gun-battle commenced.'

**AMY:** St. Matthew's. Short Strand. That's near where daddy grew up.

**SEAN:** *reads out the date of the newspaper.* This paper is dated 14<sup>th</sup> August 1922. Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

**AMY:** I can guess...

**SEAN:** Look, I saw a thing on the internet about time travel. It *is* possible, because well, well, er, ummm it's to do with travelling at the speed of light.

**AMY:** People do not time travel in East Belfast. *She snatches the paper off him and folds it up curtly, and the eerie music quickly dies.* Someone from the church will be here soon, to check on Dorothy, the homeless lady, so we just wait.

**SEAN:** Oh, so its Dorothy now is it.

**AMY:** Yes, she has a name, poor woman. We should give her some money.

**SEAN:** Money?!

**AMY:** We have more crisps in the bag, don't we?

**SEAN:** Yes

**AMY:** They say its better giving down and outs food rather than money

**SEAN:** What about all the weird stuff – the gunshots, the loudspeakers?

**AMY:** Well, I don't know, do I?! *Silence*

**SEAN:** What about the chocolates in your bag? We give them too I suppose?

**AMY:** No, we are not giving away grandma's birthday present. However, I am going to go upstairs to ask Dorothy about that key of hers.

**SEAN:** Hmm, well *you* can do that without me. I suppose if we're feeling chilly later tonight, we could wrap ourselves in some of this black cloth, so we don't get hypothermia. Meanwhile, our families are going frantic, thinking we've gone down a black hole somewhere in Mount Pottinger, which we probably have.

**AMY:** - They will find us, Sean

**SEAN:** - Eventually. Dead. Strangled by a mad woman from the 1920s. Or shot by a random time travelling gunman.

**AMY:** - Did you smell something?

**SEAN:** – Like what?

**AMY:** – Smoke.

**SEAN:** – You're the one that's getting jumpy now.

**AMY:** – No, I am serious.

## 6. INTERIOR: FLAMES, RETURN OF DOROTHY, ENTRANCE OF BRIDIE

*The sound of crackling flames can be heard.*

**SEAN:** – The building's on fire, Amy. She's a madwoman capable of doing anything.

*He is panicking. Amy is looking at the glow of red and orange flames at the far end of the auditorium.*

**SEAN:** The building's on fire, Amy! We have to find that bloody key.

**DOROTHY:** *appears on the balcony, looking over the rooftops.* Don't ye worry yourselves, that's the police hut catching fire, its not us. It belonged to the Special Constabulary, beside the Sirocco Rope Works. The IRA tried a few times before to set it alight. Not surprised they succeeded at last. Anyway, it's no danger to me. I'm away back to my bed.

*She retires . It is a pretty lurid scene lit by flames. Amy is shocked into realising that something weird has started to happen ever since they both entered the building. Long pause as we see a figure in the crackling firelight. A woman walks in from the 'flames'. She has two old suitcases in her hand.*

**SEAN:** Missus, hey there, missus. Is the fire spreading, missus?

**BRIDIE:** I saw the fire brigade. They'll put it out.

**AMY:** Do you know anything about it?

**BRIDIE:** Revenge.

**SEAN:** Sorry?

**BRIDIE:** Tit for tat. The B Specials shot a man on the Falls Rd earlier today. So, the IRA are burning down their premises. And so, it goes on and on. *She walks on, clearly going somewhere*

**SEAN:** The B Specials?

**BRIDIE:** Yes son, where have you been? The Special Constabulary. All Protestants. Out of control they are

**AMY:** Could we go with you? Get out of here? We're feeling a bit lost.

**SEAN:** Maybe we could help you carry your suitcases?

*Bridie comes back to be closer to the children. The flames still flicker but gradually less so. She sets the suitcases down, weary with their weight. She opens one which is packed full of stuff in order to pack it more carefully.*

**BRIDIE:** I'm moving away as far as I can. My brother is staying put around here but not me.

**AMY:** Sorry to be nosy, but why are you carrying these two cases?

**BRIDIE:** You really want to know?

**AMY:** Please.

**BRIDIE:** Are ye locals?

**SEAN:** Sort of.

**BRIDIE:** Can I trust ye? That's what I mean.

*Amy and Sean nod. Bridie looks around her fearfully including up at the balcony. The two children come closer, sitting on the pew where she is now sitting.*

**BRIDIE:** I had a notice up above our bar that said NO SINGING. That's what they objected to.

**SEAN:** Why would you want no singing in a bar?

**BRIDIE:** It was a mixed bar, the sign was there for years. Some people get a few drinks into them, you see, then they start up the old political songs, especially at certain times of the year. Not that I mind some of the songs myself. In fact, I could sing you The Sash, all 3 verses of it, and me a good God fearing Catholic. *She blesses herself.* It's just that I didn't want trouble. Ah, sure everything changed a couple of years back. The bars we Catholics owned got it in the neck, once the troubles started. Me and my brother thought we'd managed to survive but then last Monday sure didn't the IRA shoot a Special over on the York Road and one of his brothers was a regular in the bar. He came in steaming drunk the night before last and his mates were with him and I tried to hush them by pointing at the notice. 'I'll sing if I damn well like' he said. And then some just went behind the bar and took a bottle of whiskey and opened it without paying and poured drinks for his mates. An hour later they told me and my brother to go. I filled the cases as best I could. There's an oil tank out the back and by the morning they'd looted the stock, poured oil all over the place and set fire to the bar. I won't say I'm not bitter, because I am.

**AMY:** Sorry, missus.

**BRIDIE:** This case is still not right packed. *Sean has been looking at a photograph that lay there as part of the jumble. She still tries in vain to fit everything back in.*

**SEAN:** What was the name of your pub?

**BRIDIE:** The locals used to call it Bridie's. That's my name, Bridie.

**SEAN:** Had it any other name?

**BRIDIE:** Some folk thought it was more proper to call it Tomelty's.

**SEAN:** Tomelty?!

**BRIDIE:** Yes. Why do you ask?

**SEAN:** Because my name is Tomelty too

**BRIDIE:** You can keep that photo.

**SEAN:** I couldn't do that, Bridie.

**BRIDIE:** Please. Keep it. It makes me too sad to look at it. It's me and the brother in happier times. *The cases have been sorted and Bridie leaves.* There'll be price to pay for all of this.

*Sean hands the photo over to Amy who puts it in her bag*

## 7. EXIT BRIDIE: ENTER STREET URCHINS

*Suddenly two figures of comparable age to Amy and Sean burst out of the dark. Bessy and Billy are their names and they are full of life and raw political nous, if ragged and dirty faced, bare-footed and smart, in true 1920s poverty-stricken style.*

**Sean:** Hallo.

**Billy:** So, who are ye two, walking around the neighbourhood at this hour? Ye are strangers.

**Amy:** We're just visiting my granny.

**Bessy:** Pull the other one. Ye're out during the curfew. I reckon you're spying for the IRA.

**Amy:** No, no. We're a bit confused, that's all. I'm Amy. Pleased to meet you.

**Billy:** Ooh, 'pleased to meet you'..... Amy, eh? That's a posh name.

**Bessy:** What about you, wee lad?

*Sean is silent*

**Billy:** Come on, you're bound to know who you are! Open your gob and say something.

**Sean:** My name is Wesley.

**Bessy:** Are you sure?

*Sean simply nods, nervously.*

**Billy:** You aren't a Fenian, are you?

**Sean:** Yes, no, I mean no.

**Billy:** You sound unsure.

**Bessy:** So, where does your granny live, Amy? Not that we're nosy, like.

**Amy:** Nearby

**Bessy:** Where's that?

**Amy:** Round here.

**Bessy:** Where's round here?

**Amy:** Mount Street

**Bessy:** What number?

**Amy:** Twenty-five

**Billy:** Ah, right. Know where you mean. But where are you coming from right now?

**Amy:** Bloomfield.

**Billy:** Away up there?

**Amy:** Yes.

**Bessy:** Did ye walk or what?

**Sean:** We took the glider.

**Bessy:** The wha...?

**Billy:** Is that like a posh tram? Anyway, what about you, mate? *To Sean*

**Sean:** Bloomfield too. We're neighbours.

**Bessy:** Come on, now, where are *you really* from? *His face is two inches from Sean's face*

**Sean:** From round here. Honest.

**Billy:** Does the first word for where you really come from begin with an S?

**Sean:** Nope.

**Billy:** I suppose the second word doesn't start with an S, either?

**Sean:** Nope.

**Billy:** I'm not so sure.

**Bessy:** Hey, what school do ye two go to?

**Amy / Sean:** Lagan College.

**Billy:** Never heard of it.

**Amy:** It's an integrated college...

**Bessy:** It's a wha...?

**Billy:** Here, I know. Say the alphabet, wee lad. And take your time

*Sean says it, fearfully, looking for pronunciation advice from Amy and deliberately recognising that he has to say 'aitch' not 'h-aitch'.*

**Billy:** Right, you're a Prod, you're in.

**Bessy:** Four Prods together. *Shaking hands*

**Billy:** I'm Billy.

**Bessy:** I'm Bessy.

**Billy:** We hid over there for a bit just to see who ye were, talking to that wee woman. We thought ye might be engaged in esp-io-nage.... But now there's four of us and that is all the better, when we start to take on them ones over there! *Points across auditorium and spits*

**Bessy:** *examining their clothes closely.* What kind of britches are those?

**Sean:** They're jeans.

**Bessie:** Keep you right and warm, so they would.

**Billy:** Where'd you get them shoes?

**Sean:** My mother bought them.

**Billy:** 'Your ma?

**Sean:** Er....yea, my ma....

**Billy:** What's in the wee bag?

**Sean:** Just crisps and choc...no, just crisps. You can have one. *Offers them to Bessy and Billy*

**Billy:** What are these wee things made of?

**Sean:** Potatoes.

**Billy:** Spuds? Get away on. *More crisps are eaten, comically*

**Bessy:** *to Amy* Where did you get your wee shoes?

**Amy:** Primark.

**Bessy:** Never heard of him. Mammy says if daddy stops drinking, she'll have a few shillings to buy me a pair but not until I've grown up, like, because my feet keep growing.

**Billy:** What do ye work at?

**Sean:** Work?

**Billy:** Yea, work. I do errands for the men in Sirocco, a halfpenny a go.

**Bessy:** I serve in a wee shop up the Beersbridge Road. What about ye?

**Amy:** We're still at school, actually....

**Billy:** At school?

**Amy:** Yeah.

**Billy:** Lagan thingy ma jig?

**Sean:** Yeah.

**Billy:** What age are ye? *Billy and Bessy are incredulous and scathing*

**Sean:** I'm Fourteen. Nearly.

**Amy:** Me too.

**Bessy:** Ye should be out there working.

**Billy:** Alright, wipe the snot off your nose and stop yapping, Bessy. Come here, listen, closer.

*They get in a huddle. Billy utters a barrage of indecipherable commands. They pull stones out of their pockets.*

**Bessy:** Did ye ever clod stones at the Fenians?

**Amy:** No

**Bessy:** *to Sean* You?

**Sean:** No.

**Billy:** No?

**Sean:** *pretending to be 'hard'*. Not recently.....

**Bessy:** What kind of a softy are ye? 'not recently'...?

**Billy:** Well, ye will see some fighting to night, alright.

**Bessy:** Ulster will fight, and Ulster Will be right. No surrender!

**Amy:** You are asking us if we want to watch you have a fight?

**Bessy:** No, we're asking ye to *take part* in a fight.

**Billy:** They're taking over Ireland, and they want to take over us. They'll leave no place for Protestants anymore. No freedom for our religion. No place to fly our flag or sing God Save the Queen. If they could, they'll make us all speak Gaelic, though they'll have some effort trying to teach Bessy and me. Oh, they'll be nice as you like to your face, as my da says, they'll pour you a drink and meanwhile out the back their brother will be planning to murder you.

**Bessy:** Wee Alec died the other night defending our place and he grew up on this very street, did you know that? His mor and for are in pieces.

**Billy:** Did ye not know wee Alec?

**Amy:** No, we didn't.

**Billy:** Where've ye been, Amy? Thon was the boy could throw a right belter of a stone, so he could.

**Bessy:** He looked a bit like you, Wesley. *Her face is just two feet away from Sean's face.*

And the dogs in the street knows who's responsible round East Belfast, for all the trouble we're in. Themens in the Short Strand and all the other fenians! *Billy gets the four of them into a huddle. There is the sound of utterly inaudible, fast, loud instructions from Billy, then....* Right, ammuniton! *He pulls out a bucket of 'stones' from the behind the drape. Bessy hands a stone each to everyone.*

**Amy:** Excuse me, but where did you get these from?

**Billy:** I used a sledgehammer. *Laughs*

You want to see what it done to the pavement. *He mimes the sledgehammer at work*

**Billy:** So we're here to tell them ones over there - 'if *you* fight us, we'll fight you back.'

**Billy & Bessy:** No surrender!

**Bessy:** You go first.

**Sean:** Me?

**Billy:** Yes, you.

**Sean:** I'm not too sure how to do this, actually....

**Bessy:** Just have a go. *They yell encouragement. Sean makes a pitiful underhand attempt to throw a 'stone'. Bessy and Billy groan*

**Billy:** Ye are effing sissies up there in Lagan thingy. Look, here, watch Bessy doing it.

*Bessy demonstrates with vigour how to throw a ball.*

**Billy:** And ye shout so you do it, right? Like this. *They both demonstrate by shouting – 'Irish rebels!', 'No Surrender!', 'Ulster forever'.*

**Billy:** Now, you have a go.

**Amy:** Me?

**Billy:** Yes, you. Try shouting first. Amy makes a pathetic attempt to shout a phrase.

**Amy:** *weakly* No Surrender! *Bessy and Billy groan*

**Bessy:** Both of you, have a proper go, louder now. Wesley, you have another go. You're clodding a stone at the Fenians, and it's for *real* this time. *All four yell, as Sean eventually manages to throw a stone to the far end of the auditorium. Loud sound of breaking glass. Silence.*

*Three kids from Short Strand enter - Danny, Saoirse and Seamy. Aged 13/14. They square up to the 'Prods'. Very slowly and deliberately, Danny shouts –*

**Danny:** What the f\*\*\*! Did one of you Huns throw that stone? *Walk towards centre stage*

**Amy:** *to Sean, whispering:* What's a Hun?

**Sean:** You're a Hun.

**Amy:** A Protestant?

**Sean:** Yep.

**Bessy:** Yeah, too right, Danny, that was one of us, so it was. .

**Saorise:** Which one of ye was it?

**Bessy:** Not me.

**Billy:** Not me.

**Amy:** Not me.

**Sean:** Er...

**Seamy:** Right, you bitter wee bugger, you're dead. Saoirse's here, and that was her mor's kitchen windy ye busted....

**Sean:** Hold on a minute. I was *told* to throw it and ...

**Seamy:** So you're admitting it, you bigoted wee fecker.

**Sean:** Hold on, I'm not even a Protestant!

**Saorise:** Who cares? You busted my ma's windy.

**Sean:** My name's Sean, my daddy supports Cliftonville and my family came from the Short Strand.

**Seamy:** Oh, so you've turned, have ye?

**Billy:** Wesley's on the right side now, so who cares what he was. *To Sean and Amy.* Before long, there'll be loads of others joining in, wait till ye see.

*Billy throws a stone. Seamy throws a 'stone'. The 'Prods' duck. More stones. By now there is a backdrop sound of rioting and it's getting louder. Loud noise of a street fight broken glass. Shots start to ring out. The mood changes as the rioters run for cover. Shooting continues.*

**Sean:** *Hiding* What's going on, Bessy?

**Bessy:** *Hiding* It's a right old ding-dong now.

**Amy:** *Hiding* Where's the police?

**Danny:** 'Where's the police'? That's a laugh.

**Amy:** Who's firing?

**Billy:** Everyone *A figure appears at the top of the stepladder. More shots.*

**Danny:** Do ye see what ye started?

**Seamy:** *Running out at some risk from hiding.* Yeah, and ye never give us any peace.

**Danny:** My pa says ye were at it thirty years ago

**Seamy:** Ye were at it last year too and ye're at it now.

**Danny:** *Running out despite the danger* I suppose ye'll sending the police in now to 'keep the peace',

**Seamy:** Baton charging us up the road.

**Danny:** Searching our houses.

**Saoirse:** I suppose ye think it'll keep ye safe.

**Seamy:** Well, ye won't be safe.

**Billy:** *from a sheltered spot* Your houses are full of guns for the IRA. That's the problem.

**Saoirse:** *Coming out* There's no guns in me mor's place.

**Seamy:** So, what, if there are guns in our houses? We've got to defend ourselves.

**Bessy:** That's what the police are for, Danny.

**Danny:** *laughter* Police! Police! At least the old RIC had Catholics in it, even if they came from down south, but the Specials are packed to the gills with bitter old Protestants like ye.

**Billy:** How do ye expect us to defend *ourselves*?

*More shots Saoirse breaks cover to stand daringly and give the fingers to the 'Prod'*

**Saoirse:** Up the Rebels!

*Billy runs out and gets stuck into them. Amy and Sean are cowering as Saoirse and Billy wrestle. Suddenly a volley of very loud rifle shots rings out, much nearer this time. The shots come from high on the stepladder where the Loyalist gunman has been crouching, holding a replica rifle. The lights on him are red and he is dressed in a wide-brimmed cap and trench-coat and wears a mask.*

*Slo-mo. Billy falls to the ground, writhes slowly. There is blood - Billy has been shot in the face and the leg. The Short Strand kids scamper away. The gunfire is more sporadic now, distant. The gunman on the stepladder retreats into the shadows. There is silence. Bessy kneels beside Billy.*

**Bessie:** Billy, Billy!

*She is obviously upset but her emotions are low-key and her voice weak due to shock. Sean and Amy have taken to lying flat during the gunfire. They peek out at the scene from prone positions, then realising the seriousness, crawl a bit closer.*

## 8. ENTER DOCTOR GRANT

*An older man with a bowler and watch and chain runs on stage from the door of the theatre carrying a leather doctor's bag. The riot sounds continue in the background*

**Bessy:** Doctor Grant, thank God you're here. *He reaches the place where Billy is lying, kneels and examines him*

**Doctor Grant:** I need a cloth, a blanket, anything at all to staunch the bleeding!

*Dorothy appears on the balcony*

**Dorothy:** What's going on?! *Sees scene.* Oh no! What's going to become of us, doctor? Another wee boy with the blood dripping out of him.

**Doctor Grant:** Shot by one of his own. *He gazes up at where the shots came from. He looks up at the gunman who is disappearing, slinking away*

**Bessy:** He was aiming at them ones, doctor.

**Doctor Grant:** You don't fire guns in crowded streets, Bessy, no matter what the reason. Dorothy, you have *got to* help us. There's blood everywhere. Bring us a towel or a dishcloth, anything.

**Dorothy:** I'll see what I can do.

**Doctor Grant:** The wound in his leg is not the one I'm worried about. Oh, dear. His left eye is a terrible mess. *He feels Billy's pulse and listens to his breathing. Sean leaps up and races up the stairs to pick up the towels from Dorothy and comes back with the items and the Doctor endeavours to save Billy's life, with a cloth over a wound to his eye and one around a wound in his leg.*

**Dorothy:** My Sammy isn't back from the shipyard. Would you believe it?

**Doctor Grant:** *Speaking to Bessy* When I hear a riot start, I know what comes next. The guns come out.

**Dorothy:** Maybe Sammy is knocking back a few whiskies in that club.

**Doctor Grant:** The number of times I've done this, Bessy.

**Dorothy:** Him up there was aiming at one of the Short Strand rebels.

**Doctor Grant:** We're human beings, Dorothy, on both sides of the road. If one of the youngsters Billy was fighting with had been hit, I'd attend to them too. Right, Bessy, it's important we keep your brother conscious. Sit him up. *To Billy* Can you hear me, Billy? *Billy groans*

**Doctor Grant:** *to Bessy* I think he understood what I said alright.

**Bessy:** You are going to be alright, Billy *Doctor Grant waves his hand in front of Billy's eyes.* Can you see my hand? *He can't.*

**Bessy:** *weeping* Oh no, tell me he's going to be alright, doctor.

**Doctor Grant:** I'm doing what I can.

**Billy:** I...can't.... see.

**Doctor Grant:** That's alright, we'll get you to the hospital. *To the other three kids.* What were you doing on the street at this time of night?... It's always the same No answer from you children who wind these things up. You should be ashamed of yourselves. Here, give me a hand. *They help to lift Billy to an upright position.* Take him outside. The police will lift him to the Royal in their lorry. *To Bessy* You go with him. I'll tell your mother.

**Bessy:** We live with our Granda now doctor

*Bessy signals anxiously to Sean and he helps her and the doctor in giving Billy a lift out to the foyer. We hear the megaphone-amplified voice.*

**POLICE:** The curfew is over. The curfew is over. We are continuing to patrol

*We hear Lancia vehicles and old ambulances...then they fade. Sean and the doctor arrive back in. He picks up his bag. He gives the bloodstained towels belonging to Dorothy to Sean and he goes upstairs gives them to her, and she holds onto them as she leans over the balcony.*

**Doctor Grant:** *Getting organised for departure* I forgot to ask where their grandad lives. Do you know where that is? *No response.* You're his friends....

**Amy:** We aren't his friends.

**Doctor Grant:** No?

**Sean:** We just met.

**Doctor Grant:** *sarcastic* I hope you feel proud of the violence you started here. And proud of the lie you've just given me. *He looks very dismissively at Amy and Sean and she finds it especially distressing.* Stay for a few minutes until everything's clear then get home before. First Alec then Billy. Beware - or the same fate as befell these other wee fellows will befall you. *Amy is sobbing now, Sean comforting her. The gunfire and other noises have gone*

**Dorothy:** Doctor, would you come up here? Just for few minutes.

**Doctor:** I'm busy, Dorothy.

**Dorothy:** Aw, doctor. I feel awful breathless tonight and Sammy's still not back. I worry about him in that club beside the shipyard. They keep calling him a communist.

**Doctor:** The chances are he's got a glass in his hand and he's out of harm's way. If you're still out of breath tomorrow, give me a call.

**Dorothy:** I don't have the money to pay you, doctor.

**Doctor:** Are you sure? *And the doctor leaves after taking a long hard look up at the top of the stepladder and shaking his head.* As for you up there with the gun, if you're still around

and haven't sneaked back to your warm bed - you were defending the Protestant people, weren't you? You did a great job. *Dorothy heads 'indoors' He heads away.*

## 9. Exit Doctor enter B-Special

*Officer Willie Armstrong, a uniformed B-Special armed with a rifle enters suddenly.*

**Armstrong:** STOP! Don't move! What are you two doing out in the curfew?

**Sean:** Curfew? We didn't know...

**Armstrong:** You didn't know? Do you think I'm stupid or something?

**Sean:** No, ahm...

*Armstrong is weary. He takes his hat off and runs his hands through his hair.*

**Armstrong:** You're just kids really aren't you?

**Amy:** Yes.

*Armstrong sits down*

**Armstrong:** I've seen some pretty dangerous kids just lately but somehow I don't think you are amongst them. Sit down the pair of ya. *Amy and Sean sit.* Where are you from?

**Amy:** We're local. Just at the minute we're really not sure where or when we're from

*Taggart enters unseen*

**Armstrong:** *laughs.* I know what you mean. I'm not sure where I'm from anymore either. I have half the population telling me what a great lad I am for trying to preserve the Union and half trying to kill me.

**Amy:** The union?

**Armstrong:** Yes... the union with Britain. Us B-Men, B-Specials. Dregs of the earth to some. Do you know over 70 of us have been killed in the line of duty? Mostly murdered by IRA scum.

**Taggart:** That's not the full story though is it?

**Armstrong:** *alarmed...* Who's that? Identify yourself!

**Taggart:** Relax Willie, it's only me

**Armstrong:** Taggart?

**Taggart:** Aye

**Armstrong:** What do you want?

**Taggart:** Paid

**Armstrong:** For information Taggart?... You know I'm not in charge of paying touts

**Taggart:** Why don't you tell these kids about the McMahons?

**Armstrong:** I had nothing to do with that Taggart

**Taggart:** Aye, but you know the Brown Square Barrack boys who did, don't you? *Turns to Sean and Amy.* About two weeks ago, two men wearing police uniforms grabbed a sledgehammer from a Corporation workman at Carlisle Circus. During the curfew wasn't it Willie?

**Armstrong:** *weary* I think so..

**Taggart:** Clifton Avenue they met three other men? *Armstrong nods.* They went to Owen McMahon;s house near New Lodge. Owen and his six sons, and Edward McKinney who worked for the McMahons as a barman were there. Ordinary Catholics. Well known people but not involved.

**Armstrong:** No, not involved. And Owen's wife Eliza, her daughter and another girl - her niece I think.

**Taggart:** Aye, her niece. They used the sledgehammer to break down the door. Four of them wearing police caps and carrying revolvers - Specials uniforms.

**Armstrong:** Aye, but they hid their faces, the bastards.

**Taggart:** The shooting continued for five minutes; five of the men were killed outright and two were wounded, one fatally.

**Armstrong:** McMahon's 12-year-old son, survived by hiding behind furniture and pretending to be hit.

**Taggart:** How many attended the funeral Willie?

**Armstrong:** 10,000?

**Taggart:** Aye, about 10,00 – mostly Catholics

**Armstrong:** And what about the day before that Taggart? I knew Tom and Bill you know – they were friends of mine

**Taggart:** Aye. The McMahon killings were most likely a reprisal for the IRA killing of two Specials. Thomas Cunningham and William Cairnside – that right Willie?

**Armstrong:** Great Victoria Street. Shot dead by the IRA.

**Taggart:** Does that make it right Willie? An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth?

**Armstrong:** An eye for an eye until everyone is blind. I'm sick of it Taggart. Mighty sick.

*Sirens. Taggart and Armstrong exit.*

## **10. Exit B-Special enter Pastor Tom**

*Amy is crumpled in an almost foetal position. Sean reaches for the bag belonging to her which is lying on the floor. He pulls out the crisps again but won't eat them and then reaches for the chocolates in the bag and the box which she had bought for her nan, but it has been crushed in the melee. They hug each other. She is crying. Unexpectedly, we hear recorded sound of a piano playing. It is an unaccompanied version of the old-time gospel hymn known as Leaning on the 'Everlasting Arms' . A young figure dressed as a pastor is standing in the doorway. He wears a neat, black suit and a round collar.*

**Pastor:** The Thompson family, Alex's family sent me to welcome you.

**Sean:** *to Amy.* The boy mentioned in the paper! *To Pastor.* The boy who was shot last night?

**Pastor:** Yes. I'm the family's pastor.

**Amy:** Pastor, there was a boy shot here as well, just now. It's so frightening!

**Pastor:** Yes. Poor Billy, we wish him a speedy recovery. You are safe now. The curfew is over, and that dreadful gun-battle seems finished, I am always grateful myself for the small mercies. I'm glad you locked us in though Amy. *He holds up the key. Then he slips it in his pocket.* I think you dropped this earlier? *Shakes their hands.* Call me Tom. The family are glad you've come, Amy. It is kind of you to be here for the ceremony. *To Sean.* And you are Sean, Amy's friend. You are welcome too.

**Amy:** Can we explain?

**Pastor:** Of course.

**Amy:** We found that key lying in the street, sir.

**Sean:** We tried the lock

**Amy:** And the key fitted and ...

**Sean:** So that's why we came into your church but then.... all these strange things started to happen...

**Amy:** We were trying to help.

**Sean:** We were trying, honest.

**Amy:** To be truthful, we were a bit curious too.

**Sean:** Like we were on an adventure.

**Pastor:** Perhaps you don't fully realise the purpose of both your visits. But you will, before you go. *He walks over to where drape covers the coffin.* This will not be easy. *The pastor exposes the coffin of Alec beneath the drape. Both Amy and Sean are visibly upset, and Sean puts his arm around Amy.* Alec Thompson, Amy. Two days ago, your cousin attempted to do

something he never should never have done. He was egged on by others on both sides of that road. Now, he's lying here.

**Amy:** My cousin? Alex Thompson?

**Pastor:** Yes, your cousin Alex, many times removed, but still your family, your own flesh and blood. I reached the hospital just in time. I talked with him and he told me he was sorry for his actions and then we prayed. My wife says she knows your side of the family, Amy. Alec's parents are heart-broken, and part of the pain is that your side – the Catholic side - refused to come to see the burial of their son. But you have come along, Amy. That makes all the difference.

**Amy:** I am glad to be here.

**Pastor:** Wherever 'here' is? *He smiles.* And Sean, as for you- the other night, two members of your family, the Tomelty's lost everything - their pub, their house, their home. One day the local men are drinking there, the next they are setting the place on fire. I pray that Bridie finds another life. And I pray for her brother now, when he's on the run.

**Sean:** Bridie Tomelty...

**Pastor:** Yes. When you leave our world and return to yours, remind your parents of a story that they'd thought was best not shared with you. *Holds out the key again. Sean takes it. He takes a photo from his pocket.* For you, Amy. A photograph. The parents asked me to pass on. A birthday present for your grandma. The great uncle that she never met - Alex. *He takes her by the hand, smiles and gives it to her.* After the funeral, you are free to go.

*She puts the photo in her bag. Silence as the music dies and stillness resumes then there are loud voices from Dorothy's house.*

## 11. Enter Sammy, Dorothy's husband

*Sammy appears upstairs in his shipyard dungarees and wearing bright red scarf and a 'Lenin' style cap. He is holding a hip flask. Dorothy is dabbing a bruise on his cheek with a lotion.*

**Sammy:** Hold that whiskey for a moment, love. *He demonstrates the moves he made in the fight he had in the pub* He grabbed me like this, right? And I punched him in the chest, like that. 'Right' I said, 'I'll take any of you on.' I said. '*any of ye.*' The whole bar went silent.

**Dorothy:** I'm sure it did, dear. Sure, weren't you a boxing champion in the army.

**Sammy:** Then I let a right gulder out of me - 'Listen, friends, a couple of years back, you drummed me out of the shipyard along with the Catholic lads, and you thought you'd put the fear of God into me, but oh no, you didn't. Sammy Paine feared no German and he's got no dread for the fists of a Protestant coward or the guns of the IRA, so he's going back home to his missus to find out what's going on, curfew or no curfew'. *He's making for the stairs*

**Dorothy:** Mind yourself on the stairs, love.

**Sammy:** Then I really let them have it, Dorothy

**Dorothy:** I am sure you did.

**Sammy:** 'Not a single one of ye were in the army during the war' I said - 'because you're a bunch of wishy-washy fecking cowards' I said, 'Staying at home, building ships, huh, some excuse that'. That's when the whole lot of them grabbed me and punched me. *Points to the bruises and laughs.* I tried to fight back, then they threw me out.

**Dorothy:** Mind that whiskey. You'll spill it and then you'll have nothing left.

**Sammy:** *He sees the children.* Looks like we have visitors, love!

**Dorothy:** It's a couple of children that got caught up in the fighting. They're strangers, Sammy, Lord knows what they are doing here. *He has descended the stairs. The children are uncertain.*

**Sammy:** Sit down, sit down, children. You've nothing to fear from me. Got banged up a bit in the club, as you can see. *Mimes a few fighting moves. Laughs. Sean smiles.* Here Dorothy, a glass of something soft for the youngsters.

**Dorothy:** I like to keep the lemonade for myself, dear. It soothes my throat.

**Sammy:** You'd be better served giving up the fags, love.

**Dorothy:** I need the fags for the nerves, Sammy. Strangers, eh?' My wife doesn't know how to greet ye. I'm Sammy. And you are?

**Amy:** Amy

**Sammy:** And you are?

**Sean:** *whispering but gaining confidence*

**Sammy:** I'm Sean.

**Sammy:** *confidential* Are ye both from across the road? *They are reluctant to speak* You can be honest with me.

**Sean:** I am, or at least my family were.

**Amy:** My dad was. I'm from a mixed marriage.

**Sammy:** What?! A mixed marriage? Socialists and Capitalists?!

**Amy:** No. Protestant and Catholic

**Sammy:** I know! Sorry, that was just my wee joke. Sorry Dorothy didn't invite ye in, earlier. She's an unhappy soul, the wife. Maybe, if she'd had a child of her own, she'd have been a bit more welcoming to other folk's weans. But then the war knocked the lead out of my pencil, if you're not too young to know what I mean. So, there's only one child in this household. And it's me! *Boisterous laughter*

**Sean:** Can I ask you a question, sir...? *Pointing to the bruise*

**Sammy:** There's no sirs in my world, Sean. The name is Sammy, though you can call me 'comrade'. *Laughs.* I try to get the fellows in the shipyard to call each other that. It never works. Go ahead, the question.

**Sean:** What happened to your face, sir?

**Sammy:** Oh that. I didn't keep my mouth shut, that's what happened. Someone was praising the ones that burned down Tomelty's pub the other night, telling me there was plenty of good strong evidence that Bridie's brother was in the IRA and how he was nowhere to be seen. Well, as far as I'm concerned, we're all the same boat, all over the world, I learned that in the army, killing young men in a German uniform, for what. I didn't agree with the war by the end of it and I don't agree with *this* one either for they both put working man against working man, and it suits the bosses to keep it like that. Well, you're not saying very much?

**Sean:** Me and Amy joke about our different religions.

**Amy:** It's all in fun of course.

**Sean:** We even go to the same school.

**Sammy:** That's the way it should be. No more of this, eh? *He demonstrates his boxing moves.* And no more of this either. *He mimes the act of prayer.* No, there's too many holy joes in the shipyard.

**Amy:** Can I ask you a question?

**Sammy:** I mightn't know the answer, but try me.

**Amy:** What exactly happened to Alec?

**Sammy:** Someone from other side of a barricade threw a grenade across - plenty of those lying around since 1918. The wee lad was only used to throwing stones back and forth. Not a clue what he he'd lifted up, but he knew he had to throw it back again. He held onto it for far too long. Terrible wounds to his belly and one of his hands blown clean off. He survived long enough for the pastor to get up to the hospital but by the time his family got there too he was gone. I could have told him. I saw too many young lads die like that in France.

**Amy:** Some of his cousins aren't coming to the funeral. My side of the family, it seems.

**Sammy:** The respectable side, eh? But you're here, Amy. So, think on that.

**Dorothy:** Well, I can't agree with not turning up at a funeral. The wee lad was doing what he could to protect the neighbourhood.

**Sammy:** Now, now, Dorothy. No-one should be throwing anything at anyone.

**Dorothy:** Except punches, I suppose. You throw plenty of those when you're riled.

**Sammy:** *To the children* That's me put in my place. Hasn't it? Do you know what I think got them all worked up in the pub tonight? I'd had a couple of whiskies and I started to sing. Do you want to hear me sing? *The children assent. He raises the hip flask and sings.*

'Arise ye workers from your slumbers  
Arise ye prisoners of want  
For reason in revolt now thunders  
And at last ends the age of cant.  
Away with all your superstitions  
Servile masses arise, arise  
We'll change henceforth the old tradition  
And spurn the dust to win the prize.  
So, comrades, come rally  
And the last fight let us face  
The Internationale unites the human race.'

**Sammy:** The four boyos that grabbed me in the pub were the same four that chucked me in the water, the day they put the Catholic fellows out of the shipyard. Lucky I could swim, eh? Look at this. The red scarf. That's our only future, children. Socialism. By the way, I never asked you your surname, son.

**Sean:** Tomelty.

**Sammy:** Would you be anything to the family that owned the bar on the road that got burned the other night? Bridies bar?

**Sean:** Yes, sir. I am.

**Sammy:** I'm sorry for what happened. It was the last Catholic bar on the road. I hear Bridie's away and her brother Sean's in hiding.

**Sean:** I think Sean is my great grandfather, sir.

**Sammy:** There. I thought I saw his face when I looked at you.

## 12. Alec Thompson's funeral

*Piano version once more of 'Leaning on the Everlasting Arms'. In through the door come the mourners. The coffin is revealed. The parents come over to shake the hands of the two children and Dorothy and Sammy, who stand there – Sammy removes his cap. The pastor moves to the lectern and bids the family be seated.*

**Pastor:** When we get to the house, Alec's father will say a few words about his son. All I wish to do is read a portion of the scriptures and then we will all sing a hymn. *Opening his Bible* First, from the book of Isaiah, chapter 43. *During this passage, the ceremony of lifting the coffin begins.* "Fear not, for I have redeemed you, I have called you by your name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, they shall not overflow you and when you walk through fire you shall not be burned. You are precious in my eyes and I will honour you. I love you, and I am with you. So, fear not".

*Then the hymn is sung. The coffin leaves.*

'What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Leaning, leaning,  
Safe and secure from all alarms;  
Leaning, leaning,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.  
Leaning, leaning,  
Safe and secure from all alarms;  
Leaning, leaning,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms..'

*As the funeral cortege disappears, Dorothy, Sammy and the two children are left seated at a table.*

### 13. Amy and Sean leave

**Sammy:** Too many lives wasted. And for what?

**Dorothy:** Here, it's time you came in and gave yourself a wash down.

**Sammy:** First I could do with a spot of breakfast, and after that some sleep.

**Dorothy:** I'll go and put the pan on.

**Sammy:** Goodbye Amy, goodbye Sean. It was good to meet you. I hope I answered some of your questions.

**Amy:** Time to go, Sean? *He nods*

**Sean:** You have the key?

**Amy:** *Smiling* I'm not losing it this time.

**Sean:** You'd better not.

**Amy:** We've learned a few new things about our families.

**Sean:** We did.

**Amy:** And each other.

**Sean:** Time travel - in East Belfast!

**Amy:** Don't forget. It's my Gran's birthday. *Amy picks up her bag.* Oh dear, her chocolates are going to be in bad shape. *She takes out a pristine, undamaged chocolate box.*

**Sean:** Well, I could have sworn...

**Amy:** Do you want your crisps, when we're at it?

**Sean:** We ate them, remember, or at least Billy and Bessy did. *She pulls out an untouched bag of crisps.* Amy, did tonight actually happen or did it not....?

*Amy pulls out the photograph and he takes it. He nods his head as if to say it did.*

**Amy:** My phone, Sean, where is my phone? *She looks in her bag again*

**Sean:** You should get it seen to.

**Amy:** Hey, it's working again! *They look at each other, just a bit stunned* Maybe we should take a selfie.

**Amy / Sean:** *Shaking their heads...* No, we shouldn't....

**Amy:** What time did we get here?

**Sean:** We got off the glider about seven, and we found the key about five minutes after that. Why, what time is it now? Must be late.

**Amy:** It's ten past seven.

**Sean:** Where did the time go?

*The play's theme music begins. The key is dangled by Amy*

**Amy:** Is that everything?

**Sean:** The pastor meant us to keep the key, didn't he?

*They hug each other and leave as the lights dim.*

## **CLOSING CAPTIONS**

- *Written by Philip Orr*
- *Directed by Trevor Gill*
- *Filmed by Alan Meban*
- *Additional material: Trevor Gill*
- *Stage Manager: Christine Clarke*
- *SEAN: Adrian Cooke*
- *AMY: Lucy Bailie*
- *DOROTHY: Tanja Jennings*
- *BRIDIE: Marina Hampton*
- *BILLY: Glenn McGivern*
- *BESSY: Lorraine Brown*
- *SEAMY: Andrew Hewitt*
- *DANNY: Sam Mahadeo*
- *SAOIRSE: Marina Hampton*
- *DOCTOR GRANT: Robert McGregor*
- *OFFICER ARMSTRONG: Glenn McGivern*
- *TAGGART: Sam Mahadeo*
- *SAMMY: Peter Millar*
- *PASTOR TOM: Andrew McCracken*
- *Special thanks to Mountpottinger Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church*
- *BUDCo and CRC logos*
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