

The Body of Ciara Molloy

Written by Cassandra Moselle

Deirdre O'Byrne : Publican & Undertaker

Nóirín O'Byrne: Deirdre's daughter

Finbar Gallagher: A Fisherman

Deaglán O'Brien: A Fisherman

Fiadh (fee-a) - seller of charms

Officer Seán O'Hanley - an officer

Ciara (kee-ARR-ah) Molloy - a dead body

Dullahan - a mythological creature

Banshee - a mythological creature

Setting: The Yew Shade Public House

Brigid's Cross & a horseshoe are above the entrance. 2 turnip Jack-of-the-Lantern is carved and 1 is placed near the window & 1 sits on the bar.

9pm on October, 31, 1866 Dublin, Ireland

Main Room

Finbar & Deaglán sit at the bar while
Deirdre works behind it.

Finbar

I was dead tired. I mean, I was goin' ta
sleep like the dead I was. But then I
wake up, all of a sudden, and I'm telling
you, she was standing right there.

Deaglán

(finishing the last swig of beer) I never
said I didn't believe ya Fin.

Finbar

Aye and ya never said ya did either.
(finishing the last swig of beer)

Deirdre

'nother round fellahs?

Finbar / Deaglán

Aye

Finbar

Yer the kindest to us Deirdre.

Deaglán

I'm comforted ta know ya will take as
grand a care of me once I've left this
mortal coil as you do ta me while I'm
here.

Deirdre

That's my job. Send ya home with a nice
drink and provide the drink when we
send ya off.

Back Room

Nóirín & Fiadh sit with Fiadh's bag next
to them.

Nóirín

I don't want ta worry me ma with this
nonsense. It's the time of year is all.

Fiadh

You need to learn to trust yer instincts.

Nóirín

And I need not stress me ma with talk of
cats in the walls and scratching at the
door.

Fiadh

I think she would think it a fine change
from the normal stress.

Nóirín

She doesn't need it. We can both agree
on that can't we?

Fiadh

If you insist on shouldering this burden
alone at least let me avail you with a
charm to protect yerself with.

Nóirín

Fine. But ya can't tell me ma!

Fiadh

So long as there's no reason to, I'll not
tell your secrets.

Deaglán
Ya need to add that to yer sign.

Deirdre
Ah right, The Yew Shade; When you
drink here, we'll bury ya like yer family.

Finbar
Where's Nóirín? You got her running
errands?

Deirdre
She's takin' inventory in the back. Need
to know how many ales and coffins to
buy.

Finbar
With the way things are goin', I tell, ya
won't be enough room to house all that
in one place.

Deirdre
Ya got it all wrong Fin, we're going
through both too quickly.

Deaglán
Don't know if it's a good thing to hear
business is boomin'.

Deaglán
Don't know if it's a good thing to hear
business is boomin'.

Deirdre
Hard to stop people from drinkin', can't
stop 'em from dyin'.

Nóirín
Do you have anything fer sleep?

Fiadh
You've trouble sleeping now too ya say?

Nóirín
Please, Fiadh.

Fiadh
Aye, I've a dram that will aid with sleep.

*Fiadh reaches into her bag & pulls out a
vial with dark liquid.*

Drink a spoon of this every night before
bed for three nights. On the fourth night
sleep with it under your pillow and then
bury it the next morning.

Nóirín
(Takes the bottle) Thank you.

Fiadh
What else do I have?

Fiadh looks back in her bag

Aha!

Nóirín
What?

Fiadh
Brigid's Cross!

Nóirín
I've one at home.

Deaglán

(raises a glass) to havin' a drink, paying
yer dues, and to your guaranteed
demise.

Deirdre

When you put it that way ...

Deaglán / Finbar

Sláinte (both drink)

Finbar

(indicating the turnip Jack-of-the-
Lantern) Shouldn't that be at the door?

Deirdre

There's one at the door. Nóirín and I
carved this earlier and left it at the bar.
I'll put it round back later.

Finbar

Invitation for mischief if you ask me.

Deirdre

This isn't my first Samhain, Fin. But I
appreciate your concern.

Finbar

Never said it was.

Deaglán

You said all you needed to without sayin'
a thing.

Enter Fiadh from the back. Finbar
notices her.

Fiadh

And it sounds like you need one here.

Nóirín

I can't imagine there's evil spirits in a
beer cellar.

Fiadh

Then ya won't mind if I just hang this
here then.

*Fiadh hangs Brigid's Cross near the
entrance of the room.*

Nóirín

Ya didn't need to do that. But thank you.

Fiadh

A little gratitude goes a long way.

Nóirín

I am grateful to ya Fiadh.

Fiadh

If ya start hearing those sounds, come
find me.

Nóirín

I will.

Fiadh exits to main room.

Finbar

Now there's someone who I know would agree with me.

Fiadh

What would you have me agreein' to now Finbar Gallagher?

Finbar

That Deirdre should put her beautifully carved Jack-of-the-Lantern near the back door.

Deirdre

Yer talkin' like I don't have any? There's one near the front.

Finbar

And none at the back.

Deirdre

Fine.

Deirdre picks up the Jack-of-the-Lantern

Ya want it at the back door, I'll put it at the back door.

Deirdre exits with the Jack-of-the-Lantern. She places it at the back door & enters the Back Room.

Fiadh

Yer right, Finbar Gallagher. As the work was already done, I'd have agreed with you that she should 'ave put it in the back.

Nóirín becomes acutely aware that she's alone. She looks around the room. She picks back up the paper with her inventory markings on it and tries to focus. Shortly thereafter, we begin to hear the sounds of a cat moving around the room. This should gradually build in intensity until broken by the entrance of Deirdre.

Enter Deirdre which immediately makes Nóirín jump.

Deirdre

Are you all right?

Nóirín

Fine. Ya just scared me is all.

Deirdre

There's no need to finish this tonight. Come out to the main room with us. I could use yer help behind the bar.

Nóirín

Yes ma.

Finbar

I knew I could count on yer support in all
things supernatural Fiadh.

Deaglán

Have anything new that yer luggin'
around the grand town of Dublin ?

Fiadh

New? I'd say I'm a lady who likes tried
and true remedies and charms.

Deaglán

Then tell me of yer tried and true.

Fiadh

Tis the season for a little divination
Deaglán.

Deaglán

Oh no.

Fiadh

Does the thought of marryin' terrify ya
so much?

Deaglán

The thought of putting all my eggs into
one basket does. What if I think it's a b
but it's really an upside p? I'd never find
my love as I'd be looking for Bridie
(bree-dee) instead of Pádraigín
(PAH-dree-gyeen).

Nóirín leaves behind her paperwork and
follows Deirdre out to the main room,
looking behind her as she exits.

Main Room

Enter Deirdre & Nóirín

Fiadh

What about you Deirdre? Ready to know the first initial of yer next husband?

Deirdre

Oh, no. I prefer the surprise.

Fiadh

On this night we get to divine our fortunes and woes for the year and none of ye want to take advantage of the moment.

Finbar

All right, Fiadh, tell me true. Peel the apple and let's discover the initial of my true love.

Fiadh

Yer already married Finbar.

Finbar

Aye, and I'm hoping you give me an R for me Rose.

Enter Officer O'Hanley

Officer O'Hanley

Mrs. O'Byrne, I apologize but I must store a body here.

Deirdre

What happened?

Officer O'Hanley

I don't know. I was makin' me rounds and saw a body round back.

Deirdre

Round back o' here? Someone was murdered outside my door?

Officer O'Hanley

Aye, or their body was left there.

Deirdre

Do ya know who it is?

Officer O'Hanley

I don't. Once we get them on the table I thought we could have a better look.

Deirdre

Well, bring them in.

Officer O'Hanley

Do you have a handbarrow?

Deirdre

It's round back.

Deaglán

Let me give you a hand.

Officer O'Hanley

That would be grand, thanks.

Exit Officer O'Hanley & Deaglán. Moments later Officer O'Hanley & Deaglán return with the body of Ciara Molloy in the handbarrow.

Finbar

Dear God!

Fiadh

We're supposed to honor the dead on Samhain, not make more dead.

Officer O'Hanley

Is the table in the beer cellar ready?

Deirdre

Aye, but let me come with you. (to Nóirín) Will ya mind the bar while I go to the back?

Nóirín doesn't respond. She's starin' at the corpse.

Deirdre

Nóirín?

Nóirín

(Snapping out of it) Yes ma. I'll stay here.

Deirdre

You've been actin' strange this evenin'. Are ya sure there isn't anything you want to tell me?

Nóirín

No, ma. I'm just tired is all.

Officer O'Hanley

We goin' to the back?

Deirdre

Aye, follow me.

Just then a low wail starts that grows in intensity to a full wail as the shape of a banshee forms. This lasts for a minute before the banshee disappears. Everyone is stunned for a moment.

Nóirín

Ma?

Deirdre

(To Nóirín) Stay out here, we'll be back. (To Officer O'Hanley & Deaglán) Let's get this body into the back.

Main Room

Nóirín, Finbar, Fiadh remain in the Main Room.

Finbar

Got anything in yer bag to protect against banshee omens?

Fiadh

That spirit just paid us a service, she did. Comin' here to warn us that someone won't make it to mornin'.

Finbar

I'm with Deirdre on this, I prefer the surprise.

Fiadh

I've never known ya to be ungrateful Finbar. That banshee gave ya knowledge. Told us somethin' we didn't know. And she did it as a service. Yer just mad 'cause ya can't ignore the fact we all die. And tonight, it may be you sayin' goodbye to this world.

Finbar

Yer right, I don't sit around thinkin' about dyin'. I've no plans to be dyin' tonight.

Fiadh

We all go when we're called Finbar. Ain't no way 'round that.

Finbar

Why are ya on me like this?

Back Room

Deaglán, Deirdre, Officer O'Hanley enter with the body on the handbarrow.

Deirdre

Let's get her on the table.

Officer O'Hanley, Deaglán, & Deirdre place themselves around the body ready to lift it up to the table.

Deirdre

One, two, three!

On three, they lift the body up and put it on the table. Deirdre steps up to look at the body.

Deirdre

(checks for a pulse) No pulse. No obvious wounds. No bruising 'round the neck. No signs of cholera or disease. What happened to her?

Officer O'Hanley

I found no weapons near her body.

Deirdre

We'll have to wait for the coroner. Deaglán, would ya mind storin' the handbarrow for me. Anywhere in here is fine. I need to get back out there and check on Nóirín. This body isn't goin' no where & nothin' more I can do for it tonight.

Fiadh

I'm on you like this because of yer nonsense.

Finbar

(Turning to Nóirín) Then if it is my last night, I'd like a bit o' whiskey please.

Nóirín pulls a bottle of whiskey out and pours Finbar a drink. She pours one for herself and looks at Fiadh who nods at her. Nóirín pours her a drink as well and sets the drinks in front of each person.

Nóirín / Finbar / Fiadh

Sláinte

Enter Deirdre & Office O'Hanley

Deirdre

Pour me one will ya.

Nóirín pours one for Deirdre. She looks at Officer O'Hanley

Officer O'Hanley

Given the circumstances, aye.

Nóirín pours an extra. Deirdre & Officer O'Hanley take the shots

Deaglán

Of course Deirdre.

Deirdre & Officer O'Hanley return to the main room. Deaglán looks around the room, trying to find a place to put the handbarrow that's out of the way. He has his back to the body of Ciara. Ciara's eyes pop open & she sits straight up. She looks at Deaglán who turns around and sees her.

Deaglán

Holy mother of God!

Ciara

I - how did I get here?

Deaglán

We, uh, found you outside. Thought you were dead.

Ciara

I must have fainted.

Deaglán

We checked for a pulse.

Ciara

I've not been feeling well lately.

Deaglán

Let me get someone to help you.

Officer O'Hanley / Deirdre

Sláinte

Deirdre

There's more than just mischief afoot
this night.

Officer O'Hanley

I've been an officer for many years &
I've seen nothing like this 'fore.

Deirdre

We've got a dead body in the back with
no visible markings indicating how she
died.

Finbar

'Fore that was the banshee. We all saw
it.

Deirdre

I was gettin' ta that. First, Officer
O'Hanley brings a dead body into the
bar, a banshee appears, we take the
body to the back to examine. I see no
obvious signs of how she died.

Officer O'Hanley

I should get the coroner.

Deirdre

If it was a normal night, I'd agree. But
something isn't right here.

Finbar

Where's Deaglán?

Ciara

Could you help me down before you go?
I don't trust myself to climb down on my
own.

Deaglán

Of course, we'll take it easy gettin' ya
down.

*Deaglán goes toward Ciara. When he
gets close she holds out her arm so that
she can put it around his neck. Deaglán
positions himself to Ciara's side and as
she puts her arm around his neck she
pulls him in and begins to drain him of
his blood.*

*Once drained, Deaglán falls lifeless to
the floor. Ciara jumps down and uses
his jacket/shirt sleeve to wipe the blood
from her mouth (at most, there should
be a trickle of blood on Deaglán's neck,
but no other traces).*

*Ciara carefully examines the room,
noticing Brigid's Cross and hissing at it.
Ciara tries to go past the entrance and
can't. She can't cross underneath
Brigid's cross.*

*She begins to pace the room, looking for
another way in or out.*

*Resigning that there's only one way in or
out, Ciara goes back to the table &
climbs back on top where she waits.*

Main Room

Deirdre

I asked him to put the handbarrow away. (shouts) Deaglán, just leave it where it is. (to Fiadh) Any thoughts?

Fiadh

I agree tis strange. But that's not all.

Deirdre

What do you mean?

Fiadh

(to Nóirín) You should say something.

Nóirín

It's stupid. It's nothing ma, really.

Deirdre

What's nothing?

Nóirín

I've heard noises.

Deirdre

Nóirín, please. What kind of noises?

Nóirín

It's -

Deirdre

What kind of noises?

Nóirín

Scratchin' at the back door at night.

Deirdre

What kind of scratchin'?

Nóirín

I don't know. Just scratchin'.

Deirdre

Imitate the sound on the bar.

Nóirín makes a claw shape with her hand and slowly drags her nails down the bar.

Deirdre

Is that all?

Nóirín

And I hear sounds in the walls. Like there's a cat back there.

Deirdre

How long has this been goin' on?

Nóirín

Maybe a couple of weeks, month at most.

Deirdre

And ya just thought to be tellin' me now?

Nóirín

It's nothing.

Deirdre

It don't sound like nothing.

Nóirín

Please don't make a fuss.

Deirdre

My daughter is being plagued by the supernatural and she don't want me to make a fuss.

Nóirín

We don't know that.

Deirdre

I've got a mysterious dead body in my cellar and a banshee appeared in my pub this very evenin'. There's a lot of supernatural goin' 'round & now you're tellin' me that there's been scratchin' on me back door and a cat stalkin' 'bout for the last month.

Nóirín

I just thought -

Deirdre

(shouting) Deaglán, fer the love of God, leave the handbarrow where it tis.

Nóirín

Why don't I check on him.

Nóirín exits to back room

Deirdre

(to Fiadh) Did ya know 'bout this?

Fiadh

She only told me this evening.

Back Room

Enter Nóirín

Nóirín sees Deaglán on the ground and freezes. She sees Ciara sitting up, distraught.

Ciara

Oh goodness, I'm so happy you've found me.

Nóirín

We thought you were -

Ciara

I must have collapsed. I've been so ill recently that my pulse must be faint.

Deirdre

I'm not lookin' fer any more trouble here this night.

Fiadh

I think trouble will find ya if it's you it be lookin' for.

Officer O'Hanley

Is there somethin' I can be helping you with Ms. O'Byrne?

Deirdre

Suppose so, just don't know what.

Finbar

If nobody believed me when I said I saw a spirit, they sure won't believe me when I say what I saw here tonight.

Fiadh

O'Hanley, you walk the streets at night. Have ya found other dead bodies like this?

Officer O'Hanley

Now that ya mention it, aye. I have seen more bodies than normal. Left behind buildings in the night and found in the mornin'.

Fiadh

What's the cause of death?

Officer O'Hanley

I don't know 'bout all of them. But I've heard some have been missin' blood.

Nóirín

I should get my mam.

Ciara

Please don't leave me alone. I'm awfully frightened. (whispering) There are sounds.

Nóirín

You can hear them?

Ciara

(nod her head yes) That's why I was so happy to see you. I've been too afraid to move lest I anger whatever is in the walls.

Nóirín

It's been haunting me for weeks. Yowling, scratching, I've started to jump at my own shadow when I'm alone.

Ciara

You poor girl. Being tormented so.

Nóirín

My mam thinks it's supernatural.

Ciara

How frightful. And I with nothing on me to protect me against such things.

Nóirín

Take my necklace.

Ciara

You sweet girl, I couldn't. What will

Fiadh

What do ya mean, missin' blood?

Officer O'Hanley

I mean that the bodies were drained of blood.

Finbar

And ya didn't find it where the body was found?

Officer O'Hanley

No. I've found several and I tell you there wasn't a drop of blood at the crime scene. They've been pale, the bodies, very pale.

Fiadh

If what you say is true then there's more than just mischief afoot. This is something foul, something evil.

Finbar

Do ya have a charm to protect against it?

Fiadh

Aye, I've things on me that should help ward away the evil spirits. (reaches into her bag) Here, (takes out Brigid's cross) take Brigid's cross (she hands one to Officer O'Hanley & Deirdre). Keep it with you. I fear we'll have need of it before the dawn breaks.

Deirdre

Anything else you can tell us Officer O'Hanley?

Ciara

protect you?

Nóirín

Here. (grabs Brigid's Cross). Hold onto this.

Ciara

I don't think I'm strong enough to keep hold of such an item if something were to frighten me. Would you hold onto it and let me be near you?

Nóirín

Yes, we must stay together.

Ciara

And your mam. Should I fear her? Will she scream at the sight of me?

Nóirín

Oh, no she wouldn't. I'll talk to her. Silly me, I didn't get yer name.

Ciara

Ciara, Ciara Molloy.

Nóirín

It's nice to meet you Ciara. I'm Nóirín.

Ciara

Such a charming name.

Nóirín

Deaglán. I've lost my focus. What happened to Deaglán?

Officer O'Hanley

Except for the lack of blood there's been nothin' else.

Deirdre

How long has this been goin' on?

Officer O'Hanley

'Bout a month.

Deirdre

Same time as Nóirín started hearin' the noises in the back.

Finbar

And what's the banshee got to do with it anyways?

Deirdre

It might not be related at all.

Fiadh

Or tis very related.

Enter Nóirín & Ciara

Nóirín

Mam, the girl, she. She wasn't dead.

Everyone turns to look at Nóirín & Ciara.

Ciara

It was that creature. Jumped at him from behind the wall. Landed on him and I don't know what it did. He collapsed on the ground.

Nóirín

Did you see where the creature went?

Ciara

I've not seen it since it disappeared.

Nóirín

(makes the sign of the cross) We can't stay here. Come with me.

Nóirín & Ciara exit to main room

Main Room

Deirdre

What do you mean, not dead. I checked her pulse myself.

Ciara

I'm sorry ma'am. I've been not well and must have fainted. I must be weaker than I thought if you couldn't find a strong pulse.

Finbar

Where's Deaglán?

Nóirín

I went back there and he -

Deirdre

What happened?

Ciara

There was - a creature. Came down and attacked Deaglán. He crumpled to the ground.

Nóirín

I was too scared to touch him.

Officer O'Hanley starts to go to the back room

Officer O'Hanley

Is he alive?

Ciara

I didn't see if he was breathing.

Finbar

Deaglán!

Finbar follows Officer O'Hanley

Main Room

Deirdre

Tell me exactly what happened.

Ciara

I woke up and didn't know where I was. I started regaining my senses and realized there was someone in the room with me. He was handling a handbarrow. I began to stir which caught his attention. He was coming over to me when this thing, this creature leapt on him. It was like a cat but bigger. Fur black as night. I didn't see where it came from but it landed on, Deaglán is it?

Nóirín

Yes, his name is Deaglán.

Ciara

It landed on Deaglán's shoulders and was hissing. I was so frightened. Then as Deaglán started to fall to the floor the creature leapt off and disappeared. I was too frightened to move lest the creature come for me and that was when Nóirín came in.

Deirdre

And Deaglán didn't move after that?

Ciara

I don't think so. I was so frightened I couldn't move.

Fiadh

And how did you come to be found outside?

Back Room

Enter Officer O'Hanley and Finbar who rush to the body of Deaglán

Finbar

Deaglán!

Officer O'Hanley

Let me look at him.

Officer O'Hanley goes to Deaglán to check for a pulse & doesn't find one. He checks for breathing.

Officer O'Hanley

He's dead.

Finbar

He can't be dead, we were just havin' a pint. He can't have dropped dead.

Officer O'Hanley

No sign of bruising, bleeding. I see no scratching or bite marks. It's like he just died where he stood.

Finbar

Somethin' happened O'Hanley. You saw him, fit enough to be helpin' with a dead body. Er, a body that was dead. How she come back to life and Deaglán be takin' her place?

Officer O'Hanley

We don't know what killed Deaglán.

Ciara

I work as a laundress and was making my way home. I've been so tired and all but couldn't afford to miss work. I must have fainted.

Deirdre

What's yer family name?

Ciara

Molloy, Ciara Molloy. I just arrived from Waterford.

Deirdre

Did you travel with family?

Ciara

No ma'am. My parents died last winter. I came here to find work. Do you think the creature is still here?

Deirdre

We should assume so.

Fiadh

I'm going to take a look at Deaglán. See what I can learn.

Deirdre

Can I get you something?

Ciara

No ma'am. I feel like I've already inconvenienced you enough.

Deirdre

Nonsense. If you have a need, ask.

Finbar

Tis strange that one dead body came in here only to switch places with a livin' person.

Officer O'Hanley

We need to know the cause of death before we can make any assumptions.

Finbar

I have all the facts I need to know that this ain't right. How'd ya not know the girl was alive?

Officer O'Hanley

She wasn't movin' so I checked for a pulse and didn't find one. Like I did here now. I came in here and got help to bring her inside.

Finbar

Then tell me how a person doesn't have a pulse and then has a pulse again.

Officer O'Hanley

I could have missed it, it could have been faint and I didn't notice it.

Finbar

Are you tellin' me you made a mistake
Officer O'Hanley.

Officer O'Hanley

I must have or else I don't know how this makes any sense.

Finbar

Nothing about this night makes any sense.

Ciara

I'm not feelin' completely back to myself. I live but a few doors down. If it's no trouble, perhaps Nóirín could walk me to my door?

Nóirín

It would be no trouble for me to walk you home.

Ciara

Thank you. I'm awfully tired.

Nóirín

Let me get my coat.

Deirdre

(to Ciara) Do you not have a coat?

Ciara

The cold doesn't bother me all that much.

Deirdre

Nonsense, that's why you've taken ill. Not bundlin' yerself up for the cold. Do you have an extra coat here Nóirín? Or a sweater?

Ciara

Really, I couldn't impose -

Nóirín

I've an extra sweater.

Ciara

Please- I live but a few doors down.

Enter Fiadh

Fiadh

Where is he?

Officer O'Hanley

Here.

Fiadh walks over to Deaglán's body.

Officer O'Hanley

No sign of bruising or bleeding. No scratching or bite marks.

Fiadh

And the body hasn't been moved?

Officer O'Hanley

No ma'am.

Finbar

Tis strange Fiadh. You see that?

Fiadh

Seems the banshee was fer Deaglán. May god rest his soul.

Finbar

Explain to me how he dropped dead?

Fiadh

Have we started looking to see about some creature?

Deirdre

You've already caught your death once tonight, can't have it be happenin' again.

Ciara

I already feel better -

Nóirín

I've a brown or grey sweater.

Ciara

I really have no preference.

Nóirín

I think this brown one is warmer.

Ciara

You're very kind.

Deirdre

Have ya had a hot meal? You look pale child.

Ciara

You've done so much for me -

Deirdre

Can't be sending you out on a cold night, after collapsing on my door step without knowing you'll survive.

Nóirín

We could send for a doctor!

Ciara

I feel so much better and I've been such a trouble this evening.

Officer O'Hanley

No, ma'am. Honestly, I don't know exactly how to start looking in the walls to find it.

Fiadh starts looking around the room

Finbar

If it's even true.

Officer O'Hanley

You can't think that girl out there managed to kill Deaglán without leaving a trace of evidence. We didn't hear a struggle, no screams, nothing.

Fiadh

Where did Brigid's cross go?

Finbar

What?

Fiadh

I hung Brigid's Cross above the door frame. Where did it go?

Officer O'Hanley

I don't know. I haven't seen it.

Fiadh

What do we know?

Finbar

A girl has come back from -

Deirdre

I think we've some soup going.

Ciara

I've not much of an appetite just yet.

Deirdre

That's part of your problem. Not eatin', not bundlin' up. Yer not takin' care of yerself Ciara.

Ciara

I've some food at my house. It will go bad if I don't eat it soon.

Nóirín

My ma makes the best stew in town. I know you'll love it.

Ciara

I'd hate to be an awful guest, as you've both been so kind to me, but I'd like to rest.

Deirdre

You've been through a lot today.

Ciara

Yes! I know I will be back to myself once I've had a chance to be back in my own bed.

Deirdre

I understand, that's the only thing I ever want after a long day at the pub.

Officer O'Hanley

We know that the young woman we brought in was placed on this table, thinking she was deceased. Deaglán stayed behind to put the handbarrow away. Nóirín comes looking for Deaglán and finds the young woman alive and Deaglán dead.

Finbar

I'm tellin' ya this girl -

Fiadh

Finbar will ye stop long enough for us to talk it through?

Finbar

My friend's lyin' dead on the floor. It's a hard reality to face is all.

Officer O'Hanley

And we'll find out what happened to him.

Fiadh

'Fore that Nóirín & I were in here. That's when Nóirín told me about the sounds she's been hearing. Tis been goin' on fer a month or so -

Finbar

A creature has been livin' in here for a month?

Fiadh

Nóirín only said she hear a creature. Said it sounded like a cat but had never seen it.

Ciara

Yes. And though I feel much better, as an added precaution, I'd be very thankful for the company to my door.

Nóirín

All this fuss must be a lot.

Ciara

You are both so kind to take such good care of me.

Deirdre

Tis' no trouble at all.

Nóirín

If you're all set then we can be off.

Ciara

Thank you, again, for all of your hospitality.

Nóirín

I'll be back soon.

Nóirín & Ciara start towards the door. Ciara sees Brigid's Cross hanging above the door frame.

Ciara

Since there's been so mischief should we take Brigid's Cross with us?

Nóirín

I've the other one on me.

Officer O'Hanley

Then why did it strike tonight? When it seemed to be something only Nóirín was hearing?

Fiadh

We can all agree that we've seen things beyond this world tonight. A girl we thought was dead, who is not dead. A banshee coming to us, Deaglán dead.

Officer O'Hanley / Finbar

Aye

Fiadh

Then it won't sound crazy when I mention that Deaglán has two puncture wounds at his neck.

Officer O'Hanley & Finbar sit up at this. Officer O'Hanley goes toward Deaglán's body & finds the 2 puncture wounds.

Officer O'Hanley

There it 'tis.

Finbar

How -

Fiadh

Do you have Brigid's Cross on yer person?

Officer O'Hanley

No

Nóirín pulls out the Brigid's Cross she took down from the back room. Ciara recoils.

Nóirín

If you'd like to hold onto it -

Nóirín stretches out her arm toward Ciara with Brigid's Cross in her hand. Ciara recoils further.

Ciara

No, please hold onto it for the both of us.
You're much stronger than I.

Nóirín

I think you're plenty strong yerself.

Ciara

Thank you.

Nóirín

Let's get you home.

Nóirín opens the door and steps just outside. Ciara stands inside, unmoving.

Nóirín

Come on!

Finbar

Is it an evil spirit you be worryin' 'bout?

Fiadh

I know that the cross I hung above the door is gone and we've a dead body with two puncture wounds by his neck.

Finbar

I've nothin' on me.

Fiadh opens her bag and pulls out 2 Brigid's Crosses.

Fiadh

Here. (hands one to each).

Finbar

Are we thinkin' that girl out there is a vampire?

Fiadh

Is there another theory?

Officer O'Hanley

Wait a minute. I am an Officer of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. I have taken an oath to uphold the law and maintain peace and order. I can't be havin' us go out there and accusin' a girl of murder and bein' a vampire. If we're wrong, I will lose my job.

Fiadh

Then we get the girl to tell us she's a vampire.

Ciara

On second thought, perhaps I will try some of that stew before I go. I'm much hungrier than I thought.

Nóirín

Of course!

Nóirín comes back inside and closes the door.

Nóirín

Ma, could we get some stew before we go?

Deirdre

Come sit down and I'll fetch you some.

Nóirín

I've never been to Waterford. Is it very different from Dublin?

Ciara

It's a smaller town, especially compared to Dublin.

Nóirín

What are the people like?

Ciara

Like people from any other small town. Everyone knows everyone else, but no one interferes in other people's business.

Finbar

I'm sure that's how she starts every conversation at the pub, *oh hello, nice to meet ya, that's grand, I'm a vampire and kill people for fun.*

Fiadh

We make her show her true self.

Finbar

And how we doin' that? Putting a nice sauce on our necks and see if she licks her lips?

Fiadh

I've dealt with children more clever than ye Finbar.

Finbar

I'd have paid more attention in school if I knew there was a bit 'bout how to deal with vampires.

Officer O'Hanley

What do we do Fiadh?

Fiadh

We use tricks to get her to show her true self.

Officer O'Hanley

And how do we do that?

Fiadh

Using what we have? Vampires are soulless creatures and will not reflect in a mirror.

Nóirín

What work did you do there?

Ciara

I helped my family on our farm. Waterford's a port town so there was always a market to attend with extra items.

Nóirín

Maybe I'll visit there one day.

Ciara

It can be a lonely place. But if you want to go I'd be happy to go with you.

Nóirín

Had you no friends there?

Ciara

Not many. Other young women my age are married so there's less time for friendships.

Nóirín

That's awful.

Ciara

It's why I came to Dublin. To start again.

Nóirín

You can come here when you're free. I work most days but could always use the company.

Ciara

I'm so glad for a friend, Nóirín. Truly. I've been so lonely since my parents died.

Officer O'Hanley

So we get them near a mirror to see if there's a reflection.

Fiadh

And no harm to the girl either way.

Finbar

What else?

Fiadh

We have our symbol for protection. If she is a vampire it will cause her distress for it to be upon her skin. Holy water will do the same thing.

Officer O'Hanley

Do we have holy water?

Fiadh

In me bag. Not a lot, but I have some.

Finbar

So the plan is to get her near a mirror to look for a reflection, get her to hold Brigid's Cross, and throw holy water on her?

Fiadh

It's what we have.

Officer O'Hanley

We can't be assaulting a young woman.

Finbar

That young woman is a vampire.

Deirdre has 2 bowls of stew prepared. She walks it over to the bar and sets it down in front of each girl.

Deirdre

Here you go girls, two stews.

Nóirín

Thank you ma.

Ciara

Thank you — I'm sorry, we were never properly introduced.

Nóirín

I'm so sorry, I completely forgot -

Deirdre

I'm Deirdre O'Byrne.

Ciara

Thank you for your kindness, Deirdre.

Deirdre

You're very welcome. Oh, spoons. I'll be right back with a pair of spoons.

Deirdre goes to get two spoons (to back room)

Ciara

I know this is going to sound silly, but would you do me a favor Nóirín?

Officer O'Hanley

We don't know that. And if I didn't see a banshee with my own eyes this evening, and if a man didn't drop dead shortly after we wouldn't even be havin' this conversation. I concede, somethin' is not right. But I will not allow us to let our fears get the better of us.

Fiadh

How do you want us to proceed Officer O'Hanley?

Officer O'Hanley

I will position the young woman near a mirror to catch a reflection. If we are certain there isn't one and I mean, we would swear on the good book that there wasn't one. Then we can see how the young woman reacts to Brigid's Cross and then to be extra certain we can get some holy water on her.

Fiadh

Then that's the plan. Officer O'Hanley will take the lead. Agreed?

Finbar

Agreed.

Fiadh

Then let's go out there and see if this girl's a vampire.

Exit Fiadh, Finbar, & Officer O'Hanley to the main room.

Nóirín	<i>Deirdre meets the group before they can get out to the main room.</i>
Of course!	
Ciara	Deirdre
And you promise not to laugh?	Did you learn anything about Deaglán?
Nóirín	Finbar
I promise.	Aye, we've learned much.
Ciara	Deirdre
I'd feel safer if you took down the Brigid's Cross and brought it closer to us.	What is it?
Nóirín	Fiadh
Brigid's Cross is meant to hang above the doors.	Maybe I should explain further out of earshot.
Ciara	Deirdre
I told you it was going to sound silly.	What is going on?
Nóirín	Officer O'Hanley
The best protection it can give you is to stay right where it is.	Someone clue her in and someone come with me.
Ciara	Finbar
I know, I'm such a foolish girl, but -	I'll go with you.
Nóirín	
Take mine.	Officer O'Hanley and Finbar exit to Main Room. Deirdre and Fiadh retreat further into the back room.
<i>Nóirín puts the one she's had on her on the table in front of them. Ciara recoils back again.</i>	Deirdre
	(taking a good look at Deaglán's body) I can't believe that he's gone. I promised him a send off you know.

Nóirín

Are you okay?

Ciara

I was startled is all. This whole night has made me so scared. Tell me, are there other ways for that creature to be getting in and out? Other secret entrances or windows? I can't believe it just disappeared into thin air.

Nóirín

No secret entrances far as I know. We've a back door fer deliveries.

Ciara

May we go and check to make sure that it's locked.

Nóirín

It always stays locked unless in use.

Ciara

I would feel safer knowing that we checked the lock ourselves.

Nóirín

Can't hurt to double check.

Nóirín & Ciara start to head toward the back when Officer O'Hanley and Finbar enter.

Officer O'Hanley

Where are you going?

Fiadh

Deirdre I'm going ta tell ye somethin' that will sound mad.

Deirdre

I don't know if there's anything you can tell me that's madder than what we've already seen here tonight.

Fiadh

What a grand and open mind ya have Deirdre.

Deirdre

Fiadh, what do you need to tell me.

Fiadh

I need ya ta take a good look at Deaglán fer me.

Deirdre

Didn't you do that with Officer O'Hanley?

Fiadh

Aye, but I need you to see it with yer own eyes.

Deirdre

And what exactly am I 'sposed to be seein' with me own eyes?

Fiadh

You're an undertaker, you tell me how he died.

Deirdre

I wouldn't say an undertaker is the coroner.

Nóirín

We're going to check that the back door is locked. Did you see the creature that attacked Deaglán?

Officer O'Hanley

No, nothing.

Nóirín

I hope we can catch whatever that was.

Officer O'Hanley

We'll do our best.

Nóirín

We'll return in a moment.

Finbar

Is Deirdre handing out bowls of her famous stew?

Nóirín

Oh, well, I can get you some.

Ciara

I haven't touched mine. You're welcome to it.

Officer O'Hanley tries to discreetly position one of the mirrors to be facing the bar.

Finbar

Deirdre's stew is the best in town. She's taken it to be judged at multiple competitions and won, hasn't she Nóirín.

Fiadh

Deirdre, look at the body.

Deirdre

Okay.

Deirdre goes over to Deaglán's body. She checks his pulse, opens his eyelids, looks inside his mouth. Examines his head.

Deirdre

He's dead. I don't know how he died. No blood, cold to the touch.

Fiadh

Look at his neck.

Deirdre looks at his neck and sees two puncture marks.

Deirdre

How did he get these?

Fiadh

I don't know. Wasn't in here when he died. But the person who was said that he was attacked by a creature bigger than a cat. Do you see scratch marks on him?

Deirdre

No.

Nóirín

She has, at least three times.

Ciara

Nóirín, would you -

Finbar

The thing is, if you ask me, I think I know the secret ingredient Deirdre puts into her stew. Aye, I like to think of myself as a connoisseur of beef stews.

Ciara

That's very -

Finbar

And I would say, I've eaten beef stew at every pub between here and the quarry. Most of them, I wouldn't even call a stew. Much too watery for my liken'. A stew has to have depth to it. Won't run off the spoon like most soups.

Ciara

Soups are -

Finbar

Which is why I think I'm the best judge around to say what makes a stew vs what makes a grand stew. And Deirdre, that woman makes an award winning, could lick the bottom of the bowl, stew.

Ciara

My appetite is -

Finbar

And fer her to be passin' out her award winning, beef stew to guests on

Fiadh

I see two bite marks. Are we supposed to believe that a creature, a bit bigger than a cat, leapt onto Deaglán, didn't leave a mark upon his shoulders, and bit his neck?

Deirdre

I don't know.

Fiadh

And are we supposed to believe this all happened without Deaglán uttering a cry fer help?

Deirdre

What are ye gettin' at?

Fiadh

What changes shape and leaves bite marks on people's neck?

Deirdre

Ye can't be serious.

Fiadh

I'm askin' you to tell me what you think happened here tonight?

Deirdre

I don't know, but if yer tryin' to convince me a vampire came in and killed Deaglán then vanished into thin air, then I'd say ya had too much to drink.

Fiadh

Who said the vampire left?

Finbar continued

Samhain is a treat. I'd say, if this was a normal even' she'd be all out by this time. But fer her to have enough fer even two bowls is rare.

Ciara

Sir, you may have mine. Nóirín and I were -

Finbar

I know that yer new in town and I wouldn't dream of takin' away the chance of tryin' the best stew in town. That stew is the reason I come here every night. If not I find myself pinning fer a bowl of stew. And no stew compares with Deirdre's. Which is why I can be both most envious of yer bowl, but also know that you'll never have anything quite like it again.

Ciara

Stews, are not my favorite, I do not mind if -

Finbar

Ah, but I know Deirdre will have saved me a bowl fer she's a kind woman who knows that her stew is my favorite dish. She'd never dish out the last drop without keeping at least a spoonful aside fer me.

Officer O'Hanley finally gets the mirror in place and Ciara has no reflection. He moves toward the back room as Fiadh and Deirdre enter the main room.

Deirdre

Ciara? You think Ciara is a vampire?

Fiadh

I'm sayin' it's worth a look to see if she is one.

Deirdre

This is -

Fiadh

Ye said it yerself. There's more than just mischief afoot this night.

Deirdre

Nóirín is with her.

Fiadh and Deirdre exit to main room but is intercepted by Officer O'Hanley

Officer O'Hanley

(to Fiadh, Deirdre can hear) She's no reflection. Be ready with the holy water.

Deirdre

Officer O'Hanley, ye can't be serious.

Officer O'Hanley

You need to get Nóirín away from that thing.

Deirdre

This is mad. That is a young woman. We can't be attackin' her in my establishment. I won't have it.

Ciara

Nóirín, we should -

Finbar

You must be weak after that fainting spell. Though I must say you look much better than how they found you. So weak they mistook you for one of the dead.

Ciara

I feel awful at how much trouble -

Finbar

I don't think I've ever fainted. Been knocked out once or twice but I don't think that's the same thing. I'm a fisherman by trade ye see, and when I was a young lad just startin' out I didn't have my sea legs yet. There I was in the biggest storm I'd ever been in, waves tossin' us around like a tin can, swells that felt like we were bein' pulled right to the bottom of the ocean. Shouldn't 'ave been out there but it came on us before we knew the sky had darkened.

Ciara

I don't think -

Finbar

When all of a sudden one of the ropes holding the sail snapped, on account of us not getting all the sails down in time. I was standing right by the line when it snapped and the end of it hit me right here in me noggin'. Next thing I knew I was wakin' up on the deck of the boat, drenched from the rain. My mate standin' by me tryin' to shake me awake.

Officer O'Hanley

Deirdre, I will take no action that compromises the oath I took when I became an officer for the Dublin Metropolitan Police. Can you trust me on that?

Deirdre

Yes.

Officer O'Hanley

Then please, can you help me by getting your daughter away from that young woman?

Deirdre

Aye, Seán. I will.

Officer O'Hanley

Thank you. Do you have any symbols of protection on you?

Deirdre

Not on me.

Fiadh

(hands her a Brigid's Cross) Take this.

Officer O'Hanley

When I give you the signal, be ready with the holy water.

Fiadh

Aye.

Officer O'Hanley

Good luck.

All 3 exit to Main Room

Main Room

Ciara

That sounds absolutely dreadful, sir.
Quite an awful life or death moment. I
wouldn't know what I would have done.

Finbar

If you were me -

Ciara

I am so dreadfully tired, havin' such a
terribly long day, I must bid goodnight.
Nóirín, would kindly, please walk me to
my door so that I may rest.

Nóirín

Yes, of course. We shall go this
moment.

Deirdre

Nóirín, I need help in the back before
you go. Need to get the body up off the
floor and there's a mess of things that
need sortin' before you do.

Nóirín

Ma, please, Ciara is tired. Let me get
her to her bed and then I'll help you.

*Officer O'Hanley gives a signal to Fiadh.
Fiadh starts toward Nóirín & Ciara.*

Fiadh

Dreadful night, it is. Two girls walkin'
alone. Here, take this fer yer safety.

Back Room

*The sound of a horse drawn carriage
can be heard. The carriage comes to a
stop. Enter The Dullahan*

Dullahan

Deaglán O'Brien. Rise.

*Deaglán begins to stir as if awaking
from a dream. Deaglán sees the
Dullahan*

Deaglán

No. No. Tell me you've not come for me
Dullahan.

Dullahan

Your name is the name I speak,
Deaglán O'Brien.

Deaglán

How?

Dullahan

It is your time.

Deaglán

There's a mistake. I was drinkin' a pint. I
was ... I was helping a woman. She ...
Oh god ... she ... she killed me? Why?

Dullahan

I have no knowledge of her motive,
Deaglán O'Brien.

Fiadh flicks the holy water onto Ciara and Nóirín. Ciara begins to writhe in pain.

Ciara

What, aaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhh, how, aaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhh

Nóirín

What did you do to her?

Deirdre

Nóirín!

Nóirín

Ciara, let me help you!

Ciara's features are twisted, her face red with her own blood, splotchy from where the water hit her skin. She grabs Nóirín. When she speaks her voice is darker.

Ciara

Do not come any closer or I will snap her neck.

Nóirín

Ciara? Please...

Ciara

Be still! I've no patience to tolerate this charade any longer.

Deaglán

What will happen to me Dullahan?

Dullahan

Follow me and you will find out.

Deaglán

Where's your compassion? I've just died and I don't know why and I don't know what will happen to me. Or what will happen to my wife. Cadhla. Will my wife be okay? Can you at least tell me that? Will Cadhla be okay?

Dullahan

What did you do when your father died?

Deaglán

This is not about me! This is about my wife!

Dullahan

Isn't it about you?

Deaglán

Ya wish to speak in riddles to me? Have you no heart?

Dullahan

For longer than the days you walked on this Earth, Deaglán O'Brien, I have shepard souls from this world to the next. I've carried babies out of cribs, ripped children from their mothers arms, and torn lovers from each other's embrace. I'm the one the dead fight when they don't want to leave even though there's no turnin' back. Do you think me cruel? Cruel would be to let

Finbar

Why'd you have to go and murder
Deaglán?

Ciara

If it were up to me, I'd have hoped it was
you who went in the back. That way I
wouldn't have to hear you go on and on
about stew. Your existence is pointless
and pathetic.

Deirdre

Ciara, please, tell us what you want and
be gone.

Ciara

Nóirín and I would like to leave. NOW.

Fiadh

The door is there Ciara. No one is
stopping you.

Ciara

We are going to leave out the backdoor.

Fiadh

Out the back. Fine way to go. Everyone
clear a path.

*Ciara starts to shuffle Nóirín to the back.
Everyone watches as they pass them.
Before they get too close to the exit*

Dullahan (continue)

you wander the Earth without a way to
the land beyond. To not have a choice
between binding yourself to this mortal
coil for your eternity or moving on to the
next. To let you haunt here, to watch as
your loved ones grow old, watch them
move on from you, watch them die,
watch me come for them until you're
alone in a world that forgot you existed.
Cruel is never coming for you, never
taking you to Tír na nÓg. Cruel would be
to make you pay a price. To pay in
currencies only the immortal trade in. To
pay in memories of the life you leave
behind or secrets never told. You wish
me cruel, Deaglán O'Brien? Because I
will show you cruel.

Deaglán O'Brien

No. Dullahan. I do not.

Dullahan

I'm not a diviner. I can not see into the
future. I cannot tell you how your wife
will be. Grief is a powerful emotion. But I
can tell you, one day I will speak her
name, the same as I've spoken yours,
and if she comes with me I'll take her Tír
na nÓg where the two of you will be
reunited.

Deaglán O'Brien

Can you promise me that, Dullahan?
That you'll bring my Cadhla to me when
it's time.

Dullahan

I promise that when I come for her,
when I speak her name, I will offer her
passage to Tír na nÓg. I will tell her
that's where you're waiting for her and if

Fiadh

But if yer hopin' not to find Brigid's Cross
on the back door yer goin' ta be
disappointed.

Ciara

I've no use for such silly symbols. Nóirín
took down the one in the back and she'll
surely take down this one if she wants to
live.

Fiadh

Oh aye, I'm sure Nóirín is fond of livin'.

*While Ciara is distracted Deirdre puts
her Brigid's Cross on the doorway
prevent Ciara from leaving the room.*

Ciara

(hissing) Take it down.

Deirdre

I thought it was a silly symbol.

Ciara

If I have to ask again I will kill her.

Nóirín

I'll do it. I'll get it.

Ciara

Everyone over there.

Dullahan (continue)

she enters my carriage, I promise she
will reach Tír na nÓg in haste.

Deaglán O'Brien

Is it true that time goes slower there
than here?

Dullahan

My task binds me to this Earth, to
continue to shepherd souls. I've never
seen the beauty that is Tír na nÓg. And
I do not think I ever will, for I fear, I may
never want to leave.

Deaglán O'Brien

I'm sorry, Dullahan.

Dullahan

Tis' I that shoulders this burden. Mine
and mine alone.

Deaglán O'Brien

I'm ready, Dullahan. Take me to Tír na
nÓg.

Dullahan

Your carriage awaits.

Exit Dullahan and Deaglán O'Brien.

Main Room

Ciara points to the other side of the room. Deirdre, Finbar, Fiadh, & Officer O'Hanley oblige.

Ciara

(in a lower voice to Nóirín) Nóirín, I did not come here to kill you. My deception has been to get close to you, to befriend you. I'm sorry for scaring you. Please, come with me. We can travel to Waterford, or anywhere you'd like. There's so many places to visit and things to see. I wish to see it with you.

Nóirín

I'd like that.

Ciara

If you take that down, we can escape. You and I. We can't be lonely if we're together.

Nóirín

And you'd not hurt me if I did this?

Ciara

I don't want to hurt you Nóirín.

Nóirín

I will do as you say.

Ciara releases Nóirín who reaches up for Brigid's Cross. She takes it off the wall.

Nóirín

There.

Ciara

(turning back to the group) Do not try and follow -

Nóirín

(Suddenly shoving Brigid's Cross down Ciara's top) I'm sorry.

Ciara begins writhing in pain again, scrambling to get the item out from her clothing. At the group rushes toward Ciara. Fiadh throwing the entire bottle of holy water on her. Deirdre wrestles Ciara to behind the bar and gets Ciara to the ground. Nóirín follows after her mother and retrieves a sword hanging by the bar off the wall. As Deirdre holds the vampire down, Nóirín cuts the vampire's head off. The head rolls out from behind the bar.

BLACKOUT