

Dragon Woman

by Elizabeth King

A Television Drama

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¹ Winged Victory of Samothrace, the Louvre Museum. Sculpture dated early 2nd Century BC

Dragon Woman

Cast in order of appearance

Marian Keeley	Frustrated housewife. Married to Pete
Petula Cairns	A lonely spinster. No children
Dilys Powell	Retired widow
Sandra Doyle	A selective mute. Abandoned by her husband
Pauline Doyle	Sandra's daughter
Lorcan Doyle	Pauline's father and Sandra's ex
Leanne	Lorcan's first wife
Pete Keeley	Marian's husband
Dylan Keeley	Pete and Marian's son
Nanette	Old woman in cave - an ancient hag and mystic
Cormac McAndrew	A handsome, rough and ready local. A bachelor. Recently bereaved. Nanette uses Cormac to manipulate events in Cnoc Mara
Barry	Cormac's drinking pal in the Windlass Bar

This TV drama is set in the fictional town of Cnoc Mara on the western edge of Achill Island. Achill Island sits off the coast of County Mayo in the West of Ireland. The black slate cliffs of Dubhchaoin rise 500 feet above a raging sea.

Cnoc Mara is a coastal town with approximately 1200 inhabitants. Its main street includes O'Malley's shop, a Post Office, the Windlass Bar and The Salt Quay Cafe.

Halfway down the cliff face — accessible only by a treacherous goat path — lies a cave: Uaimh na Caillí; a deep sea cave carved into the cliff by centuries of storm surge.

INT. The Salt Quay Cafe. Morning

Marian, Petula and Dilys are meeting for a late morning coffee. Marian is ordering coffees from the barista. She brings them to the table.

The women are talking about a local woman called Sandra - 54 years of age, who lives with her 16 year old daughter - Pauline. Sandra is a selective mute. She claims that her previous husband Lorcan died some 10 years ago - but the small town community have questioned Sandra's story ever since.

PET I think it's wonderful what you're doing Marian .. continuing to make all these visits, especially when there's been so little change ..

DILYS How many years has it been now ?

PET I just worry about Pete. He's acting out of sorts Marian ..

Marian is distracted

MARIAN I don't know what it is about her .. something keeps me going there. It's like a wheel. If I don't pop in, I'll not stop me worrying .. and so it goes ..

DILYS Well she's a grown woman isn't she ? Where's the worry .. ?

MARIAN I like Sandra. Why is that an issue for either of you ? I'm not followin' ..

PET I mean .. she doesn't .. well .. isn't our concern for her daughter ? With no one to talk to .. I mean .. Sandra stays silent around Pauline as well does she not ?

MARIAN I've never *seen* them speak to one another, no. There's no actual talking going on .. but Pauline will say things out of the blue .. as if responding to Sandra like..

DILYS That's strange Marian.

PET Is Pauline happy ?

MARIAN Well .. yes

PET And she's goin' into school ?

MARIAN Yeah .

DILYS What about this tutoring thing ? Is Sandra still doing that ?

MARIAN Yes - in her maths. She's tutoring her in Latin as well ..

Pet and Charlotte make eye contact

PET Latin Maz ?

MARIAN Yes .. and why not ?

Dilys is concerned about the atmosphere turning sour

DILYS Let me get these ladies. D'you want another Marian ?

Marian shakes her head and Pet knocks back her coffee

INTERCUT : INT. Pauline's Home. Afternoon.

Pauline gets in from school. She unpacks a shopping bag for Sandra who is sitting at the table smoking. There is a vase of yellow roses and fuchsia pink blooms on the table. Sandra appears very calm and watches Pauline with ambiguous contentment.

Pauline places items onto the table : Milk; biscuits; apples .. Sandra smiles

Pauline holds the biscuits out to her mother

PAULINE D'you mind ?

Sandra stubs out the cigarette. She stretches and yawns.

Pauline opens the packet and tucks into a biscuit.

Sandra puts her hands behind her neck and lowers her head to the table.

Pauline watches in a biscuit eating trance.

INTERCUT : INT. Marian's Home.

Marian picks up the telephone on the kitchen wall and telephones Sandra. Cut to Pauline who picks up the receiver.

INTERCUT : INT. Pauline in kitchen at home.

Sandra watches Pauline answer the phone.

TELEPHONE Pauline ? Hello love. Is your mother alright ?
VOICE
OF
MARIAN

PAULINE Yeah .. of course she is .. (pauses) .. Did you want to speak to her ?

Pauline looks at her mother cheekily ..Sandra blinks slowly

PHONE
VOICE OF
MARIAN

Can you just tell your mum that I probably won't be round for a few days .. I've just got some .. I'm just going to be a bit busy .. I'll be over just as soon as i can

PAULINE

Okay okay

Sandra goes to the kitchen sink. Pauline puts down the receiver

That was Marian. She's .. she'll be over in a few days. She's busy .. with stuff

Sandra slams a kitchen utensil down into the washing up bowl

Pauline flinches but clearly this loss of temper is not something new.

PAULINE

Well that doesn't help you, me or anyone now does it ?

Sandra stands and looks at Pauline - steadily but not angrily.

Sandra looks at her wrist watch and then the kitchen clock.

She pulls a folder from a drawer.

Instantly, Pauline seems to understand what this means and becomes overcast

I don't know what you want me to write ..

Sandra holds her gaze upon Pauline

Where are we today ?

Sandra sits at the table. She is very relaxed. She gently pushes a book across the table and Pauline reads the cover

Cicero and the Catilinarian Conspiracy ..?

Pauline reacts with fatigue

Mum !

She puts her head in her hands

I need to think

Sandra touches her arm to rally her

Pauline looks up. Sandra beats her chest once and produces some kind of hand gesture that connects to the mouth. This is clearly a thoroughly explored means of communication

Pauline stares and begins to interpret ..

Create my own ..?

My own decree ..

Sandra pulls a cigarette from a packet and lights it

Pauline searches for a pen and glasses from her school bag

Sandra takes a print from her folder and pushes the image across the table to Pauline.

*It is a photograph of the **Winged Victory of Samothrace**.*

Sandra studies Pauline as her daughter consults the picture. Sandra begins to move the book on Cicero away from Pauline

Pauline claws at the book to keep it close by

PAULINE I still need to read what he said !

This reading and writing ritual is an early hint at a dysfunctional mother/daughter relationship

Sandra rises and leans against the edge of the kitchen sink to watch Pauline.

Pauline settles into reading almost immediately.

Sandra watches Pauline then turns to look out of the kitchen window.

A kind of peace befalls them

INTERCUT : INT. Next morning. Pete and Marian's kitchen at home

Marian is sitting at the table eating her breakfast. There is a vase of yellow roses and fuchsia pink blooms on the table. Pete comes down in work clothes. He works in a factory on the mainland. He starts raiding the refrigerator.

PETE Are you going round to see her today ?

MARIAN No. No .. I think she's alright at the moment.

PETE Are they from Sandra's garden ?

Marian smiles benignly at Pete. Pete does not reciprocate

Why is Dylan still in bed ?

MARIAN He's not well Pete. He's not ..

PETE Well ? What's the matter with him ?

MARIAN I don't know. He's gone back to sleep.

PETE Work sucks doesn't it ? Totally get that. Might do the same meself.

MARIAN Oh it's not like he makes a habit of it is it ?

PETE If you're askin' .. it's the thinner end of a wedge

MARIAN What ?

PETE This is how it starts

MARIAN Oh God .. get rid of your early morning grumpy, sit down, and eat some breakfast

Pete starts shovelling cereal into his mouth like a teenager. His eyes alight upon the flowers

PETE And how's she managed to grow those ?

MARIAN A greenhouse ..

PETE What's she got one of those for ? Does she talk to the flowers mind ?

MARIAN And why would she do that ?

PETE Suit her down to the ground wouldn't it ? Wit' no one *actually* listening ?

MARIAN Talk is cheap

PETE Oh but it's nice once in a while isn't it ?

MARIAN I suppose so. You're always telling **me** to give it a rest ..

PETE Maz. She doesn't speak for Christ sake

MARIAN And you'd be surprised how much can be communicated when only one person is talking

PETE *(momentarily agog)* Oh no love ! That doesn't come as a surprise at all

Pete winks at his wife. He has momentarily amused himself

Marian narrows her eyes at Pete

MARIAN Hmmm ... Right now, get yourself off ..

Marian takes plates from the table to the sink and Dylan slinks into the kitchen in his Pajamas.

MARIAN (to Pete) Well ? Aren't you going to say anything to him ?

Pete resolves to say nothing.

I've called school Dylan

Dylan does not respond. He stands at the kitchen sink. Pete stands behind him waiting so that he can dump his bowl. Dylan becomes conscious of his father and moves to the refrigerator.

PETE Right. I'm off

MARIAN D'you want a lift ?

PETE How d'you mean ?

MARIAN I need the car today. I'll take you ..

PETE What d'you need it for ?

MARIAN I can't be bothered to explain Pete

Pete moves to the hall to get his coat on. Marian dumps stuff in the sink

Back soon love

Dylan ignores his mother

Front door clicks shut.

Dylan's toast pops up. He starts scraping butter over it. He stares at the pink and yellow flowers on the table and bites into his toast.

INTERCUT : EXT. Day / afternoon : Main street

Dylan is walking along a windy rainy street, nearly bumping into oncoming pedestrians. He stops by a street wastebin to unwrap a chocolate bar. Something makes him look up.

Across the street is a gaunt aged woman appearing as an anachronism as do her gesticulations and facial contortions. She does not seem to be visible to any other public members surrounding or passing her : noone other than Dylan.

She wears tatty old gloves and makes unintelligible hand signs - directing them at Dylan. Her head peers from beneath cloths and rags. Her lined weathered face is alarming : manic smiling and piercing eyes that seem to belong to another dimension

Dylan is disturbed by this woman and is momentarily paralysed by this eye contact encounter. He continues to take her in against his own will

Eventually he manages to break the contact and starts to stride down the street. He looks over his shoulder : She is still there.

He walks on - frightened.

He looks over his shoulder again.

She is gone.

INTERCUT : EXT Cliff face / goat path

From the distance - a man - Cormac McAndrew - all bundled up in coat and scarves - is skittering along a perilous goat path that runs across and down the cliffs of Dubhchaoin. He fights the elements - trying to reach Uaimh na Cailli : a centuries old sea cave

INTERCUT : INT Sandra's kitchen

Sandra is standing at the kitchen window watching the rain lashing against the pane.

She pulls on a cigarette and exhales smoke like an old pro ...

INTERCUT : EXT Witch's cave

Cormac is perched on a rock at the mouth of the cave. He is windswept, wet and cold. He squints into the salty spray. He appears to be waiting for something. Further into the cave is a fireplace. An unaccountable curl of smoke rises from its recent extinction .. He looks at it both warily and with suspicion

Out of the darkness comes the witch like voice of Nanette. It is uncanny and extraordinary but of no surprise to Cormac

NANETTE (...) fuckin' 'ell d'you want ...?

Cormac scoffs and rubs his hands to try and keep warm

CORMAC Half arsed bitch .. (referring to the ashes) You put that out coz y'saw me comin' ?

There is a lull and then Nanette appears out of the gloom

NANETTE Take what you need and shove off ..

CORMAC And don't you be fart arsin' me about .. What's on the horizon ?

NANETTE Got nothin' for yer ..

She starts to wheeze and cackle.

Suddenly from nowhere the fire catches light and a flame starts to dance wearily over a small pile of logs and ashes

CORMAC Set me a burn Nan ..

NANETTE 'tsin yer pocket !

She sinks her gaze into him. Her face and nose wrinkle up with pleasure. A mirthless smile reveals rotten and missing teeth. Cormac pulls a bent roll up out of his jacket .. He sucks and the end glows automatically. He accepts this phenomenon unflinchingly and smokes

Nanette settles her gaze upon him. Clearly she has effortless insights into the man

NANETTE Comin over 'ere unannounced ..

CORMAC Knew damn well enough I was comin'

NANETTE And if I did ?

Cormac shifts with slight unease

CORMAC It's the Post Office .. I couldn't be doing with that this morning ..

NANETTE You blind fool .. 'Twas only a letter

CORMAC Aye and I'm not sendin' it ..

NANETTE 'Aye and I'm not sendin' it' he says

Nanette's head cocks to one side like a bird who suddenly sees something unfamiliar

You'll not be cookin' up anything for me .. 'Tis me alone who does all the cookin' ..

Cormac looks at Nanette and starts laughing at this housewife connotation

Nanette catches his glance.

They both lock eyes and chuckle together - a temporary moment of a false reconciliation.

Suddenly Nanette's face turns nasty

NANETTE Let me see it

She holds out a hand that is gnarled and filthy. Her fingernails are overgrown

CORMAC Don't 'ave it

NANETTE Now Mac ! Before I flay the face off a yer ..

Cormac pulls out a letter in a manky envelope. It is blank

NANETTE No address so ?

CORMAC *(a little afraid)* Not yet ..

Nanette rips the envelope open and pulls out the crumpled page. Her eyes move rapidly across its contents

NANETTE So you're thinkin' of askin' her out ?

CORMAC Not thinkin' ..

NANETTE Oh praise be .. Not thinkin' ...? So not intendin' on it at all then !

Cormac's voice issues from his chest like a hungry angry bear.

CORMAC Oh and what's in it for you any ways .. ?

Nanette luxuriates in this sudden flare of masculine fury

Clearly her ability to engender this kind of human reaction is one of her greatest pleasures.

Her eyes twinkle. She wheezes a painful chesty laugh that tears up her eyes.

NANETTE Well dere's certainly nothin' in it for you - is dere now ?

Cormac makes to leave. Like lightening Nanette is before him and stops him by his arm.

Little wee boy. The joke of a man ! Always needin' dere mummy ..

She holds Cormac's face by the cheeks with one hand

Cormac ... you're a handsome man

CORMAC *(without malice)* Fuck off

NANETTE Handsome prizes to be won .. Isn't it Maccy.. ?

Cormac doesn't respond

Eh ?

CORMAC I didn't forget

NANETTE Did you see the van then ..?

CORMAC Yeah .. *you* that was it ? **Was** it you ?

NANETTE Of course me. And you know that it was. What have you got ?

Cormac slips her an evil smile

CORMAC Doors were wide open Nan ..

Nanette closes her eyes and nods, making sounds of calm and comfortable concurrence

CORMAC It is handsome Nanny

NANETTE Of course Cormac. And I bet it is ..

Cormac is levering something out of his pocket.

Nanette snatches it

The fire has got up somewhat and it casts a warm orange hue over the cave

Nanette and Cormac sit down again

Cormac relights his cigarette with a match

Nanette probes inside the bag.

She pulls out a diamond necklace like a baby snake

CORMAC When ?

Nanette looks at Cormac with disappointment

When do I get it ?

NANETTE Ungrateful sack of shit

Nanette rises in an instant and moves round to Cormac who is already on his feet. She shoves the letter against his chest.

And so you be takin' the letter !

The light in the cave changes to a cold blue hue. Cormac looks - the fire is out again.

Smoke curls up into the air.

Nanette has disappeared

INTERCUT : EXT - Goat path leading to top of cliff - a darkened sky

Cormac can be seen scrambling back up the goat path towards home

INTERCUT : INT - Next day. Home of Petula.

Lying on the doormat is the letter from the previous scene.

Petula frowns at it and stoops to pick it up. She doesn't delay and opens it. She reads with scrutiny.

Her face shifts to a slightly more upbeat expression...

PETULA *(talking under her breath) .. What ?*

She smiles and goes back upstairs to the bedroom

INTERCUT : INT - Late afternoon. Pete and Marian's house.

Pete comes in to discover that Marian is not in.

PETE Hello ?

Goes to kitchen

Marian ?

Pete cracks open a beer from the fridge

He crashes down beside the kitchen table to enjoy the solitude

A minute later Marian returns

She calls Pete from the hall

MARIAN *(voice from hall) Pete ?*

She bustles into the kitchen with bags

MARIAN Bloody 'ell you sat here in dark for ?

She switches on the kitchen light. She sees his beer can

Bit early for that isn't it ?

PETE Didn't know where you were ...

Marian is slightly baffled

MARIAN Is Dylan home ?

PETE How the bloody 'ell should I know ?

MARIAN Right. Lets get something on ...

Marian starts moving around the kitchen trying to prepare an evening meal

PETE What d'you need the car for ?

MARIAN I went to the library if you must know

PETE (*highly amused*) The library ? For some peace and quiet I hope .. s'nothin' else there

MARIAN No. To print something

PETE Why ?

MARIAN Printer's out of ink

PETE Has it ?

Dylan ambles sheepishly into the kitchen

Pete is distracted by his son and his apparently groundless day off from school

Help your mother Dylan... God's sake

MARIAN Leave 'im

DYLAN What ?

MARIAN Sit down Dylan

PETE What were you printing ?

Marian looks slightly anguished at the thought of mentioning Sandra's name

MARIAN It's something Sandra's showing me ..

PETE Oh God - no ..

Dylan's phone suddenly emits sounds from youtube

MARIAN Dylan

PETE Get in the other room !

DYLAN What ?

PETE Dylan

DYLAN *(teenage insistence)* It's **OFF** !

PETE I want to speak ..

Dylan puts the sound back on

Pete swipes at Dylan's phone

DYLAN Shit ..!

MARIAN Dylan !

Pete is looking at Dylan's phone

Why d'you do that ?

PETE *(looks at Dylan's phone)* The history of Cnoc Mara ? Am I missing something here ?

MARIAN *(mild triumph)* That actually sounds like homework to me

Pete grimaces

Marian leaves the kitchen to deal with Dylan

INTERCUT : INT Petula's bedroom

Petula is making up her face and she is wearing a dress. By her behaviour she has not been out on a date for a while

INTERCUT : INT Pete and Marian's kitchen

Pete and Marian are eating. Clearly Dylan is not joining them. After a spell of time Marian speaks

MARIAN Take him his phone

Pete sighs and takes the phone to the TV room and hands it to him.

PETE Dere you go fella

Dylan is unresponsive and chucks his phone onto the sofa

*Pete returns to the kitchen. He notices a print out of something in the hall.
It is Marian's Latin text from the library.*

Pete doesn't like it.

INTERCUT : INT The Windlass Bar on Main street

Cormac is sitting at a table when Petula comes in searching for him. He has scrubbed up really well and looks markedly different. He gets himself a drink and settles beside her

CORMAC Didn't expect yer

PETULA Well ..

CORMAC You're lookin fine Pet

PETULA I'm sure I don't .. How so ?

CORMAC Can't you accept a compliment then ?

PETULA Not from you ...

CORMAC Well .. You're lookin' fine alls the same ..

PETULA What do you want Mac ?

Cormac looks slightly lost for an answer.

Petula looks up.

Marian has entered the bar with Pete. She waves keenly.

Pete goes to the bar to get the drinks. He looks over at Marian who is clearly making ways into Pet and Cormac's company. He is not pleased to see this but without an option he ferries the drinks over to Pet and Mac's table.

Marian has already sat down next to Petula

Cormac looks somewhat relieved.

PETE Alright mate ?

CORMAC This your missus ?

PETE This yours ?

Cormac raises his eyebrows

Not yet at least !

Cormac smiles

CORMAC No by the grace of God ..

They share momentary shallow laughter. Marian and Petula are otherwise engaged.

PETE Nothin' stoppin' the girls when they get goin' ..

Cormac grins again. He notices Marian very quickly and is sexually attracted to her

MARIAN We're talking about Sandra ..

CORMAC Who sorry .. ?

Pete groans

MARIAN Sandra Doyle ..

Cormac shakes his head

PETE *(wide eyes)* La Lunar !!

CORMAC Oh aye ?!

PETE Lunatic woman. Never speaks ..

PETULA Never spoken ?

MARIAN Oh no .. I don't think that's the case

CORMAC Never speaks at all like ?

PETE Talks to flowers

MARIAN Shut up Pete

PETE Jesus Mary and Jo ..

MARIAN I'm so excited .. I've never read any Latin before

PETE So that's what you printed out at the library .. ?

PETULA What does it say Maz ?

PETE Recipes for a Happy Husband .. Right love ?

Marian is now oblivious to Pete as is Cormac who is becoming increasingly interested in Marian

CORMAC So Sandra's not married

MARIAN Well. She was .. that Lorcan fella ..

PETULA Who ?

MARIAN He was awful .. Still married to his first wife when he got with Sandra

Petula grimaces in empathy

MARIAN Sandra is lovely. She asks for nothing and she always welcomes me in ..

CORMAC So she's a good friend of yours ?

MARIAN And I of hers ..

PETE She's a florist isn't she love ?

MARIAN Pete is uncomfortable about my visits to Sandra ..

PETULA She's a bit of a worry Cormac. Not talking .. I mean .. not talking to her daughter

CORMAC She's not talking to her little girl ?

MARIAN Pauline is 16

PETE The Florist's Apprentice ..

Cormac observes Pete for a moment

Has she got a pussy cat Mazz ? Surely to God ..

PETULA Marian ! What is this Latin text you were talking about

MARIAN Oh ! I've not read it yet !

PETE So where's the appeal in that ? I'd sooner read the obituaries ..

MARIAN Pauline explains things when certain situations demand it ..

PETULA *(unsure)* Right ..

CORMAC Strikes me you're doin' her a favour making these visits .. Is she lonely like ?

MARIAN I think so .. I don't know

Petula notices Cormac becoming increasingly enamoured with Marian

PETE She's obsessed with her

PETULA And whatever makes you say that Pete ?

MARIAN *Laus Mulieris Fortis*

PETE Fortis what ?

MARIAN The Praise of the Strong Woman. It's from The Book of Proverbs - *Liber Proverbiorum*, Vulgata Latina

PETE It's Latin for vagina

Cormac is obliged to chuckle at this

PETULA Have you got the translation ?

MARIAN I really want to unpick it myself

CORMAC Nothin wrong wi' that

PETE Everythin's wrong with it mate .. When's she got time to do that ?

PETULA It's fascinating.

CORMAC It is ..

Marian smiles at Cormac and Petula clocks it with envy

Pete and Cormac knock back their pints.

PETE Nuther one mate ?

CORMAC Cheers pal ..

INTERCUT : INT Sandra's Kitchen

Sandra smoking and looking out of the kitchen window

She looks around and Pauline has fallen asleep at the table.

She sits down and takes up Pauline's work .

She reads Pauline's notes. Pauline's voice sounds mildly irritated ..

VOICE Of Pauline Susceptibility to passion and grief ? Ruled by feelings ..? Less fit for the dispassionate deliberation expected in public life ? So ? I am emotional and open to pain .. I inhabit the higher ground because I will take risks.

Why the need for so much control ? Cicero's words. What are these words ? I see the lines and I read them but I'd sooner read between them. Male dominance ? The rat of a husband - the rat who cheats. Let these men rat on themselves.

This is my language. These are my words

Sandra looks up and smiles

INT : Kitchen / Following morning at Sandra's Home

Pauline is eating cereal and Sandra is sitting at the table brushing her hair

Pauline looks up at her

PAULINE Mum .. why do you brush your hair at the table? It's not hygienic

Sandra widens her eyes humorously and slams down the brush onto the table

Pauline laughs

That's worse !!

Sandra takes up the brush and continues to work it through her hair

Pauline eyes her with a playful challenging smile

Sandra starts to pull hair from the brush

Mum !

She winds the hair around her finger and presents a small wreath to Pauline

For **me** ?!

Pauline puts the ring of hair on her finger

She gnashes her teeth in fun and presents the ring on her finger

It's official ..behold ! The sacred ring .. (a satanic voice) .. betrothed to Grendel

Sandra sits back - amused

Pauline gets up, bins the hair and dumps her bowl in the sink

She gathers her coat and bag for school

Sandra goes to the kitchen window sill, reaches for her cigarettes and lights up

Pauline watches her closely as she gets into her coat

Sandra raises a finger - meaning - 'hold on a minute'

Quickly mum ..

Sandra pulls a piece of paper out of her jeans pocket

The note is in Latin.

Pauline reads it in fits and starts and laughs

Mother, the ... smoke ? The smoke bearing dragon

She repeats the text she has just read but in Latin and pronounces it with flair and a gesture

Mater draco fumifer !

Pauline appears to be enjoying this

She shifts her weight onto one hip and smiles

OK ..

Sandra proceeds to act something out

She crosses her arms over her chest and then claws the air to mean 'dragon'

PAULINE *(reading the mime)* My mother bears a dragon's spirit;

Pauline squeezes her eyes together to grasp the Latin translation

Mater mea draconis animam gerit :

Sandra puts the cigarette into her mouth and allows smoke to curl from her nose and mouth whilst she motions her arms and hands to indicate the flames of a fire

PAULINE *(enchanted)* Umm .. amid flames and smoke .. inter flammis et fumum ?

Sandra takes the cigarette from her mouth and lodges both hands over her heart

PAULINE Cor mite latet .. a gentle heart hides ..

Sandra smothers Pauline with a prideful hug

PAULINE OK ! Get off ! *(laughing)* Foetidum draconis !

Sandra gives her a playful warning expression with her eyes

Yes ! Stinky Dragon ..

Pauline points at her mother playfully

I think so ..

Sandra pushes Pauline like a cupboard on wheels to the front door and bundles her out of the house. The front door clicks shut.

The house falls silent. Sandra is triggered by Pauline's sudden absence

She turns to head back to the kitchen

INTERCUT : INT : FLASHBACK - 10 years previous

Lorcan (absent husband) - a man aged about 60 is pointing and shouting in Sandra's face. He has a cigarette in his mouth. He throws down a book. This 'motion picture' memory instantly moves into another :

Sandra curled up with the same book. She is reading Latin. Lorcan bends over her and kisses her. He appears to say something along the lines of : "You can't go far wrong with that. See if you can finish it by the end of the week".

Sandra acts playfully submissive. She appears to say "I'll try". Lorcan winks at her

INTERCUT : INT : Sandra's Kitchen / Present time

*Sandra stubs her cigarette out in an ashtray on the side
She runs to the kitchen window in time to see Pauline walking into the distance on her way to school*

She washes up at the kitchen sink

INTERCUT : INT : Library / Late Morning

Dilys is working in the local library.

She is busy on the computer when she looks up and sees Marian.

Marian waves and points in the direction of the book shelves. They smile at one another.

A visitor places two books onto the front desk

DILYS Just those love ?

VISITOR Please ..

DILYS Are you a member?

The visitor puts his card on the desk

Lovely

Dilys starts to stamp 'due back dates' into the backs of the books with an inkpad.

Her eyes lift as she hands the books over to the visitor

Right behind the visitor is Nanette. She is clothed in a rain coat and along with a dirt smudged face, she looks like a homeless elderly woman who has seen far better days

Dilys is suddenly distracted by Marian calling in harsh whispers

MARIAN Dilys ! I'm going to get off !!

Dilys face automatically brightens for Marian and she mouths OK to keep the quiet

She looks back to where Nanette was standing.

Nanette is gone

Immediately Dilys searches for her in astonishment

INTERCUT : INT Factory / Afternoon Pete is at work

Pete is eating a hot meal in a cafeteria when his work mate sits down beside him

MALCOLM That was a piggin' decision if ever I heard one

PETE Aye .. who cares anyway ?

MALCOLM Wish I 'ad your laissez faire attitude

PETE Ah God no ..no more laissez faire for me ..

MALCOLM Oh Christ .. What's Keeley got up 'is sleeve already .. ?

Pete starts looking at his phone

Pete. You're miles away this mornin' .. what's it that's botherin yer ?

PETE I don't know

Pete starts dialling home

INTERCUT : Pete and Marian's House / Phone rings

Telephone rings in an empty house

INTERCUT : INT / Factory canteen

MALCOLM Checkin' in on her ?

PETE No .. wanted to take her out tonight

MALCOLM Mate ! What did you do ?

Malcolm leaves the table.

Pete looks at his phone and continues to brood

INTERCUT : EXT Colaiste Cnoc Mara (Secondary school) - Lunchtime

Pauline is chatting to girlfriends Nellie and Evelyn in the playground. She has spotted Dylan sauntering along the periphery. He is looking through the fence at the urban houses across the street.

He looks over to Pauline and clocks her watching him.

She quickly redirects her attention for fear of him gauging her physical attraction to him. She chats avidly to her friends as a compromise

NELLIE What you gawping at ?

PAULINE And who says I'm gawping ?

Evelyn instantly looks over her shoulder at Dylan

PAULINE Ev ! Don't !!

EVELYN (beaming) What ?

Nellie laughs

NELLIE Totally into him ..

PAULINE So what if I am ?

EVELYN You like Dylan ?

PAULINE And what if I did ?

EVELYN He's weird Pauline

NELLIE No kiddin'

EVELYN Frank Doolan hates his guts

PAULINE Who gives a shite what Doolan tinks about anyone ..

NELLIE I don't ..

PAULINE I don't !

EVELYN Dylan's hardly ever at school any ways

NELLIE He's trying to set us all an example

Nellie looks over her shoulder again. Dylan sees this for a second time

PAULINE What are you doin ' ?

NELLIE What ?

PAULINE Gods sakes Nellie

EVELYN Quit 'ogglin Nellie ..

NELLIE Can look where I want and how I want

Pauline huffs an impatient sigh. She is clearly an independent spirit and not someone to suffer peer pressure or any opinion from her girlfriends

PAULINE Give way girls

Evelyn and Nellie move aside

Pauline swings her bag over her shoulder and walks deliberately passed Dylan to make her way to class.

Her gait is a little too filled with resolve. She deliberately ignores Dylan.

The bell rings for class

Evelyn and Nellie make eye contact with Dylan. They laugh in his direction.

Dylan gives Evelyn and Nellie the finger. Pauline looks over her shoulder and sees this exchange between her peers.

Evelyn walks in Pauline's direction and Nellie straggles behind.

INTERCUT : EXT Sandra's Greenhouse Afternoon

Sandra is in her green house picking dead leaves off her flowers and watering plants

INTERCUT : INT Sandra's Kitchen Bach / Glenn Gould is playing

The doorbell can be heard over the music

INTERCUT : EXT Sandra's Doorstep

Petula is ringing Sandra's doorbell and waiting. Sandra is still in the greenhouse.

Petula can hear the music so she does not give up. She waits and rings the bell again.

Sandra starts to make her way back up to the house.

Sandra enters the kitchen and hears the doorbell. She lays some flowers on the side

She goes to answer the door

Muffled voices from the hall

Sandra re enters the kitchen. She looks a little confused. Petula waddles behind her apologetically

PETULA I should have called first Sandra but I didn't think you'd answer.

Sandra smiles to herself. She puts the kettle and presents two mugs by way of offering Petula tea

Oh .. Please Sandra. That would be lovely.

Petula is clearly relieved that the music is playing. She settles beside Sandra's kitchen table.

She looks at the yellow and fuchsia pink flowers on the table.

Lovely flowers Sandra. Are they yours ?

Pause

Well - I expect they are ..

Sandra gathers the flowers recently cut from the greenhouse

Oh Sandra ! They are beautiful. I love that colour combination

Sandra nods to concur. She is clearly happy for Petula to be visiting

The kettle boils and Sandra pours the tea

Pauline's gone off to school of course .. Is she alright there ? I hope so.. Colaiste looks a bit run down these days doesn't it ? But cut me off quick if it isn't ..A very good school is it not Sandra .. ?

By all accounts ..I just hope Pauline has made some friends there .. You often see the kids scattering the streets ..around 4 .. Seem ok .. they seem alright don't they love ?

Sandra goes over to an old record player and lifts the needle.

To Petula's horror a heavy silence befalls ..

PETULA I love that music Sandra ..

Sandra presents an old record sleeve and smiles

Oh .. JS Bach .. And you've got one of those lovely old vinyl record players ?! Thats fantastic Sandra

Sandra goes over to the flowers and begins to tie some string around the stalks

Petula watches - unsure of what to say next

Sandra ties up the flowers and hands them to Petula

Oh heavens ! Are you sure ?

Sandra settles back down to the table and drinks her tea. She is strangely comfortable and rests her chin in her hand to look directly at Petula without offering a word

Petula inspects the flowers; she smiles. She is getting better acquainted with the silence.

She sniffs at the flowers.

Oh that's a beautiful scent ..

Petula drinks some tea

Marian was in the Windlass last night and she was talking ..

Doorbell rings

Sandra looks at her watch

Are you expecting someone ?

Sandra leaves the kitchen. Marian's voice can be heard from the hall.

Sound of the front door closing.

Marian enters the kitchen ahead of Sandra.

MARIAN Pet ! What are you doing here ?

PETULA Perfect timing !

MARIAN *(not entirely convinced)* Well .. yes

Sandra is already preparing tea for Marian

MARIAN Thanking the Lord for the rain that's just started .. I could have been caught right in the middle of that dump of wet

PETULA And here we are all cosy in Sandra's kitchen ..

Sandra puts Marian's tea in front of her

MARIAN Oh that's grand Sandra .. thanks love

Sandra goes to the record player and restarts the Bach

You've got a lovely bunch there Pet

PETULA Sandra brought them up from the greenhouse. They weren't intended for me so they weren't but she's lain them down for me anyhow

MARIAN Gorgeous ..

Pause

And what about that gorgeous young man last night ?

PETULA Young ? Get off Marian ! He's gettin on for 60 mind

MARIAN He's a handsome fella though isn't he ..

Marian looks at Sandra

If I wasn't all these years betrothed I know where I'd be steerin' the boat ..

PETULA I'm not steering anyone's boat .. Least of all one that sails the seven seas .. Quite happy to curl up with me cats and read a book .. Don't we Sandra ?

Sandra is still focussed on Marian. She is intrigued by this particular subject of the male

Marian senses Sandra's curiosity

MARIAN Oh my Godfathers .. Now. What's his name Pet ?

PETULA Cormac McAndrew

MARIAN That's it

PETULA We dated a while back

MARIAN So hows come you were back datin' im last night Pet my love ..?!

PETULA He wrote me

MARIAN He did what ?

PETULA Dropped me a note

MARIAN Bless us all so nows we're all back at school ?

Sandra finds this amusing and hides a downward grin into her mug of tea

Cormac McAndrew was t'ree year above us at Colaiste. And we all had a crush on him ..

PETULA Apart from de girls who wanted to get on in life

MARIAN Aye .. (*genuine laughter erupts from Marian*) Well said Pet .. And so - will **you** be gettin on .. ? Or not ?

More laughter

Oh Pet .. You want to give that a go ?!

PETULA Don't be so ridiculous

MARIAN So's what you doin there with him in the Windlass in the first place ?

PETULA Didn't want to let him down ..

MARIAN You what ..?

Sandra gets up from the table. Marian and Petula have been temporarily carried

away by this spate of nostalgia. Sandra's movements bring them out of it

Sandra brings a book to the table

Marian and Petula hush themselves down as they recollect the real purpose of their visit

Marian seems disappointed in herself for being sidetracked by Petula's romantic affairs

MARIAN Sandra ! I've been reading it .. the **Laus Mulieris Fortis**

Petula becomes instantly fascinated

PETULA Marian ! You're scarin' the bejeezus out of me .. Can I have a copy Sandra ?

Sandra is once again focussed completely on Marian

MARIAN I think I can remember it .. some of it

Sandra smiles.

Sandra's silence becomes a theatrical pause that anticipates Marian's first step into her new life chapter of Latin recitation

Petula's mouth has fallen open like a five year old child in awe of a miracle.

Sandra observes Marian like a proud university professor

(hushed tones) Wait a minute now ..

Marian composes herself

Fortitudo et decor indumentum eius, et ridebit in die novissimo.
Os suum aperuit sapientiae, et lex clementiae in lingua eius.

Marian beams at Sandra

PETULA May the Lord strike me down Maz .. How in God's name did you remember all of that ?

Marian and Sandra seem temporarily deaf to Petula

MARIAN It honestly didn't take me long because I **feel** it Sandra. It matters .. It really matters to me

Petula forgets herself for a minute

PETULA Bleedin' 'ell ... all o' this within earshot of your husband? Oh my God .. Mazz !
Pete'll think he's married in to a witch ?!

Sandra is less comfortable with this comment and Marian is subsequently displeased

Petula senses this repudiation

Petula looks at Sandra's kitchen clock

Oh look ..

Marian and Sandra remain silent

Sandra ! I cannot thank you enough for these flowers

Sandra has already fallen back into gracious forgiveness and Petula starts to relax

Sandra rises and opens her arms up to Petula. Petula walks into Sandra's embrace

(clumsily) I'd love to have a copy of the ..

MARIAN Laus Mulieris Fortis

PETULA What love ?

MARIAN The Strength of a Woman. Make of it what you will Pet .. It forms a different foundation for every woman who reads it and the ways in which she takes it on ..

PETULA *(intimidated and lost)* Of course

Sandra pulls a piece of paper from her back pocket

What's this ?

Marian stifles a squeal of laughter with her hand like a child who is watching a magician

Petula attempts to read the heading

Vulgata Latina !

Oh ! Its The Strength of a Woman ! Sandra. Thank you so much.

Sandra starts to make her way out of the kitchen.

Oh I can sees my way out Sandra dear.. Take care Marian .. Will I see you at the Cafe soon ?

MARIAN Yes yes. I saw Dilys briefly this morning but I didn't have time to talk. We'll probably rendez vous in a coupla days. I think she gets lonely Pet ..

PETULA I think she does too .. Bye ladies. Don't drink too much tea !

Sandra settles back down to the table.

Marian is looking down and smiling as if she has just been blessed by a priest.

Sound of front door closing.

MARIAN She's a funny ole thing isn't she ? I do love her though ..

Don't expect you saw that one comin' ?

Marian gives Sandra a lovely smile

Sandra shrugs gently and returns the warmth. She touches Marian's arm as if to say - "I'm glad you're here"

Marian breaks into a sob

The two women look at one another

Funny isn't it. You've said nothing for the entire time I've sat here and its the best conversation I've had in months ..

Marian sobs ..

I don't know Sandra

Sandra pulls away to give Marian space and as if to say - I'm here to listen

Marian senses her patience

Why does Pete get so upset about me coming to visit you ? It used to make me laugh - but now .. it's making me angry. It's not harming him in any way. You're not harming me in any way. Why can't he see that ?

Marian looks at Sandra for a reaction. Ironically, Sandra's blank expression gives her incentive

Shouldn't he be pleased that I've found somewhere ? Somewhere to be peaceful ? Where I can learn something new ? S'just a bleedin' print out ! Twelve lines of Latin text and the man is incalculably threatened. A man who watches two or three TV quiz shows in a row and likes to go fishing on a weekend ? What does he want me to do ? Just stay silent ?

Marian catches herself out and suddenly she is thrown into a confusion

Oh my God Sandra.. I didn't mean it like that

Sandra shrugs and smiles

There's nothing wrong with it is there ? Nuttin' at all. Let them talk eh ? Let them Sandra ! Its all rubbish anyways isn't it ?

Marian starts to laugh. She looks relieved.

I ought to go really. He'll be wastin' away on the sofa. He'll disappear if I don't get back and put somethin' on a plate .. Pathetic isn't it ?

Sandra settles into the table. Her elbow slides and she eases her face into her hand. She looks upon Marian as if beholding a lovely flower in a pot.

MARIAN *(intimate sincere tones)* I'll be off Sandra. Be round again soon. I've got some more books from the library. I thought maybe to share it all when I see you next .. ?

Sandra sits up in anticipation of Marian's departure. She exudes joy and positivity

INTERCUT: EXT : Afternoon - Nanette's cave

*Nanette is rocking and listening to the rain and a mild low rumble of thunder
She responds to it with vocal sound and looks both up to the skies and back inward
to herself*

*She sits before a pile of rocks and continues to build it up, to resemble a feast or wealth.
A symbol of power.*

She finally reaches for one small lone rock and places it at a distance from the mound

She laughs heartily

NANETTE Dido regina stat in urbe. Non amorem virorum quaerit, sed sapientiam
et amicitiam. Civitas eius flouruit sub legis feminarum²

*It is suddenly apparent that Cormac is there. He is sitting some distance from Nanette
within the cave.*

CORMAC Nanny Netta ! Bloody 'ell are you doin' ?

NANETTE Do you love a beautiful woman Mac ?

CORMAC What kind of a question .. it depends on the woman does it not ..?

NANETTE Does it depend on the woman ?

CORMAC What's in it for ..?

NANETTE What's in it ? What's in it is nothin' you're about to see

CORMAC Think I don't know that .. This game .. you playin' de witch dere

NANETTE I wish I was

CORMAC Don't know how you sleep at night

NANETTE I don't. I do. And I don't.

CORMAC Here we go

NANETTE Cormac. I die every night. Every day is a different day

CORMAC Well that's handy ..

² Translation: Queen Dido stands in her city. She seeks not the love of men, but wisdom and friendship. Her city flourishes under the laws of women. Aeneid by Virgil 29 BC

Nanette's eyes narrow

What was the feckin' point of Petula ?

NANETTE And you've got no patience to your name ..

CORMAC (*angry impatience*) Can't you get **her** for me ?

NANETTE GET her ?

CORMAC Marian; the Marian bird .. Open her up like the back doors of that van ?

NANETTE Please tell me there's more to Cormac McAndrew than that ?

CORMAC So what's next is it then ? A date with Pete ? Barry ?

NANETTE Aye - The Windlass

CORMAC Why's d'you keep sendin me dere ?

NANETTE A quiet drink

CORMAC The only decent boozier in Cnoc Mara

NANETTE Number 54 Cormac

CORMAC Number 54 .. ?

Nanette closes her eyes and starts rocking

NANETTE Number 54 ..

CORMAC I've got better tings to do .. I'll leave you wit' that nice little ole pile of rocks dere Granny ..

Nanette continues to hum and rock herself with eyes closed

Cormac can be seen scaling the face of the cliffs once more and struggling to get up the goat path

INTERCUT INT Sandra's Home / Afternoon

Sandra sits at an easel. She works on a still life type of painting with charcoal and paint. It is a large pile of rocks with one small rock next to it.

Another painting hangs beside her : a painted grey thundery sky over the cliffs of Dubhchaoin and Nanette's cave from a distance. She has used a fine brush to depict a tiny man struggling up a perilous path on the face of the cliff side.

INTERCUT EXT : Outside Colaiste Secondary School / Afternoon

Dylan is walking along the road outside school towards home. Pauline is walking through the school gate. She sees Dylan

PAULINE Dylan !

Dylan keeps walking. It is not clear whether he hasn't heard Pauline or that he is choosing to ignore her

Pauline has no reservations about catching him up along the street

Sorry about this morning

DYLAN What you on about ?

PAULINE I wasn't staring at you ..

DYLAN Don't know what you mean ..

Pauline is slightly struggling to keep up with Dylan but she tells herself that this is not the case. Following an awkward silence they both speak over one another ..

PAULINE How are you
/ DYLAN Where are you going ?

PAULINE Oh ! Sorry .. I'm goin' home. Are you ?

DYLAN Don't know

The rain starts to pick up and a gale blows against them both. Pauline exclaims at the strength of the gust and grabs her scarf

PAULINE Well ..

The intervening windy weather emboldens Dylan. He raises his voice over the noise

DYLAN D'you know those ruins up past Gortnacarrow Ridge? Might go up dere.

PAULINE There's that empty ole cottage

DYLAN Dere's loads

PAULINE I know

Pauline and Dylan walk more in step with one another and continue down the road towards the ridge

INTERCUT EXT : Main Street / Afternoon

Nanette is standing in the street. There is no one else around her except the buffeting wind and rain. She smiles amidst the feeling of controlling a situation.

She squints at Dylan and Pauline as they move further away into the distance.

She mumbles in Latin

NANETTE Puellas audiunt venti, et montes respondunt.
Non virorum verba, sed feminarum sapientia resonat.³

INTERCUT : INT : Abandoned Cottage / Late Afternoon

Pauline sits on a broken wood box trying to look demure

Dylan faces into a corner of the cottage shielding a bent cigarette from the wind.

He struggles to light it

PAULINE Didn't know you did that

DYLAN Well what about it ..

Pauline watches him. She is attracted to his attitude and body language

Dylan turns round and pulls on the cigarette and exhales smoke

He cracks a smile at Pauline. She is slightly overcome

She picks Dylan's mother as a topic of conversation

PAULINE Your mum's nice

DYLAN Is that right ?

PAULINE She seems to get along really well with my mum

DYLAN Think she's cracked

PAULINE What my mum ?

DYLAN No mine

PAULINE Oh ...

³ The winds hear the girls, and the mountains respond. Not the words of men, but the wisdom of women resounds. *The Female Oracle inspired by Sibylline Prophecies*

DYLAN And yours .. probably

Pauline laughs without knowing if that's a good idea. Dylan is turning increasingly into a puzzle that needs solving

PAULINE You look like her

DYLAN First time I heard that

PAULINE She's really pretty

DYLAN What you sayin'

PAULINE No Dylan .. Not like that .. You've got her eyes though don't yer .. ?

DYLAN Never looked ..

Dylan squats down for want of something to actually sit on

Pauline instinctively rises for fear of Dylan sensing her attraction to him

She stands at the cottage door

PAULINE When d'you go out ? D'you ever go out ?

DYLAN Yeah ..

PAULINE Sometimes I don't see you .. at school like ..

DYLAN Place does my nut in

PAULINE Don't you like any of it ?

Dylan shrugs

DYLAN Your mother home schools you does she like ?

PAULINE What makes you say that ?

DYLAN S'what I heard

PAULINE Well you heard wrong

A natural pause ensues.

Pauline gathers her thoughts for the next impression she can make on her 'handsome' companion

Teach meself sometimes .. if that's what you mean ?

DYLAN *(smiling)* I didn't mean anything

Pauline feels suddenly encouraged that Dylan might like her.

PAULINE My mum's got a thing for Maths .. and Latin

DYLAN Oh joy ..

PAULINE *(smiling back)* It's my choice. I like it .. I love it. I can read it. And I can speak it.

DYLAN Who's got the time of day for a bit o' Latin .. What's the idea ?

PAULINE The idea ? Ah, cop on, Dylan ! That's a world in itself .. Don't you want to explore anywhere other than the one you're in now ? Day and night. Week in week out.

DYLAN Alright In my bedroom so it is.. Keep myself in dere .. Thats a world I can explore

PAULINE Your own *headroom* so you're sayin'

DYLAN An' if I am ? Away from me dad at least

PAULINE You're lucky you got one dere so

DYLAN And your dad ..

PAULINE What of him .. ?

DYLAN Lorcan Doyle isn't it ..?

PAULINE I don't know .. I can't remember him

DYLAN You don't ?

PAULINE I don't ..

DYLAN Is that so bad though .. ?

PAULINE He died Dylan

DYLAN What are you sayin' ?

PAULINE What I just told yer

DYLAN That's not what I heard..

PAULINE What you heard ?

DYLAN S'just that noone knows where der feck 'e is ..

PAULINE And who's *no one* ? Don't you think I'd be knowin' a little more about me own father's whereabouts than a bunch odd folks knocking about Cnoc Mara gettin' a stupid video or a Chinese take away out of a lousy ole Friday night

Dylan tries to reconcile with Pauline

DYLAN None so odd as folks round this neck ..

Pauline interrupts. She is trying to rein herself in.

PAULINE Aye you'd be right about that .. *(Pause)* Anyways .. I don't remember him .. *(another pause)* I visit 'im though .. the cemetery

DYLAN His headstone ?

Pauline realises that Dylan is not convinced about her father's death

PAULINE Of course his headstone ..

The atmosphere of good will deteriorates

'Graveyards' reminds Dylan of the sinister vision in the street when Nanette appeared to him

A surge of energy prompts him to share his encounter

DYLAN There's a witch in Cnoc Mara

Girlish screechy laughter bursts forth from Pauline but Dylan enjoys it

Pauline sits back down on the broken box

Dylan rises and stands at the door

PAULINE Now look who's lost his marbles

DYLAN I've seen her

PAULINE By 'eck you 'ave

DYLAN I swear to the Lord Jesus Christ that I've seen her

PAULINE And I'm tellin you my father's lying in that cemetery

DYLAN I believe it Pauline

A delicate moment creates a tiny lull in their exchange

PAULINE Like a witch with a pointy hat ?

DYLAN No ! I mean it ! I really have seen her ! Saw her last week !

Pauline takes a moment to look at Dylan. She feels a bit closer to him

And - she's livin' in a cave.

PAULINE A cave ?

DYLAN That's a fact .. s'what I've been told

PAULINE What cave ? Where is it ?

DYLAN Uaimh na Cailli. Years old. A cave carved out o' the cliff face, so it is. Been there fierce long—hundreds o' years .. and ... I've seen **her**

PAULINE The Cliffs of Dubhchaoin

Dylan's cigarette has gone out. He assesses the possibility of trying to relight it

Pauline's face is filling with wonder

PAULINE A cave

DYLAN Should we go there then ?

Pauline suddenly makes the connection with the cave of Dido and Aeneas by Virgil

She gazes at Dylan in disbelief

PAULINE Oh yes. We must ..

Pauline still holds Dylan in a gaze he cannot decipher

Dylan !

DYLAN *(uncomfortable)* What?

Pauline gets to her feet to get closer to him.

PAULINE Dido ... Dido and Aeneas. That's where they go ..isn't it ? Y'know .. in The Aeneid

DYLAN Dido .. ? *(his face screws up)* No .. nothin' like that Paul ..

PAULINE Isn't it ?

DYLAN Dere's a witch there .. Don't you want to see ?

PAULINE So - we're going to the cave then ?

DYLAN *(embarrassed by her zeal)* Ah, shut up, ya melter.

PAULINE You shut up

Pauline punches Dylan playfully

He laughs.

DYLAN S'just a cave you wee eejit !

Pauline pushes him out of the cottage

PAULINE Don't be callin me that !

*Both are full of smiles and energy and navigate their way across the hills and bumps on
The wet grassy ridge*

So when are we going ? Do you know exactly where it is ?

Dylan pushes on ahead and Pauline shouts after him with glee

We'll have to wait till Juno brings a storm down upon us !

DYLAN What ? Like this one ?

He laughs. She runs after him

PAULINE It's an ancient Roman .. its an epic poem. Dylan ! I want to tell you something !

INTERCUT : INT Nanette's Cave / Darkening skies

Nanette's face expresses delight. It is suddenly lit up by a flame from her cave fire.

Her eyes fill with anticipation and she croons and coos over the flame for a few seconds

NANETTE Ahhh .. Juno !

Nanette looks out of the mouth of the cave and up into the sky

Bring me the storm ...

INTERCUT EXT : Street of Pauline's Home / Evening

It's late. Pauline is wet and bedraggled. She makes her way down her street towards home.

INTERCUT : Sandra's Kitchen / Evening

A clock is ticking. Sandra sits in silence

Pauline is never usually this late

Another memory of Lorcan suddenly jolts her back in time

INTERCUT : FLASHBACK INT The Windlass Pub 10 years previous

*Lorcan is sitting at a table with his first wife Leanne. He has his arm around her
He has no concerns about the time or Sandra's whereabouts
Sandra appears at the door of the pub. She is wet through and very distressed*

*She walks over to Lorcan's table and stands there limply - saying nothing
Lorcan rolls his eyes as if Sandra were a waiter bringing the bill
Leanne does not appear to have even seen Sandra ..*

INTERCUT : Sandra's Kitchen Late Evening

Sandra goes to the kitchen sink, lights a cigarette and looks out of the window

Another flashback intrudes upon her thoughts.

She rubs her brow

INTERCUT : FLASHBACK INT Lorcan and Sandra at Home 10 years previous

*Sandra is sitting at the kitchen table
Pauline is on her lap
She is rocking her
Pauline is holding a toy. Pauline flinches with every word that Lorcan fires at Sandra

He yells at his wife without showing any love or respect*

LORCAN *Staying silent is the best thing that could ever happen to you Sandra. Because ?
YOU. You disappear. You've disappeared Sandra. And when you disappear - I see
someone else. I see a different woman. A powerful woman - who becomes present.
A woman. With potential.*

Pauline clambers off of Sandra's lap and runs out of the kitchen.

Sandra turns towards the table and puts her head into her hands

LORCAN *You want to think on that .. think on that my dear ..*

INTERCUT : EXT Sandra's Doorstep

Pauline lets herself into the house

INTERCUT : Evening / Windlass Bar

Cormac is leaning on the bar with his local pal - Barry. Cormac is motioning to the barman

CORMAC Two more please mate

BARRY Easy fella .. Dis is your third ..

CORMAC Oh grow up Barry

Cormac looks at the change in his hand. He's been caught short

Oh Jesus .. come on

BARRY S'alright .. I got 'em

CORMAC Thanks mate

BARRY You still lookin' ?

CORMAC I'm always lookin' but I'm not always findin'

BARRY There's some sheep shaggin work coming up if you want it

CORMAC I was hopin' for a woman

Barry laughs

Who's the Marian woman ? She was in 'ere last night

BARRY Pete Keeley's wife .. ?

CORMAC Aye .. She's lovely 'er ent she

BARRY That's the wrong direction completely mate .. You want to be going after that bird who never flies the coop .. She's gorgeous

CORMAC What you on about

BARRY S'what I've heard. The one that grows the flowers

CORMAC Is that Sandra you talkin about - the one who never speaks ?

BARRY Aye thats it

CORMAC Where she livin'

BARRY Where ? More like 'How' mate ..

CORMAC How ?

BARRY She's alone. You just need a reason to visit. And only the good Lord knows the answer to that little devil's dilemma..

CORMAC So what'll I be doin' if I'm not goin round for a chat so .. ?

Alpha male guffawing

BARRY She's livin' up by Paolin's Farm. Lorcan Doyle's old house

CORMAC The old estate

BARRY The same ..

CORMAC I know it .. which house is it ?

BARRY And how the bleedin' 'ells I supposed to be knowin' that you silly woman !

He leans into Cormac

Now dere's a little bit of homework for yer Mac. Sooner done the better. Don't be puttin that off mate ..

INTERCUT : Night time / Nanette's Cave

Nanette is standing in the blue hue of a cold cave

The fire is out. Her cave is now the central governing force behind the narrative towards which time place and people are racing

She seems to be reading energies that are resonating within the walls of the cave and she is holding the diamond necklace like a charm

She moves about the cave and sporadically laughs as if being tickled internally

She is seeing and sensing future events : Dylan and Pauline visiting the cave and Cormac's pending love and obsession with Sandra

She weaves about the cave as if to greet and approve the karmic energies that prevail.

INTERCUT : Late Night / Sandra's Kitchen

Pauline looks in on Sandra who has moved to the sitting room. She is dozing ..

Pauline goes into the kitchen and sees the painting of the rocks and then the painting of the cave. Her face fills with incredulity. The painting provides her with a kind of affirmation that she intuitively welcomes

Sandra appears at the kitchen door waiting for Pauline to say something

PAULINE I wanted to go up into the hills .. Just for a bit

Sandra sits at the table without taking her eyes away from Pauline. She is not angry

I didn't come home because I went straight there with Dylan Keeley.

Sandra nods and half smiles. She is 'prepared' to listen. She gets up to switch on the kettle. Pauline watches this and feels the invitation to talk without a filter

Pauline goes over to the painting of the cliffs and the cave. She sits on the stool in front of her mother's easel

Mother .. Do you know of this cave ?

Sandra nods

Is it safe ?

Sandra frowns

Is it a witch's cave ?

Sandra nods but not without a hint of sarcasm

Pauline feels slightly embarrassed and returns her a smile

Dylan seems to think that it is ..

Pauline takes in the painting again

The cliffs of Dubhchaoin ...

Pauline scrutinises her mother for a moment

Is that how daddy died ?

Sandra shakes her head

I wish you'd tell me ..

Sandra fetches milk from the fridge

I'm thinking that I might be in love with Dylan

Sandra makes a gestural movement that Pauline already knows ..

She reads the gestures

PAULINE *(translating Sandra's signs)* On ... my .. terms .. ?

(picking up speed) It IS on my terms mother .. and he likes me. I know it. It was HIS suggestion to visit the cave. I never mentioned it. It's odd mother. Don't you think ? Should we wait until the next storm comes ? Might dere be one tonight ?

Sandra draws Pauline's attention to the painting of the rocks ..

Pauline commits to absorbing the image for some time. She points out the large pile of rocks in the painting

Is this you ?

Sandra confirms this with a smile.

*Sandra writes "Cormac" on a piece of paper and pushes it towards Pauline ..
Pauline reads it*

PAULINE Cormac ? Who is he mother ? Is that something that you're wantin' me to do ?

INT : Petula's home / a Friday morning

Petula sits with a coffee at her kitchen table reading from the Liber Proverbiorum in her reading glasses. She keeps checking the kitchen clock

Sandra's pink and yellow flowers are standing in a vase on her kitchen table

She reads a line and then tries to pronounce it. She stumbles over the Latin ..

PETULA *Fortitudo et ... decor indumentum ...eius ? et ridebit in die novissimo.* Well I certainly hope that's true ..

INTERCUT : INT The Salt Quay Cafe / Mid morning

Marian and Dilys are in the cafe. They look up as Petula arrives

MARIAN Hi there Pet .. Good to see yer

PETULA S'freezin' out there isn't it ?

MARIAN What d'you expect ?

Petula settles herself in

Marian pushes a coffee towards Petula

We took the liberty

PETULA Good gracious ! Right on cue

DILYS Wit' no sugar !

Petula smiles at Dilys

MARIAN I been tellin' Dilys about your current little dalliance ..

PETULA Oh ! What - the one that just finished

MARIAN Hasn't he called ?

Petula shakes her head hurriedly to dismiss the question

DILYS And there's nothin wrong in it Pet so .. Did he not call ?

PETULA Oh girls ! Will you leave it be ?

MARIAN These tings only come around once - do they not Dilys ?

DILYS You're askin' the wrong person dere love

MARIAN If you don't seek yea'll not find Petal ..

Petula is drinking her coffee

PETULA My God .. needed that ..

MARIAN *(to Dilys)* He's a funny chap is Cormac .. Like a floatin piece o' trash wit' no history ..

DILYS And she's a poet all of a sudden ?!

PETULA Why's I'd like to get onto a subject with more substance if its possible

Marian squeals with laughter

MARIAN My God ! Never did I think I'd hear Petula Cairns talkin like that ! Anyways .. s'plenty o' substance where Cormac McAndrew is concerned !

DILYS Stop your filth. So Petula .. Marian's been dippin' a little toe into Sandra's lily laden pool of paradise .. Will you be goin' in yourself ?

MARIAN I'm up to me neck already !

Dilys and Marian share a look of amusement

PETULA You were married once Dilys. I know its been years but how does life compare when you're not worryin' about .. smelly socks .. cooked meals.. or vacuuming the bleedin' carpet

DILYS What do you mean ? All those things need doin' Petula. Husband or not .. I suppose I just do them on my terms

MARIAN And thats it exactly. Jesus .. You know ... I swear Sandra is gettin' younger .. She's got such skin .. like its never seen the sun .. some subterranean creature

PETULA Probably sleeps like a baby

Dilys snorts

PETULA What ?

DILYS Its not sleeping that troubles me .. its wakin meself up ..

PETULA Aye well .. dere is that so .. Are you still enjoyin' the library Dilys ?

DILYS Get's me out the house doesn't it.. ? Y'know ..

MARIAN Oh but it's more than that isn't it Dil ?

DILYS Was a lovely mornin' last week .. D'you remember that bright sunlight we had .. just for a few hours ?

Without delay Marian and Petula concur in unison. Clearly the morning was a memorable one given day to day Irish weather

DILYS The light was shinin' right through that gorgeous green stained glass window behind the front desk

Marian sighs in wonder

MARIAN The old schoolhouse library .. a lovely buildin' that place so ..

DILYS Changed me mood in a heartbeat so it did .. the colours were sort of millin' about on that dreary ole carpet and the place just lit up ..

Petula looks at Dilys and enthuses

MARIAN Oh aye .. like Emerald City

PETULA So you're happy Dil ? You're really happy ..

DILYS What does that honestly mean Petula ? Do you know ?

PETULA I thought I did

MARIAN I know what it is

Dilys and Petula look at Marian

Its first thing in the mornin' when the front door closes .. Pete starts the car and I start my day in peace and feekin' quiet ..

PETULA Marian. I like Pete. I always have .. He loves you y'know

DILYS He's a sweet fellow Marian .. Not the chairman of MENSA mind ..

Petula squeals

MARIAN Aye and don't I know it ..

DILYS Who needs that though Marian .. I don't know one woman who's better off ..

Marian looks through a nearside window and into the horizon beyond

MARIAN Better off ... I don't know

DILYS Well then ?! Stick with what you DO know and stop foraging through the things that you don't ..

Petula looks at Marian. Marian shrugs the notion off. Petula seems suddenly confused and off balance ...

Speakin' of Oz and the Emerald City .. I saw what looked like our very own witch of the west in the old schoolhouse last week

PETULA What d'you mean ?

DILYS Marian was there ..

MARIAN In the library ?

DILYS Did you see her ?

MARIAN Last week ?

DILYS Aye last week. You were surely in with the wind and gone with it .. But anyways you'd know if you'd seen 'er .. trust me

PETULA Witch you say ?

MARIAN And there's supposed to be a witch in Cnoc Mara ?

DILYS Aye well .. I don't think it was that one ..

PETULA Why not ? She just popped in to look up one of her ancient old recipes ?

MARIAN Ouf ! Careful Dil .. We hopes she'd not be puttin' dee auld piseog on top 'o your head now .. Or either of ours for that matter

PET She forgotten the order for the Blackthorn Hex

MARIAN Aye ! Popped in for the charm of the Hare's foot

DILYS We're not a Halloween shop

PETULA The bog witch's whisper

DILYS We've no ole books on the likes of that

MARIAN Wait what ? This is Cnoc Mara for God's sake ! What's we's all famous for ?

DILYS Well lets just hope it was the Moon Mad Blessing she was givin me - twas a full one that night y'know ..

MARIAN Oh ! That might explain my bad temper other evenin' .. poor Pete .. I was rippin' into 'im .. twas off the scale !

The women laugh

Oh Dil' .. now who'd be cursin' you all of a Tuesday morning when that emerald greeeen sunshine's all of a blaze on that tatty old carpet .. eh ?

Petula laughs

DILYS I don't know .. I was never Sandra's biggest fan .. Maybe she's sendin' in her superiors to fix me for good ?!

MARIAN All 's the more reason to pay her a visit ?

DILYS Dear sweet Lord have mercy .. you seriously must be jokin' ?

INTERCUT : EXT Colaiste Secondary School playground / Morning breaktime

Pauline Nellie and Evelyn are sitting outside on a bench affixed to a wooden table for Students at breaktime

EVELYN What's up Paul ? You're really down in the dumps .. s'not me is it ?

PAULINE Course it's not you Ev .. Why would it be ?

Pause

EVELYN What is it Paul ? Go on ..

PAULINE Oh .. It's silly

EVELYN Just tell us .. I'll be the judge o' that

PAULINE Hmmm..

EVELYN Is it that Dylan that's botherin you so ?

Pauline looks at Evelyn. Evelyn looks surprisingly sincere

PAULINE I .. well .. d'you think he might be avoidin' me like ?

EVELYN What makes you think he's doin' that ? You's hardly ever talk to him anyways ? Do yer ?

PAULINE No ..

Pauline smiles at Evelyn

EVELYN You silly old donkey ! .. What is it ?

PAULINE Me and Dylan .. we went up to one of those cottages on the ridge ..

Evelyn's interest is suddenly piqued

EVELYN You did ?

Pauline smiles again

How in heaven's name did that come about ?

PAULINE It was me .. Oh God .. whatever this is .. don't let him forsake me .. please ?

EVELYN The drama of the girl ! Where's all this comin' from ?

PAULINE I think I read way too much into it ..

EVEYLN Read too much into what ?

Pauline sighs.

My God Pauline. It weren't nothin' like that was it ?

PAULINE No ! We just .. we was gettin on really well .. It was nice .. y'know

EVELYN *(a hint of envy)* Really ? I always thought you two might hit it off ..

PAULINE I thought we had ..

EVELYN Maybe's just back off for a little while like .. know what I mean ?

PAULINE Ah right .. I s'pose .. I was just gettin' all geared up for a bit more y'know

EVELYN Pauline ! Brakes on love .. Come on and get a hol' of yourself

Pauline looks at Evelyn

EVELYN Pauline ..

Pauline searches Evelyn's face

He's trotted up to the fence .. So ..?

PAULINE Evelyn ..

EVELYN Hold out your hand ..and let 'im have a nibble for Christ's sakes .. don't grab his collar .. not yet anyways ! He'll think he's for the slaughter ..

PAULINE The cave though ..

EVELYN What ?

PAULINE The cave. It was his idea

EVELYN What was ?

PAULINE He suggested that we meet there ..

EVELYN Paul ! He suggested that you meet one anothers in a cave ? How is that avoidin' yer !? Honestly I doubt it .. You're overthinking this one. He's probably wantin' to make sure he's not comin' on all too strong of a keen bean either ..

Pauline searches Evelyn's face again

I've heard it all now .. That'll be it .. and that's my take on the boy

They shift off the bench to get to class

We've got English. Just makes sure yer not lookin in on him too much.. or .. I don't know Maybe look at him once .. ? No. Don't ..

PAULINE Oh what does it matter ?!

Evelyn laughs

EVELYN By the looks o' you .. Quite a bit so !

Pauline rolls her eyes. She's not entirely convinced by Evelyn's theory

INTERCUT : INT Pete and Marian's Home / Lunchtime

The house phone is ringing. Marian is emptying a laundry basket and does not welcome the intrusion. She goes to pick it up

MARIAN Hello ?

She listens

Okay love. No. No its fine .. I just don't understand why you're calling me from work.
Can't it wait .. ?

She listens

No Pete .. (*listens*) .. because .. No. Its simply because I can't see what you're gettin'
yourself so worked up about ..

She listens and sighs

They were dead anyway Pete. (*She listens*) No. I was going to throw them out myself ..
Pete .. (*she waits*) No it doesn't matter .. No. Well. Whatever Pete. No its fine. I'm
going this afternoon. Yep. Yep. Right. Yep. No. Okay. See .. see you later love.

She hangs up

Christ's sake ...

INTERCUT : INT Sandra's Home / Lunchtime

*Sandra is sitting at an easel in one corner of the kitchen. She is in the midst of painting a
portrait of Pauline : a deliberate attempt to exalt her daughter.*

*Around the portrait are visual signs / symbols that tie in to the ideology that Sandra
surrounds her daughter.*

*Suddenly her paint brush is suspended and a memory sails across her mind. It
is in conflict with what motivates her to paint*

The sound of Petula, Marian and Dilys's voices replay from the previous encounter :

PETULA He wrote me

MARIAN He did what ?

PETULA Dropped me a note

MARIAN Bless us all so nows we're all back at school .. ?

Sandra finds this amusing and hides a downward grin into her mug of tea

Cormac McAndrew was t'ree year above us at Colaiste. And we all had a crush
on him ..

PETULA Apart from de girls who wanted to get on in life

MARIAN Aye .. (*genuine laughter erupts from Marian*) Well said Pet .. And so - will **you** be gettin on .. ? Or not ?

More laughter

Oh Pet .. You want to give that a go ?!

PETULA Don't be so ridiculous

Slowly, Sandra resumes to paint but a slight anxiety starts to set in ..

INTERCUT EXT : Graveyard / Afternoon / After School

Confused and despondent, Pauline is wandering down the road towards the church.

A graveyard comes into view. She is seeking solace away from Dylan's recent withdrawal. She is visiting Lorcan's headstone.

She looks up at the church in search of answers and then weaves in and out of the graves to Lorcan's headstone. She reads the inscription in the stone

The unmistakable croak of Nanette's voice cuts across the cemetery

NANETTE Lo volat super flumina !

Pauline looks around. The cracked voice is an ill timed intrusion but she recognises the Latin words and they are not entirely unwelcome. She is already thinking about the woman that Dylan described at the cottage ..

... non captivata sed libera !

Pauline looks about her with greater deliberation.

PAULINE (*responding to the Latin statement*) I am ?

The empty cemetery reveals nothing. She continues to search the space around her.

She turns back towards Lorcan's headstone

Nanette is inches from her face

PAULINE Jesus !

Nanette cocks her head and points a finger into Pauline's face

PAULINE Can I help you ?

NANETTE No dear .. I don't think so ..

Pauline takes a few steps back and looks over her shoulder in the direction of the voice she's just heard. She turns back and Nanette is sitting some feet away from her, atop the mound of someone's grave.

PAULINE You be sittin' on someone's grave .. if I'm not so sorely mistaken

NANETTE Tis the grave of Maureen Daly. Year of death .. Black '47.

PAULINE The famine ?

NANETTE The same .. and that shelter from the cold and wet .. your young fella was puffin' away in .. not so many sleeps ago .. that'd be Maureen's cottage so it was ..

Pauline feels her status ebbing away. This is the witch that Dylan reported.

She eyes the old woman cautiously.

You like the young lad do you not my dear ?

Pauline is not sure how to respond

PAULINE Have we met ?

Nanette's eyes bore into Pauline as she gathers ever more information on the predictable mortal subject standing before her.

Nanette laughs with a hint of affection

NANETTE Met ? Have we ? How have we .. ?

PAULINE I don't know. I'm not sure. I don't know if we have or not .. I'm .. ?

NANETTE Pauline ..

Pauline's eyes widen

This is where you come isn't it .. ? Isn't this the place where you come sometimes ?

Maybe .. if only for a little .. quiet ? At the grave of Lorcan Doyle ?

PAULINE My father ..

NANETTE Ah yes .. and he would be your father

PAULINE He died ..

NANETTE *(provocatively)* DID he ... ?

Pauline instantly fears what sounds like rhetoric and steers the subject elsewhere

PAULINE Do you live here in Cnoc Mara ?

NANETTE No dear ..

PAULINE You don't ?

Nanette smiles. Pauline feels a kind of fear for the first time

PAULINE Dylan saw you ..

Nanette continues to smile and gaze at Pauline

Do you know Dylan ?

Nanette's smiling face has frozen and has become something of a mirror to Pauline

PAULINE Is there something you want to tell me ?

NANETTE No dear .. not so .. But something that you want ..something you want to ask me

PAULINE Yes ..

NANETTE You can see me. Can you see me or can you not ?

PAULINE Of course

NANETTE So ... ?

Nanette thrusts a small bony fist up in front of her face

Seize it ! Doesn't come around very often my dear ...

PAULINE No ..

Pauline waits for Nanette's next cue ..

NANETTE *(feigned tenderness)* My little colleen .. your mother loves you very much

Finally Pauline feels free to express her own mind ..

PAULINE The bible talks about women .. women speaking. It's in a passage from the apostle

Paul - instructing women to be silent in church and not have authority over men.

Corinthians 14: thirty four to thirty five .. women remain silent in churches

NANETTE You fear your mother's silence ?

Pauline is unable to respond

Some interpretations suggest twas not a prohibition on all speaking, but a command for order in a specific context such as public worship - to avoid chaos.

PAULINE Chaos ?

NANETTE Too much chaos ..

PAULINE My mother does not talk. She talks to me but .. without speaking

NANETTE And you listen ..

PAULINE In my own way

NANETTE You've sails Pauline .. Let them unfurl .. great white billowin' sails

PAULINE I'm not sure what you mean .. errr ..

NANETTE A war ship.. she's blowin you a silent wind my dear

PAULINE I don't know what I'm doing

NANETTE A silent wind ..

Pauline's frustration causes momentary distraction

PAULINE She's blowin' me smoke ! Smoke is what she's blowin me !

She looks again but Nanette has disappeared

VOICE OF NANETTE Oh, she'll talk. She'll talk again when the time is right

Pauline looks around her. She is astonished at the sound of a disembodied voice

Cormac wanders into the grave yard. He moves towards a headstone and bows his head to read the inscription

Pauline feels faintly relieved at the sight of 'normal' human company. Nanette's memory seems to have eclipsed her as quickly as it accosted her

Cormac glances over to Pauline. She makes a conscious effort to look normal and adopt the conventional stance of a grave visitor

Suddenly her head fills with the sound of Nanette's words - loud and clear

VOICE OF NANETTE

Seize it !!

Without any real forethought - Pauline finds herself calling over to Cormac

PAULINE Hello

Cormac smiles. He remains rooted to his spot which removes the possibility of a threat.

CORMAC Visitin' family ?

PAULINE Aye ..

CORMAC The same .. me brother

PAULINE Your brother ?

Pauline starts to amble cautiously over to Cormac

Cormac's attention returns to his brother's headstone

I'm sorry ..

CORMAC Neither has he been lain to rest for long .. And you ?

PAULINE *(gesturing over to Lorcan's grave)* Oh .. that's me dad ..

Cormac is caught short and says nothing

CORMAC Seamus were better than me .. has to be said ..

He looks at Pauline to see if she is on board with this

He was trying to save his dog .. on holiday like

PAULINE Oh no .. that's terrible .. I'm so sorry

CORMAC He did see the good in me like .. so .. don't really see why he was taken from us

Cormac's gentle self deprecation draws Pauline in

PAULINE And you are .. ?

CORMAC Cormac

Pauline instantly tries to cover up her stupefaction. This is the name which Sandra showed her the previous night

Cormac elects to wander over to Lorcan's headstone where Pauline was previously standing

PAULINE It's me dad ..

Cormac reads the stone

CORMAC His little girl's makin 'im proud ..

PAULINE Little ? No ..

She smiles

CORMAC Or not so little ..

Cormac holds out a hand by way of introduction

Cormac .. McAndrew

PAULINE Pauline ..

CORMAC You live round ere den ?

PAULINE *(unable to suppress a blush and a smile)* I might ..

CORMAC Alright then ..

He chuckles

PAULINE Wit me mam ..

CORMAC I'm tinkin' I knows her

Pauline lights up

PAULINE You do ?

CORMAC Marian is it ?

PAULINE *(sorely disappointed)* No

Cormac looks equally disappointed

CORMAC Ah well .. I's better be gettin' meself off now

Pauline's gaze returns to Lorcan's headstone

Who's that then love ?

PAULINE Lorcan Doyle .. me dad

Cormac is trying to piece things together but he doesn't feel he should tarry longer

CORMAC Pauline ! Twas a pleasure

Pauline manages a half smile

Cormac heads off and Pauline stares after him

Cormac looks back and catches Pauline watching him go ..

INTERCUT EXT Sandra's Road / Afternoon

*Cormac stands before the house showing Door number 54
It is Sandra's home*

*By some force of magnetism, Sandra has gone to the sitting room window
To Cormac's astonishment, the curtain twitches
Sandra's face appears at the window*

*She sees Cormac
They stare at each other
Both man and woman are completely disarmed*

After a time Sandra smiles at him. Intentional or not, her smile is seductive ..

*The force of a strong mutual attraction forms instantly between them and Cormac
is bewitched*

INTERCUT : EXT - Nanette's Cave

Nanette has her back to Cormac

She is pulling at strings of seaweed and laying them down on rocks within the cave

CORMAC Took myself off to number 54 didn't I ?

Nanette remains with her back to Cormac

NANETTE Who can find a strong woman ? For she is far more precious than jewels ...

CORMAC What's that in Latin ?

Nanette turns slowly

NANETTE Mulierem fortem quis inveniet ? longe pretiosior est quam gemmae

CORMAC She's a beauty Nan .. bleedin 'ell ..

Cormac is rubbing his head with nerves and anticipation

Can you teach me it ?

NANETTE Teach you ? Meaning what ? Knock me sideways - he's as daft as he looks .. I turn away
in disgust ..

CORMAC You cankerous old crow ! De language is what I meant .. the Latin so .. How long
 'ave I got ?

NANETTE Don't be so feckin' ridiculous .. It's the meanin' that's the mattering
 Not a bloated braggart's Latin recitation. Be gettin' yourself together

CORMAC Maybe I could just quote a bit of it

NANETTE With the brains of a pheasant ? Get off with yers !

INT : Late Afternoon / Kitchen - Sandra painting

Silence except the sound of Sandra's kitchen clock

The background to Pauline's portrait has darkened and a strongly delineated moon hangs behind her daughter. Pauline's face - now nearly completed - has taken on a more powerful look of autonomy and independence

The sound of the front door closing

Pauline appears at the kitchen door. She looks muddled and undecided as to what is really going on around her at this time

The painting is something of a welcome diversion from the circumstances

Sandra happily observes Pauline as she takes in the painting

PAULINE Artemis ? Diana ?

She looks at her mother

Sandra nods towards the painting as if to say 'Look again'

PAULINE Independence .. Chastity .. Wild Nature ..

Pauline becomes slightly anguished ..

I'd love to be those things mother .. I would .. but I'm none of them

Sandra signs to her and Pauline interprets

Divine ? Feminine Authority .. I don't know mother

Sandra taps her head and makes more signals

PAULINE Intuition and inner knowledge ..

Sandra indicates her eyes and gestures some more

The unseen ?

Pauline turns away from the painting in frustration. She sighs forcibly

Mother. What is the good of the unseen if I can't feckin' see it ?

A beat

I'm sorry

Sandra lights a cig

PAULINE Mother .. I'm tired of depth and wisdom. What is the good of the unseen if you can't see it mother .. is what I'm askin' ? You're lookin for somethin' .. I'm not .. Can't we just settle with 'the now' ?

Something occasions Pauline to look at the painting again. Her tone indicates that she might be prepared to reconsider

PAULINE The moon's phases.. Rebirth .. Shifting life stages

She looks directly at Sandra

PAULINE Continuity through change .. This isn't me mother .. Its you

Pauline grabs her phone and starts to google

PAULINE Wait .. Okay. The moon .. Right. The moon is associated with the night - the quiet hours and the realm away from public attention

She engages with her mother again

Hidden strength ..

Pauline smiles

This is *you* mother .. and that's great !?

*Cormac rings the door bell. Pauline looks immediately in the direction of the sound
She goes to see who it is*

Sandra stands in suspension. She seems as unsure as did Pauline when she first returned to the house some 5 minutes before

Pauline hurries back into the kitchen and speaks in forceful whispers

PAULINE Mother ! Mother ! It's Cormac ! My God ! Mother ! He's only standing outside of the house ?!

Pauline seizes her mother by her shoulders

Mother .. Something exciting is happening. And we have been granted a favour. I believe it. The moon ! Of course ..! It's a prophecy .. sit down mother .. I'm going to let him in

Sandra is not entirely sure what to do

From the hall come sounds of Pauline and Cormac's pleasant exchanges

Sandra goes over to the painting and pulls an old paint stained drape over the easel to cover the painting.

She eyes the doorway as if counting down to the moment Cormac will appear

Cormac looms within the frame of the kitchen door. He is a big handsome man

Sandra is instantly taken aback

CORMAC Hello ..

Pauline edges her way into the kitchen by way of rescuing the newly acquainted pair

PAULINE Mother ! This is Cormac McAndrew. We met this afternoon at the cemetery

Sandra motions to the table to welcome Cormac

Pauline looks over to the painting and notices that it is covered

Pauline and Cormac exchange smiles by way of establishing a mutual encouragement and trust in one another

Cormac is holding a bottle of wine. He puts it on the table

PAULINE Ah Cormac ! Grasta !

She engages her mother

Would you get away ?!

Pauline addresses Cormac

The Romans called it vinum .. swore it kept the household spirits sweet so

CORMAC Best excuse for crackin' one open dat I ever heard ..

PAULINE The Romans said 'in vino veritas' .. Not that we're drinkin' it .. ?

Pauline looks to Sandra for a reaction ..

Sandra pulls a corkscrew from a drawer

Pauline watches her - smiling

Sandra hands it to Cormac

Cormac opens the wine and Pauline scampers to the draining board to fetch two tumbler glasses

Unsure of who intends to partake, Cormac plants the bottle into the centre of the table

Sandra takes up the bottle. It is starting to look like some kind of ritual. Pauline watches with baited breath

Cormac sits down and picks up his tumbler .. he humours it in the absence of a wine glass

CORMAC We're not messin' are we ?

Pauline laughs

Sandra pours Cormac some wine.

He takes the bottle from her and she returns to her seat

He pours wine into Sandra's glass

PAULINE Cormac brings the wine ! Jaysus, Mam .. next thing he'll be quotin' Cicero on virtue (to Cormac) Its all very cultus .. nothin to fear

CORMAC If you say so love

They sit in silence and Pauline watches her companions savour the wine

Pauline is up again immediately and she grabs a large candle from a shelf and lights it

Sandra goes to the cooker and lights the ring under a casserole dish.

PAULINE Did you make something mother ?

Sandra starts stirring

My God we're preparing for this evenin' are we not ?!

Pauline goes to the fridge to get an orange juice carton

CORMAC It's a lovely house you got here girls ..

Sandra looks over her shoulder at Pauline and they smile

PAULINE I can put on some music !

JS Bach starts to play gently in the background

D'you like this sort o music Cormac ?

CORMAC I could get used to it .. definitely

Cormac notices the flowers on the table

These home grown are they ?

PAULINE Mother's favourites ..

CORMAC Mine too I think ..

Pauline looks between her mother and their guest. She starts to feel the challenge of being 'facilitator' for the evening that lies ahead

PAULINE S'a lovely old cemetery that one isn't it ?

CORMAC Oh God aye .. I try to get meself there at least once a week ..

Sandra looks round at Pauline as if to say .. 'what were you doing there?'

Pauline quickly redirects the narrative away from her father's grave visit

PAULINE I've always loved graveyards .. they remind me of Great Expectations

Cormac's eyes light up

CORMAC Dickens

This is unexpected. Sandra and Pauline clock one another

PAULINE So it is ..

Cormac is incredulous at this stroke of good fortune.

It is the one book about which he has patches of knowledge.

He gestures towards Pauline and then to himself ..

CORMAC Pip .. and Magwitch !

PAULINE *(gleeful)* Why not ?! The graveyard intensifies everything the story wants to say about origin .. identity; fear and social class

CORMAC Till Pip meets Magwitch - he stands 'mongst a bunch o the dead and the buried !

PAULINE *(falling in love with Cormac's warmth and company)* .. a graveyard on the windswept marshes ..

CORMAC Of Cnoc Mara

PAULINE My true soil

CORMAC Mine ..

PAULINE You are a true gentleman Cormac

CORMAC Think some might differ on that score me darlin'

PAULINE No. I think Dickens shows that gentility originates not from inherited class or family, but somewhere else .. like the convict's gratitude

Pauline looks at Sandra

PAULINE Did you read it Cormac ?

CORMAC Some of it ...

Pauline reaches for Cormac's arm

PAULINE .. and true expectations arise from the depth of human connection

Cormac and Sandra smile at each other

Sandra rises to dish food out onto their plates

Pauline goes over to the easel

Guess who this is ?!

Sandra looks unsure about this imminent reveal

Pauline pulls back the cloth

It's me !

Cormac looks

CORMAC *(not convinced)* Ah yeah ..

PAULINE D'you like it ?

CORMAC And what's with all the bows and stars and trinkets floatin' about her head now ?

Pauline laughs

That a hot air balloon so .. ?

PAULINE Balloon ? No Cormac ! They're symbols .. they all mean something

CORMAC Nothin' to do with Latin I don't imagine .. Somethin' to do with the Romans ?

PAULINE We'll not get into that .. Whose head is it now ?

Cormac looks at Pauline

CORMAC In truth ? At first I thought it was your mother .. maybe in her younger days like ..

PAULINE Its me ! You drunken dodo !

CORMAC Ahh so it is ... I see that now

They all start to dig into the meal that Sandra has prepared

Silence

CORMAC Very nice Sandra

Pauline smiles at her mother

PAULINE *(introvertedly)* Magwitch .. that's a great name for a cat

CORMAC Aye .. tis a great name ..

Pauline clearly feels safe enough to share her earlier experiences

PAULINE Somethin' weird happened before you came to the graveyard Cormac

CORMAC Oh aye .. what was that then ?

Sandra is looking up now and paying fullest attention

PAULINE Mother .. I think I met a witch

Cormac seizes up for a second and then does everything in his power to relax his demeanour

He buys time by clocking Sandra and laughing

Sandra continues to look at Pauline by way of encouragement

You'll not believe me anyways ..

CORMAC Ah go on Pauline .. we're listenin .. course we are ..

PAULINE She seemed to know me .. She seemed to know all of us .. Well : Me. Mother .. and Dylan ?

CORMAC Ah Jaysus, Pauline, it's only the aul' gossip - local motormouth .. As sure as the gods blew Noah's Ark across the western sea. I've seen her down dere in the washrooms, giving out to anyone that'll listen. *Many* a time now I'm gettin to it ...

PAULINE Ah ! No ! She wasn't like that .. not at all. Not like anyone from here any road

Sandra leans over to the wine and motions to Cormac to ask if he wants more

CORMAC I'm alright love

Pauline watches as her mother pours herself more wine

PAULINE Givin' me all sorts of advice she was ..

CORMAC I'd ignore that if I were you love ..

Sandra looks at Pauline quizzically. Then her eyes begin burning into Cormac ..

Cormac can feel this

(to Sandra) Nuttin' to worry about love .. No harm done

Sandra continues to stare at Cormac

Pauline looks at her mother

PAULINE Shall I cover the painting back up mother ?

Sandra shakes her head

CORMAC Leave it be Pauline .. It's lovely. There's nothin' to hide is there ?

INTERCUT INT Other side of the Kitchen Door / Later on in the evening

Pauline is coming down the stairs with a black vinyl record.

She stops in her tracks and goes to listen at the door.

Although barely intelligible - she can hear the soft intimate tones of her mother's voice talking with Cormac.

She is astonished and her reaction is to leave them be. She is not sure whether to be pleased or concerned and an ambivalence spreads across her face

INTERCUT : EXT : Nanette in her cave alone / Early morning of Saturday (the following day)

Nanette is standing at the mouth of her cave - enjoying the sea spray. She squints into the curtains of windswept rain and begins to mumble in Latin ..

NANETTE De Tranquillitate Animi ..

She claps twice and laughs

She who seeks predictions afflicts herself with anxiety twice

She claps again and laughs

Twice ..

She claps twice

Twice ..

She claps twice

*Strands of seaweed are hanging from the cave wall like a tapestry loom
Nanette weaves one strand in and out across the falling weeds*

Interweaves but not .. Not .. Yet .. Woven ..

*She clambers over to a rock to sit, gathering seaweed strands into her lap.
She begins to loop them into incomplete knots - not yet tightened*

She rocks forwards and backwards

Wait ... wait ...

She takes a piece of charcoal from the fire and draws spirals on pieces of old vellum

The fire jumps into flames

Her face can be seen through the flames that begin to leap higher

She dangles the first piece

(she caricatures the voice of a weak and vulnerable female) What will become of me ?

She ignites the vellum and watches the falling ashes

She repeats the very same ritual three times with the vellum and the same question

INTERCUT - INT Sandra at Home / Morning

Sandra is standing at the kitchen window with a smoking cigarette.

She does not move and the ash end of the cigarette is getting longer and longer.

She is perturbed and drops her cigarette into the sink. The cigarette ash breaks up in the kitchen sink.

A vision befalls her ..

INTERCUT - EXT Sandra's Vision : The Goat Path to Nanette's cave / daylight

Pauline can be seen - struggling down the goat path in the wind and rain towards Nanette's cave

INTERCUT - INT Sandra at Home / Morning

In her anxiety, Sandra rubs her forehead

Another flashback intrudes upon Sandra's thoughts

INTERCUT - Flashback / Visual of Sandra and Pauline in Kitchen (extract from previous scene)

Pauline's anguished expression

PAULINE I'd love to be those things mother .. I would .. but I'm none of them

Sandra signs to her and Pauline interprets

Divine ? Feminine Authority .. I don't know mother

Sandra taps her head and makes more signals

PAULINE Intuition and inner knowledge ..

Sandra indicates her eyes and gestures some more

The unseen ?

Pauline sighs forcibly

Mother ! What is the good of the unseen if I can't feckin' see it ?

A beat

I'm sorry

INTERCUT INT : Sandra's kitchen / Present time

Sudden sounds of a heavy storm brewing. Sandra observes the trees' sudden wild movements outside and the violent spray of rain on the kitchen window.

She hears the front door close.

It is Pauline leaving the house to go to the cave at the cliffs of Dubhchaoin

She goes to the sitting room to watch Pauline walking away down the street.

INTERCUT : EXT The Cliffs of Dubhchaoin and the goat path / Late morning

We see Pauline standing over the cliffs.

Terrific gusts of wind beat about her head.

Pauline does not look optimistic which is further intensified by the adverse conditions

She is not sure of the whereabouts of the cave. She spies the goat path and ventures to take it nonetheless. She skids and stumbles along what is left of the path.

Pauline reaches the cave.

Nanette is nowhere to be seen and the cave appears to have been vacated many many years from before. There is no sign of the fire.

Pauline goes into the cave and is overcome with a feeling of failure and foolishness.

Dylan has not shown up. She is devastated

She goes to the mouth of the cave to face the elements

PAULINE (an angry scream) Dylan !!!

INTERCUT : Sandra's Home / the Doorstep Late afternoon

Pauline gets in from the cliffs.

Her mother is sitting in the sitting room reading amidst curls of smoke from a burning cigarette. She looks up briefly and smiles

Suddenly not being able to talk to her mother is a cause for frustration; the sensation of abandonment is doubled

She bypasses her mother and goes to her bedroom.

She sits on her bed with her back against the wall and starts googling on her phone

She scrolls and reads ..

The Voice
of
Pauline Smoking woman ... dragon woman : a self possessed, potentially dangerous female who has stepped outside prescribed boundaries .. A dragon is majestic, autonomous, ancient. Not a pet. To reframe .. A woman who has reclaimed her power and refuses to be diminished. Smoking may become a visual shorthand for her exhalation of fire - expressing what the woman cannot.

Pauline resolves to go downstairs and confront her mother

Sandra looks up from her book

Pauline points towards the kitchen

Who is that ?

Sandra questions her daughter with her eyes

Who is that mother ?

Sandra rises and goes into the kitchen. For the first time she seems to be losing her patience with Pauline

I know you're grateful mother

Sandra turns to face her

I'm no miracle mother

Pauline looks down

I went to the cave.. Mother .. Dylan didn't come

Sandra shakes her head slowly

PAULINE I don't understand ..

Sandra continues to shake her head

PAULINE He let me down .. What did I do wrong mother ?

Sandra cannot tolerate it anymore. She puts her hands over her ears

Pauline is horrified by this action. Sandra strides out of the kitchen and up the stairs.

Pauline yells after her

PAULINE Oh ! Mufflin' your ears dere so ? Are you actually feckin' jokin' wit' me now ? So you want ME to stop talking ? Well that's grand .. And what happens the next time we have someone round here hey mother ?

I'd suggest that might be a push too feckin' far for the guest that didn't quite see a telepathic mind reading session on the cards before he/she stepped lightly into this God forsaken house and home ?

Oh but wait a minute..wasn't it that maybe only 5 minutes into my back bein' turned .. a little conversation erring on the side of speech might have actually taken place between yourself and Mr McAndrew .. ? Coz I've been waitin' feckin' years mother .. **He** didn't have to wait much further than a minute or two beyond that of the hour in which he came now. Did he ?! Did he **not** mother ? Well ?

She screams

Answer me !

Pauline returns to her bedroom and slams the door

INTERCUT : INT Pete and Marian's House / Early Evening

The TV is on

Pete is sitting on the sofa. He keeps on glancing over at Marian.

Marian sits in an armchair. She stares at the TV but she doesn't watch it.

Neither of them are talking

Dylan has taken refuge in his bedroom

PETE Shall I's get the tea on ?

MARIAN No Pete

Pause

PETE S'just .. I'm gettin' a bit peckish love

MARIAN I'm doin' it

Pete watches Marian make no attempt to move. It is hopeless. His head falls back onto the sofa cushion

PETE Marian

MARIAN Don't ..

PETE Don't what .. ?

Marian closes her eyes. Suddenly they open and she looks to the ceiling .

MARIAN When will he get the message ?

PETE Who ?

MARIAN You ! You pheasant brained fool ! I've no interest Pete

PETE Let me do it then ..

MARIAN No .. NONE. None .. at all .. Nothin' in anything that you might have to say ..

Pete gets up. He is crying

PETE This ain't you Mazzie. It ain't .. Where d'you go love ?

Marian gets up

MARIAN Sit down. I'll make the tea

INTERCUT : INT Pauline's Bedroom / Evening

Pauline jabs Dylan's number into her phone

She waits for an answer

PAULINE *(whispering)* Hey.. Dylan .. It's me. *(she listens)* Did you not see the storm today ?
(listens) It doesn't matter anyway .. No .. well, I might have done. What's it to you ?
 No. I .. No, because I don't want to anymore .. that's why. *(listens)* Ouf ! I thought you understood. No. But it was .. it was a heavy storm Dylan .. err . howlin' wind ? lashin' rain ?
 No Dylan ! I was the one went out in it was I not ? I's should know so .. *(she listens)*
 No .. no.. I do actually. Y'know that witch you was talkin about that night at the cottage.
 Aye .. Well .. I met her .. *(she listens)* No. I was at the cemetery. *(she listens)* You know full and well that I did ! We spoke for ages .. *(she listens)* Not really. It was weird though ..
 I heard her before I could actually see her .. *(breaking into laughter)* Ha ha ! Not the same no ! *(she listens)* .. What ? Tonight ?
 I don't know .. I said I don't know

The doorbell rings. It is Cormac calling for Sandra.

Dylan .. can you shush a minute .. ?

Pauline is suspended for a moment. She is waiting to hear her mother let Cormac into the house. Sandra does not answer the door

Dylan ? I'm callin' you back.

Pauline dashes over to her bedroom window.

Cormac can be seen walking away from the house. She is horrified

PAULINE Mother !

She throws open her bedroom door

Mother ! What in God's name are you doin ' to that man ?

INTERCUT : EXT Nanette's Cave

Cormac is standing before Nanette - caught up in his own distress. He is

waiting for Nanette to give him answers that she does not have

NANETTE Marian's free now. Marian is single. She stopped talking. She won't talk to him
any more. Pete's going to leave ..

Nanette pulls the diamond necklace from her person

Here Cormac ! Take it

CORMAC What's that ? I've no use of that. I don't love her.

NANETTE Love ?

CORMAC I thought it went well.. at Number 54 .. Didn't you ?

NANETTE What do you want man ?

Cormac staggers out to the mouth of the cave

INTERCUT : INT Sandra's Home / Late Evening

*Sandra is sitting on the edge of her bed. Suddenly she can see Nanette's face.
Nanette's obsidian eyes bear into Sandra as if to light up her interior and force her to
reconsider what she is doing*

Sandra goes to knock on Pauline's bedroom door

She goes in

Pauline looks up

Sandra goes to speak ..

PAULINE I love him mother. I wish I didn't .. I .. even went to the cave. Just like Dido. I thought it must have meant something when he told me about a cave ? But Dylan wasn't there mother. He didn't come at all ..

I have to change the narrative .. don't I ? How do I do that mother ?

Sandra is looking fit to burst. The speech that tumbles forth is therefore not entirely unexpected

SANDRA Oh stop talking. This is nonsense. Stop it

Pauline stares at her mother in disbelief

PAULINE Oh my God ..

There is a long pause as mother and daughter acknowledge the sound of Sandra's voice after such a long period of non verbal communication

Pauline's mind automatically remembers Cormac and the doorbell

PAULINE Where is Cormac ?

SANDRA No Pauline. What good is that ? What good is Cormac to me ?

PAULINE So now you're talking. And guess what mother ? You're making absolutely no sense. This was a shelter for him .. somewhere for him to come and stay .. for good. You broke your silence. I don't know how to be around you anymore

SANDRA Pauline ..

PAULINE And what good is that ? What good is this ?

SANDRA We'll not speak

PAULINE This is not how it's supposed to be. I always wanted you to talk. So .. talk to me

SANDRA No talking

PAULINE Stop it mother ! This is not you !

SANDRA You're right. It's not.

Sandra resolves to talk. In her mind, she is cured. Lorcan left her but Cormac came to save her. She has rebalanced the score board

Pauline ! I'm alive again ! I'm alive Pauline ! Don't you see ?

Pauline shakes her head

We're free Pauline. Pauline ?

Pauline just stares ahead at her mother ..

*She swaps her consternation for a carefree attitude and moves over to the kitchen worktop
She slides a cigarette from Sandra's pack.*

She lights the cigarette and pulls hard on it.

She turns to lean against the kitchen sink and blows a torrent of smoke in Sandra's direction

INTERCUT: EXT Sandra and Pauline's Street / Late evening

Dylan is walking up to their front door

INTERCUT : INT Sandra's Kitchen

The doorbell goes.

SANDRA Is that Dylan ?

Pauline shakes her head

SANDRA *(trying to engender excitement in her daughter)* I bet it is !

I'll get it !

Pauline bars the way and Sandra steps back

INTERCUT : EXT / doorstep

Dylan stands and waits.

He cannot understand. He tries the bell again. He waits.

He walks away from the house

SANDRA He's gone

Sandra searches for the right words ...

I'll make something nice for us .. yes ?

Pauline pulls a chair up to the kitchen table.

She makes no response

Pauline ... Pauline ?

INTERCUT EXT The Cliffs of Dubchain / Dim light of a late evening

Cormac is looking down at the waves crashing against the cliff face. His motivation for this is not entirely clear.

The sea rages and the wind howls ..

Nanette appears at the mouth of the cave. She peers into the darkness.

Cormac is no longer there.

She shuffles towards the cliff edge and peers out into the void.

Nothing.

She shows no emotion and disappears into the black hole of the cave

INTERCUT EXT Sandra and Pauline's street / Late evening

Pauline can be seen turning to slam her front door shut.

She moves as fast as she can to the road and charges down the street shouting after Dylan

Dylan comes into view.

He turns back. He looks very relieved to see Pauline.

Without any plans, the two of them walk on towards the cliffs of Dubhchaoin.



