

ACT III

Scene 2

WAKE SCENE

(The scene opens in the diningroom of the Muldoon home. Everyone in the family, from the infant to the grandfather, is seated around the dining table, a large meal before them. Utter and oppressive silence in the room. Each member registers the shock, disbelief, sorrow, etc. of Michael's death.)

GREAT-

GRANDFATHER:

(Attempting a light mood) Hey, Padraic did ya ever hear the story of the Irishman who was pulled over to the side of the road for hittin' the car in front of him? The cop asked for his driver's license, took one look at it, and said: "Well, Mr. O'Sullivan, do ya know how fast that fellow was goin' when he backed into you?"

(Grandfather is the only one to laugh. Everyone else looks out at audience. Grandfather, embarrassed by the silence, reaches for the bottle of wine, pours, and takes a long drink.)

GREAT-

GRANDFATHER

(Continuing):

Paddy, did you hear the one about the two Irishmen who were walkin' down the streets of Dublin? One of them was walkin' with one foot in the gutter and one foot in the road and his friend said: "Mike, how come you're walking with one foot in the gutter and one foot in the road?" And Mike says: "Oh, thank God for ya, John, I thought I had a broken leg."

(Silence again. Grandfather takes another drink and then passes the cup of sorrow to the person on his right.)

GREAT-

GRANDFATHER:

Take a drink Uncle Bill.

UNCLE BILL:

I will, Grandfather. I will.

(The cup is passed from man to man. Everyone watches to see if the next person will drink from the cup of sorrow. Finally, as the cup is drunk by the last man . . .)

GREAT-GRANDFATHER:

Ay, that's the spirit! Now, let's break bread. (Everyone except Katie begins eating.) It's as good as always, Mary.

ALL:

(Death Rattle) Aye. (They glance over at Mary, realizing that it is not as good as always because Michael is not there.)

GREAT-GRANDFATHER:

Katie, why aren't you eatin'?

~~KATIE:~~ *Sean*

I don't feel like eating, Grandfather.

GRANDFATHER:

(Rising and banging fist on table) Well, you damn well better eat!

(Everyone looks at Katie and she finally begins.)

PADRAIC:

It's the Lord's Day. On this day we must not eat without the presence of a stranger. (Goes to window and calls out) Hallo! You!! Are you hungry? Are you thirsty? Come in then.

GREAT-GRAND-  
FATHER:

(Aye, that's right.) The needy are always with us.

GRANDMOTHER:

We must share our table with the poor, who are also dear to God.

CHARLES:

(Aside to Agnes) What's next? He'll bring every tramp in town into this house.

AGNES:

What did I tell you?

CHARLES:

How tasteless!

AGNES:

Disgusting!

(A knocking at the door; Charles goes to answer.)



CHARLES: Oh, my God! (Slams the door and turns away.)

PADRAIC: Who is it?

(A knocking again; Charles opens door.)

CHARLES: We can't help you. Go away!

PADRAIC: Who's there?

CHARLES: Nobody. Nothing.

(A knocking is heard again; Charles opens the door.)

CHARLES  
(Continuing): There's grief in this house. Can't you understand me?

PADRAIC: Let him in.

CHARLES: But he's just a poor old filthy beggar.

PADRAIC: (Rises) Let him in! Open the door!

(An old tramp appears at the doorway.)

PADRAIC  
(Continuing): Come in then. Come in.

(Tramp takes a few more steps into home.)

PADRAIC  
(Continuing): In Christ's name you're welcome here.

GRANDMOTHER: There's room for one more.

~~KATIE~~: *Mollie* Won't you sit here, sir?

(Tramp is seated next to Paddy. Paddy pours wine into his cup and passes bread to old tramp.)

PADRAIC: Will you have wine and bread with us?

TRAMP: It's been a long time since any man has invited me to his table.

PADRAIC: For the love of sweet Jesus, will you share our cup of sorrow?

MARY: Our son is dead.

TRAMP: Did he die a good death?

PADDY: Aye, he died like a man.

SEAN: He died a hero.

TRAMP: Then he lives with the immortals. And I'll drink to his health. To Michael!

PADDY: How did you know my son's name?

GREAT-GRANDFATHER: Waste no tears on those that are leaving, I say. It's those that are coming in that are in trouble.

UNCLE BILL: Some must go up.

UNCLE MIKE: And some must go down.

UNCLE BILL: Some must come back again.

UNCLE MIKE: And some go all around.

GREAT-GRANDFATHER: We should mourn those being born and give joy to those who die. All hail Death, the Great Liberator! Give the Virgin Mary a bloody good kiss for me when you see her Michael!

TRAMP: Now why so sad? You're the lucky man. He'll not come back again in the form of a dog.

PADRAIC: Nay . . .

TRAMP: Or a lizard.

UNCLE BILL: Nay.

TRAMP: Or an ant.

RACHEL: If he came again he would come with vision. He would come as an eagle soaring high, the boldest bird in the sky--the one he loved so much.



KATIE: *Grandmother* Or with the wild strength of a tiger.

SEAN: Lion-hearted.

NAT: *Uncle Mike* Or as a dove with peace in his heart.

UNCLE BILL: Or with the great power of a bull.

MOLLY: As a unicorn--so beautiful.

MARY: He'd come with all of these and more.  
For he'd come with love. He was a loving boy.

MOLLY: A precious boy.

UNCLE MIKE: A goodly lad.

GRANDMOTHER: He had a pure heart.

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Aye, that's me great grandson. The spitting image of him. They've described him to a "T."

TRAMP: Well then, you're rich. And you've cause to celebrate. Why these mournful, gloomy looks? You're rich in a noble son. For there is no death for hereocs. They live in our hearts forever.

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: You see, what did I tell you? You wouldn't listen to me. It took a perfect stranger to wake you up to the glory of it all. The trouble with all of you is you're all too young to know how to have a good time at a funeral. I don't know what's come over this younger generation. You act like a bunch of ignorant savages. You think when you bury a man you have to crawl underground with him to keep him company. His body's below; his soul's above. You've got to learn how to kick up your heels at a wake. There, right now, he's dancing a jig on his coffin!!

MOLLY: Where, grandfather?

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: There! Are you blind? Can't you see him?  
Hallo Michael! I'll do a dance with you.  
(To Molly): Come, my darling girl, we'll  
dance a jig with your sweet brother.

MOLLY: Is Michael in Heaven,

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Not yet. We've got to dance him up there.  
  
(Great-grandfather and Molly start  
to dance.)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER  
(Continuing): Dance harder lass.

MOLLY: Now, grandfather?

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Almost. Keep it up now.  
  
(They dance harder and harder,  
faster and faster. Everyone joins  
in the rhythm by beating their spoons  
on the table.)

MOLLY: Now?

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Now! Hooray!  
  
(Everyone cheers.)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER  
(Continuing): Remember me in Paradise to all those  
saints and virtuous people, Michael!  
I'll handle the Lord myself.

SEAN: You're not worried about God,  
grandfather?

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Hell, no! He's an understanding fellow.  
  
(Tramp breaks out laughing and puts  
his hand on Paddy's shoulder as he  
does so, for support.)



MERCURY: Look! What's He doing down there?

JUPITER: He's dressed in filthy garments.

SATURN: It's a disgrace.

MARS: He's talking to that slug.

JUPITER: Wasting His Divine Energy.

MERCURY: He's fallen so low as to represent himself as a man! And now he's putting his hand on that slug's shoulder.

SATURN: Oh, how wretched! The eons I have worked for him! He never did that for me. There is no justice.

JUPITER: Senile!

MARS: He's gone crackers.

(Asteroids laughing)

SATURN: Now we're surely the laughing stock of the galaxy. The old man's gone soft in the head. I hate to say this, but I have known for some time that the Solar Laboratory is little more than a nursery.

JUPITER: Why, he's not fit to rule the solar system. I must take command.

SATURN: Yes, it's high time we took over around here and ran things right.

MARS: Let's go!

JUPITER,  
SATURN, and  
MERCURY: NOW!!

(Pluto extends arms stopping them and forcing them to see themselves. They freeze in postures of anger, greed, lust, etc. The Gods experience remorse and cry out in a singing wail.)

THE GODS: A! E! I! O! A! A! E! I! O! A! A! E! I! O! A!

TRAMP  
(God):

I had a son. He was very dear to me--  
the joy of my heart. He was wise as  
he was beautiful; as kind as he was  
brave. People used to come from miles  
around to be near him . . . to hear  
him speak. He was always kind. All  
he did was good. This world is just  
the opposite. And it killed him.

(To Paddy): And you're kind too.

PADRAIC:

I, kind?

TRAMP  
(God):

Yes, kind; otherwise you would not have  
invited me into your home to eat with you  
and your folks.

PADRAIC:

Why not? You're a man, aren't you?

TRAMP  
(God):

I am nothing.

PADRAIC:

To your son!

TRAMP  
(God):

To all our sons!

UNCLE BILL:

And all our daughters!

TRAMP  
(God):

May they live forever in our hearts!

UNCLE MIKE:

to life!

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER:

Come on, drink up!

(A knocking at the door)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER:

*See*  
Katie, answer the door.



*Sum*  
KATIE:

Good morning Father.

FATHER MURPHY:

Good morning Kate. (Walks to table)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER:

Here comes the Church to take away our  
fun and make official mourners of us  
all.

FATHER MURPHY:

Good morning Mary . . . How are you all?  
I thought I would stop by to have a word  
with you and maybe sit down and have a  
drink of wine.

*Milly*  
KATIE:

Would you have a chair, Father?

FATHER MURPHY:

I know how you all must feel. And how you  
all must be troubled at this time. I have  
seen young men struck down in their prime  
before, but Holy Mother Church in her  
infinite wisdom and mercy has provided for  
such terrible things as this.

FATHER MURPHY  
(Continuing):

(To Tramp) Pardon me, but don't I  
know you? I think I've seen you somewhere  
before. Are you in my parish?

TRAMP  
(God):

I hope so.

FATHER MURPHY:

I've not seen you in church lately.

TRAMP  
(God):

The Church does not always welcome me.

FATHER MURPHY:

That's outrageous!

UNCLE BILL:

But true.

UNCLE MIKE:

Beggars can't be choosers.

FATHER MURPHY:

We're all beggars in Christ. You're always  
welcome in my church.

TRAMP  
(God):

Then I will come gladly. Now I must go.  
Thank you for your hospitality.  
I will not forget this day.

TRAMP

(God)

(Continuing):

(To Paddy): What you have wished for me, I wish for you.

TRAMP (God)

(Continuing):

(To Father Murphy): I'll be seeing you Father.

FATHER MURPHY:

May God be with you.

TRAMP (God):

(Stops and turns) And you too, Father.

(Molly runs to door and gives him a lollipop.)

FATHER MURPHY:

What a strange Man! I can't describe what I felt in his presence.  
(Silence)

FATHER MURPHY

(Continuing):

I know that Michael was a fine young man. I remember his confirmation and when he made his first communion.

PADRAIC:

Father, I remember him myself. I don't need to hear this from you.

FATHER MURPHY:

I am sorry. But these accidents will happen.

PADRAIC:

Accidents? My son was shot down like a dog in the street--in cold blood. And you call it accident?

FATHER MURPHY:

We must forgive and forget.

PADRAIC:

I'll not forget. And some things must not be forgiven. I'll never forgive the men who did it to the day I die. I want to remember!

FATHER MURPHY:

But no one is responsible.

PADRAIC:

The innocent blood of my son is crying out for vengeance! And you say no one is responsible?

FATHER MURPHY:

He who lives by the sword will die by the sword. "Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord.



PADRAIC: My son marched for peace. He was slain for that. He wanted a decent world where all men could be brothers. His blood was shed for that. There was no provocation. No provocation at all. You'll allow innocent blood to be shed and not stop the killers!

FATHER MURPHY: Once, a long time ago, innocent blood was shed . . . for many.

PADRAIC: Once a real man walked the earth and because of that the rest of us can spend six days a week at larceny, thievery and murder, and on the seventh day rest from our crimes. Only to repeat the whole bloody business over again, ad infinitum, ad nauseum. And then Holy Mother Church says: "Rest from your crimes, children; we understand you." Is that what the Church teaches?

FATHER MURPHY: Don't talk that way!

PADRAIC: How else am I to talk? You're giving men the license to kill, Father.

FATHER MURPHY: You know I'm not. People can't control themselves.

PADRAIC: Man is responsible. Do you hear me? The men who killed my boy knew what they were doing. They pressed that trigger . . .

FATHER MURPHY: They were under the authority of fear. They didn't understand.

PADRAIC: When will they understand? When all our sons are murdered? You don't help people with that kind of talk, Father. Your confessional just makes babies out of them.

FATHER  
MURPHY:

But they are children!

PADRAIC:

Evil children! The men who killed my son must be stopped or they'll go on killing and killing and killing without end. Do you think the Church helps men to live? No! It's the tomb of death. Embalmers of sanctity for Satan. You promise the faithful sheep they'll go to God, but the Devil gets them anyway . . . the sale of indulgences.

FATHER  
MURPHY:

God will stop them.

PADRAIC:

When?

FATHER  
MURPHY:

In his good time.

PADRAIC:

Sorry, Father. I can't wait.

FATHER MURPHY:

When will you understand that ignorant men are not responsible?

PADRAIC:

Oh, I see, Father. That's what they'd like to make us believe so Evil can have a clear field. That's as much as to say there are lies but no liars--betrayals, but no betrayers; evil, but no evil-doers; killings, but no killers. A lying creed right out of hell that justifies and condones the killer! How long have you and your Church been in cahoots with the Devil? The Devil's favorite trick! If evil doesn't exist, then you can't fight it. I want the one who's responsible for this!

AGNES:

You should know!

PADRAIC:

What's this?

AGNES:

Look to yourself.

PADRAIC:

What are you talking about?

AGNES:

You filled his head with those filthy ideas. You sent him out to the gutter to be killed . . .

MARY:

Agnes!!!



PADRAIC: Shut this woman up or I'll . . .

AGNES: You'll what? You'll murder me too, as you murdered your own son.

(Paddy breaks toward her)

PADRAIC: Why you rotten . . .

AGNES: As God is my witness, you murdered him! Murderer . . . murderer . . .

her

PADRAIC: Get/out of here or I'll kill her!

MARY: Agnes, control yourself.

PADRAIC: Get out of my house, you bloodsucking bitch!

FATHER MURPHY: Paddy, the woman can't help herself. Can't you see that?

PADRAIC: Get the hell out of my way, Father!

FATHER MURPHY: Paddy, we've been friends since youth.

PADRAIC: I'm warning you, Father. Get out of my way! I want her out. Out of my house!

AGNES: Help! Help! He wants to murder me now! He's going to murder us all! Bernard! Charles! Herb! Save me! Save me! (She breaks down weeping) Oh Michael! Michael . . . (starts wailing). So young, so young. All your promise washed away.

CHARLES: This is no way to talk to my sister. Can't you see what you're doing to her?

PADRAIC: Don't you talk to me, you son-of-a-bitch!

CHARLES: Why you . . . !

PADRAIC: You say one more word and I'll . . . (starts to go toward him)

CHARLES: You can't talk that way to me . . .

PADRAIC: Get the hell out of here and take her with you! All of you, get out! Poisonous vermin!

BERNARD: You can't talk to my mother that way!

HERB: Call the police, Bernard!

CHARLES: Someone should teach you manners. Why, you're no more than a violent animal! I'll have you arrested.

PADRAIC: In my own home?

CHARLES: And my sister's.

AGNES: As God is my witness, I'll never set foot in this house again.

PADRAIC: That's good. Is that a promise? Because the door will be barred to you forever.

MARY: Paddy, Paddy, please for my sake!

FATHER MURPHY: Peace . . . peace. You've got to stop this, Padraic.

PADRAIC: I'm to let this woman come into my home and destroy my daughter? I'm to see my son killed and say nothing? No, not for a son who was as fine a lad as any man could have. I'll roast in hell before that day comes!

FATHER MURPHY: You're making things worse.

PADRAIC: So you're siding with her?

FATHER MURPHY: I'm siding with the truth.

PADRAIC: And the truth is that I'm wrong, is that it? (Father says nothing.) Why don't you leave with them, Father? I'm sure you've nothing further to do here. Don't let me keep you.



GRANDMOTHER: Padraic! You must excuse my son, Father.  
He's not himself.

UNCLE MIKE: He's very upset--very upset,

FATHER  
MURPHY: I understand, Mrs. Muldoon.

PADRAIC: You understand? What do you understand?  
Killian, do you understand what it is to  
have a boy dead? No. You've never had a  
family of your own. You're a priest. Not  
a man at all. The priest has swallowed up  
the man.

GRANDMOTHER: Padraic, he's a priest.

PADRAIC: I don't give a damn.

UNCLE BILL: Pay no attention, Father. He's lost his  
head.

FATHER  
MURPHY: Yes, I can see that. I can see that he's  
lost control of himself.

PADRAIC: I have not lost control of myself!

FATHER  
MURPHY: Padraic . . .

PADRAIC: Have you ever had a son, Father?

FATHER  
MURPHY: Padraic . . .

PADRAIC: Don't Padraic me! I remember you as a young  
man; and what happened to you? You've ended  
a dried-up fig.

FATHER  
MURPHY: I've given my life to what I believed.

PADRAIC: You've never given your life to anything but  
a comfortable seat in the vestry.

UNCLE MIKE: He's not himself, Father.

out

PADRAIC: You've never had the guts to raise a family of your own . . . and see them killed before your eyes.

FATHER MURPHY: I know this is a difficult and terrible time you're going through now, but you've got to remember that there is something far beyond this that man is here for.

PADRAIC: And what is it when they cut down a man like my Son? What is it?

GREAT-GRANDFATHER: I'll tell you . . .

UNCLE BILL: Give him a drink.

PADRAIC: I don't want a drink.

FATHER MURPHY: If there's anything at all you believe that you were taught as a young man --- as I was---then you'll be trying to see something good for yourself and for your children, and for your son who has died.

PADRAIC: And what is it, Father? Tell me what's good. . . why it's good that a young man gets killed.

FATHER MURPHY: I didn't say . . .

PADRAIC: Tell me what's good.

FATHER MURPHY: Well, it has happened . . .

PADRAIC: Aye, it's happened and you tell me what kind of comfort you have to offer. Save it for the ladies' tea.

FATHER MURPHY: I'm here because I know myself that there's something more than just this life.

PADRAIC: I don't want to hear it now. I just don't want to hear it.



FATHER  
MURPHY:

If you think that this life on earth is all we have, I'm sorry to hear you come to it. Because you know a lot of good men have given their lives to what they believed in.

PADRAIC:

It's not a question of life on this earth, but the draining of the blood of the people.

MARY:

Padraic!

FATHER  
MURPHY:

I put many a man into the ground myself, Padraic.

MARY:

Padraic, this is the Father of the Church!

PADRAIC:

He's never been the father of anything. He's never had a son.

UNCLE BILL:

He has a function . . .

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER:

Aye, I will tell you what it is. His function is to hound good men to their death like he hounded Parnell. I fought with him, and I remember how the Church dragged him to his death, and you buried him Father.

FATHER  
MURPHY:

That's not true! Many priests were on the side of the revolution, and you know that yourself. And when you're talking about the bishops you're not always talking about how a priest feels in his heart, and you know where my heart was.

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER:

Where was your heart? I'll tell you . . .

FATHER  
MURPHY:

My heart was for the freedom of Ireland and for something higher than that.

PADRAIC:

(Tired) Father, will you please leave?

FATHER  
MURPHY:

I'm sorry to see that it's come to this  
sorry end between us. I'll be going now.

PADRAIC:

And take your Holy Mother Church, I don't  
want it.

UNCLE BILL:

We'll see you to the door, Father.

FATHER  
MURPHY:

Thank you. I'll find my way alone.

UNCLE MIKE:

I'm sorry, Father.

MARY, <sup>Carol</sup>~~KATE~~ and  
GRANDMOTHER:

Goodbye, Father.

(Exit Father Murphy)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER:

There's something I want to tell all of ya.  
And Paddy knows it 'cause I've told him  
already. When dear Jesus was murdered he  
gave the keys to the Church to Peter and  
he said: "Upon this rock I'll found my  
Church." And his original intention was to  
take the teaching and make it real to every-  
body--make it real to the likes of you and me.  
His intention was to bring the word of Jesus  
Christ into little lads' souls--into the  
hearts of men--into the bosoms of our women.  
Now I want you to take a good long look at  
our Father Murphy and tell me if you see  
anything of Jesus or Peter; and let me ask  
you if he came here really to console us and  
to give us some answers to our question as to  
why Michael was murdered; or did he come here  
to pawn off his phoney morality--the same  
morality that hounded another good man to his  
death: my leader Parnell, and I'll not forget  
him. You see that Father comes around to suck  
our blood. He wasn't here when we passed the  
cup of sorrow. He wasn't here when we learned  
about Michael's death; but he came around  
afterward to drink it all up. I don't believe  
in all his high-falutin' malarkey. There's a  
higher world, sure, but there's this world



GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER  
(Continuing):

here too, and what you do in this world right now is what counts. You can't be thinking about a world everafter and forget about this one. And if you do, you'll become a saint like our Father Murphy with one eye on the collection plate and one eye on heaven. Our sweet Lord Jesus said: "I came not to bring peace, but a sword."

RACHEL: Come, let's all sit down.

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: I don't want to sit down; I want a drink.

FAMILY: Yes, no confusion.

UNCLE BILL  
and MIKE: Let's have a song.

UNCLE MIKE: Yes, a good old Irish song.

(Bill and Mike sing a song.  
Everyone accompanies.)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Keep it up!  
(They repeat song.)

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Up the Irish!

ALL: Up the Irish!

KATIE: *Sean* Up grandfather!

ALL: Up grandfather!

UNCLE BILL: Have another drink grandfather!

GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER: Let's have a little dance- da, di, da, da,  
di, dum dum . . . I never thought you'd  
go before me Michael, but you have.  
Remember me to the Lord in heaven. Here's  
to you Michael! Up, up, up Michael . . .

(ALL BEGIN TO DANCE)

WAKE SCENE

(Sean comes to his Father.  
Padraic alone at table remains  
sitting.)

PADRAIC: Still want to go a-soldiering, lad?

SEAN: No, Dad, my fighting days are done.  
Oh Daddy (begins to weep); I miss  
Michael so much. (Sits on Padraic's  
lap.)

PADRAIC: I know my boy; I know.

SEAN: It hurts so much. I want to go with him.

UNCLE MIKE: (Comes to Sean) Sean, will you dance  
a dance with Uncle Bill and me? Give  
me your hand. (Sean goes with him.)  
We're gonna dance to your brother's  
memory up in heaven.

PADRAIC: Oh my son, my son. Would to God I had  
died instead of you. My son . . .