**IRISH ROULETTE**

(A drama in 2 acts)

by Claire Booker

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**CHARACTERS**

(FIRST ACTRESS)

Cathleen Maguire: A northern Irish catholic woman aged 19 (later 27 years old).

(FIRST ACTOR)

Liam Maguire: Her 22 year old husband.

Jacko French: A Lance Corporal in the British Army.

Dr Boyle: A hospital doctor.

Jim A British soldier.

(SECOND ACTRESS)

Anne: A 35 year old northern Irish Catholic woman.

Dolores O'Hare: Cathleen's Aunt.

Carol: A female sergeant.

A nurse:

(SECOND ACTOR)

Gerry O'Hare: Cathleen's older brother. A 25 year old Provisional IRA member. (later 33 year's old).

Bill/Rob: British soldiers.

**SET**

The play requires a flexible set to represent a range of locations including a hospital room, Cathleen's bedroom and a bar. Lighting, sound and prop changes should adequately convey these locations. An area front stage should be left free for outdoor scenes such as the riot.

**ACT ONE**

**Scene One**

A sunny morning. Church bells ring out a celebratory clarion. Cathy and Liam in full bridal gear are followed by Dolores who clutches a camera and box of confetti.

Cath (selecting a spot front stage and beckoning Dolores) This is it. Just here. With the rose bush behind us.

Liam (tugging at her dress) Cathy, you're treading on your dress.

Aunt Jesus, Mary and Joseph; that girl ! (adjusting Cathy's dress for the impending photo) You've entered the most holy state of matrimony, Cathy. Don't go sticking your foot through your dress. Wives don't do that sort of thing.

Cath (giggles) What do they do then, Auntie ?

Aunt Never you mind. (adjusting Liam's position beside Cathy)

Cath Do I look alright? My mascara hasn't run, has it?

Aunt You look a picture. (starts to cry with emotion) I'm sorry, Cathy. I can't help it.

Liam Do you want me to take the photos, Miss O'Hare ? It'll be no trouble.

Aunt Fine photos that would make. A bride with no groom. Just stay where you are, young Liam, and contemplate the seriousness of the step you've just taken.

Liam (hugging Cathy) I'd rather be kissing Cathy.

Aunt Don't smudge her lipstick. (positioning herself to take the photo) Not that sort of kiss, Liam. That belongs in the bedroom. (they kiss more chastely) Are you ready, now? (the camera clicks) Got you. Now, one for For Father O'Donnell. A bit further apart. (they take up an excessively chaste posture. The camera clicks) Magic. He'll love that one.

Liam It's no good, Miss O'Hare. I'm going to have to kiss her again. It's a chronic disease.

Aunt For the love of Mary! You make me feel ninety years old with your Miss O'Hare. Call me Dolores.

Cathy (looking into the audience) Ma's still trying to fix her hat. Look!

Aunt I told her to use a pin. But would she listen?

Liam Let’s get the others over now.

Aunt I haven't finished with you yet. (hands him the confetti box) Grab a handful of that and throw it up when I tell you. It'll look like apple blossom. (Liam takes a handful of confetti and they position themselves) Are you ready?

Cath Let's pretend we're eating it when it comes down. (she sticks out her tongue like a hungry dog)

Aunt (impatiently) Cathy. You're nineteen years old. Put that tongue back inside your mouth and behave yourself or I'll go get your brothers and they'll put it back in for you !

(A uniformed soldier walks on from stage left, receiving signals from the walkie-talkie he carries)

Sold Morning. We're running P. checks on the area.

Aunt We're at a wedding. Are you blind, or something?

Sold Any of your guests own a black Ford Transit, registration JXC 34L?

Liam Piss off !

Aunt Language, Liam. They may be scum, but there's no need to sink to their level.

Sold (to the couple) Do you own a black Ford Transit, registration JXC 34L?

Cath I don't even own a bicycle.

Liam Are you deaf or something? I said, piss off.

Sold (into his walkie-talkie) 'Zero' ? Do you read me ? This is 'One'. Two female, one male. Obstructive behaviour. Running P. check.

Cath Go to hell! This is my wedding day.

Aunt (hugs Cathy) Cathy, love. They're heathens. You can't expect them to act normal.

Sold All I need is your name and address. It won't take a minute.

Cath He's enjoying it, the bastard. You can see it on his face. (holding up half her little finger at the soldier) I bet your prick's that small.

Aunt Cathy.

Sold (turning to Dolours) Shall we start with your name and address, madam ?

Aunt 38 Springfield Road. O'Hare, Dolores. Miss. Satisfied?

Sold (speaking into his walkie-talkie) Dolores O'Hare. 38 Springfield Road. (to Dolores) And these two?

Liam I hope you have a shit awful wedding one day.

Cath I hope the roof falls in and your guests all die of food poisoning.

Sold (to Liam) Look, do yourself a big favour. Give me your name and address, and I won't have to take you in.

Cath Go to hell, you murdering bastard!

Aunt Cathy.

Cath Marie's dead because of the likes of you. (she grabs the confetti box and starts hurling handfuls of confetti into the soldiers face) Bloody butchers!

Aunt Cathy. Don't!

Cath You and your frigging patrols!

Aunt Do something Liam. She's going to get us all lifted.

Cath (distraught) I don't care if I'm lifted. You can lift the whole bloody lot of us.

Liam (restrains Cathy) Cathy. Cathy, love. It's our wedding day. Come on, now, let's dance.

Cath But he . . .

Liam (he grabs her round the waist and swings her around, singing) I had a wee dog and his name was Mack, he piddled all over the Union Jack. (they continue dancing and singing until Cathy begins to laugh)

Sold (to the walkie talkie) Do you read me 'Zero' ? I'm taking this lot in.

Aunt No. Listen. She's Cathleen Maguire, nee O'Hare. Sixty five the Divis. And he's Liam Maguire.

Sold (to the walkie talkie) Hang on a minute, 'Zero'. P. Check on Cathleen Maguire, nee O'Hare, sixty five the Divis. Yes. And Liam Maguire . . . (nods to Dolores)

Aunt Two hundred and twenty five the Divis.

Sold (into walkie-talkie) Two two five the Divis.

Liam (to the soldier) Why don't you drop in for a cup of tea one day ?

Sold I might take you up on that.

Cathy (with malevolence) We'll be waiting for you.

Sold Mine's white, two sugars.

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