

Example of Benchmark (3)

RIDERS TO THE SEA

SCENE. *An Island off the West of Ireland.*

(Cottage kitchen, with nets, oil-skins, spinning wheel, some new boards standing by the wall, etc. Cathleen, a girl of about twenty, finishes kneading cake, and puts it down in the pot-oven by the fire; then wipes her hands, and begins to spin at the wheel. [Nora, a young girl, puts her head in at the door.]

NORA (in a low voice). Where is she? TO ASSESS

CATHLEEN. She's lying down, God help her, and may be sleeping, if she's able. TO EXPLAIN

[Nora comes in softly, and takes a bundle from under her shawl.]

CATHLEEN (spinning the wheel rapidly). What is it you have? TO INQUIRE

NORA. The young priest is after bringing them. It's a shirt and a plain stocking were got off a drowned man TO ELABORATE in Donegal.

[Cathleen stops her wheel with a sudden movement, and leans out to listen.]

NORA. We're to find out if it's Michael's they are, some time herself will be down looking by the sea. TO ESTABLISH

CATHLEEN. How would they be Michael's, Nora, How would he go the length of that way to the far north? TO DOUBT

NORA. The young priest says he's known the like of it. "If it's Michael's they are," says he, "you can tell herself he's got a clean burial by the grace of God, and if they're not his, let no one say a word about them, for she'll be getting her death," says he, "with crying and lamenting." TO REITERATE

COULD IT BE MICHAEL?

The sisters attempt to figure out if Michael could have gone to Donegal.

- Quickly

DONEGAL - TOWN ON COAST OF DONEGAL BAY

LAMENTING - VOCAL EXPRESSION OF SORROW

WILL BARTLEY NOT GO?

Both sisters show concern
if Bartley will leave
because of the weather.

Slows

WAIT TILL LATER

The sisters realize that
they should take caution
in opening the bundle

picks up again

WILL BARTLEY NOT GO?

Maurya is set on the fact
that Bartley will not go and
the sisters try to get thru to
her that he will go and none
will be able to stop him.

Slows

[The door which Nora half closed is blown open by a gust of wind.]

To EXPRESS
CONCERN

CATHLEEN (looking out anxiously). Did you ask him
would he stop Bartley going this day with the horses to
the Galway fair?

To ASSURE

NORA. "I won't stop him," says he, "but let you not be
afraid. Himself does be saying prayers half through the
night, and the Almighty God won't leave her destitute,"
says he, "with no son living."

To WUNDER

CATHLEEN. Is the sea bad by the white rocks, Nora?

To REVEAL

NORA. Middling bad, God help us. There's a great roar-
ing in the west, and it's worse it'll be getting when the
tide's turned to the wind.

[She goes over to the table with the bundle.]

To ENTICE

Shall I open it now?

To ANALYZE

CATHLEEN. Maybe she'd wake up on us, and come in
before we'd done. (Coming to the table.) It's a long
time we'll be, and the two of us crying.

To DESCRIBE

NORA (goes to the inner door and listens). She's moving
about on the bed. She'll be coming in a minute.

To CONCEAL

CATHLEEN. Give me the ladder, and I'll put them up
in the turf-loft, the way she won't know of them at all,
and maybe when the tide turns she'll be going down to
see would he be floating from the east.

[They put the ladder against the gable of the chimney;
Cathleen goes up a few steps and hides the bundle
in the turf-loft. Maurya comes from the inner room.]

To NAME

MAURYA (looking up at Cathleen and speaking queru-
lously). Isn't it turf enough you have for this day and
evening?

To JUSTIFY

CATHLEEN. There's a cake baking at the fire for a short

GALWAY FAIR - livestock exchange
GALWAY - town on coast of Galway
Bay

middling - moderately sized

gable - top of chimney

turf - peat used for fuel
"fire rocks"