

# **When was 1916?**

**(A play about a pivotal Irish event seen from the perspective of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)**

**By Charles W. Barry**

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## Characters in order of appearance

**Pat (an expatriate)**

**Nat (a national)**

**Jack**

**Margaret (his wife)**

**Jim (their son)**

**Peggy (their daughter)**

**P.H Pearse**

**Bulmer Hobson**

**Eoin MacNeill**

**Kearney (an RIC constable)**

**Dr. Shanahan**

**O'Rahilly**

**Baron Wimborne (Viceroy of Ireland)**

**Matthew Nathan (Under-Secretary for Ireland)**

**Ivor Price (Head of Intelligence)**

**Walter Edgeworth-Johnstone (Head of the Dublin Metropolitan Police)**

## Prelude

(Pat sits behind a laptop. Nat appears on the screen)

Nat: Hello! I said -Hello there!

Pat: Hello

Nat: Busy as usual?

Pat: Yes. Please do not disturb

Nat: How am I disturbing you?

Pat: By being there. Please let me return to my writing

Nat (coming out of the laptop): What are you writing now? (Pat sighs) Tell me.

Pat: I'd rather you didn't interfere.

Nat: Interfere? I'm trying to help you

Pat: Not very successfully. Anyway – can you go now?

Nat: I want to help.

Pat: You can help by going.

Nat: No way (presses on Pat's keyboard) What do we have here?

Pat: Nothing

Nat: I thought you were writing

Pat: I was starting when you came

Nat: So continue. I promise not to disturb

Pat: I can't concentrate if you're watching me

Nat: I'll look the other way

Pat: Oh please go!

Nat: OK I'll go – on one condition. That you tell me what you're going to write about.

Pat: I don't know

Nat: Well what ideas came to mind?

Pat: I-

Nat: Yes?

Pat: I was thinking of writing about –

Nat: Yes?

Pat: 1916

Nat: Well of all the luck! Can you imagine – I was just thinking about the same theme myself!  
Talk about telepathy!

Pat: So now will you go and let me get on with my work?

Nat: No way! If you're going to write about 1916 I have to be there to give you inspiration.

Pat: I get inspiration when I'm alone

Nat: The union of great minds will make a better job of it. (Pat sighs) So what about 1916?  
There's a lot of talk these days about it

Pat: That's just it. As so much is being said about it can I say anything new?

Nat: Maybe you can sing something about it?

Pat: No – that's been done before.

Nat: Maybe you can write a book about it?

Pat: At the moment there are about 500 titles available in print

Nat: So maybe you can write a play about it?

Pat: Not on. *The Plough and the Stars* by Sean O'Casey. I can't guild the lilly.

Nat: So I give up

Pat (pressing the keyboard and a picture of a family appearing): Look at this!

Nat: It looks like *Happy families*. That doesn't sound like 1916 to me!

## Spy Wednesday

(The scene opens out and the family in mime are having lunch. Animated gestures. A man, a woman a boy and a girl with a servant)

Nat: Now for the life of me I can't see what this has to do with our show. You must be on the wrong channel

Pat: Let's listen to them. They may give us a clue

Boy: Will we be going to the races on Monday Daddy?

Man: I hope so Jim.

Girl: I love horses but I think that racing is a waste of time

Man: Why do you say that, Peggy?

Girl: You see the horses only for a minute and then they're gone.

Boy: It would be great if we could make a film of it!

Woman: Children – can you eat up quickly please!

Nat: I've no idea why we're having this pantomime – have you?

Pat: I think so. Just watch.....

(In shadow the children disappear, the butler removes the plates and the couple are alone)

Margaret (the woman): Jack – do you think it's safe to go to Fairyhouse on Monday?

Jack (the man): I should think so Madge. Why not?

Margaret: Well there's been a lot of talk over the last few days and marches

Jack: Oh that! A few fools dressing up pretending to play cowboys and Indians

Margaret: You don't think there's any danger?

Jack: I don't think so Madge

Nat: Now what was that in aid of?

Pat: Can't you see? This is an ordinary Irish family on the eve of the Easter Rising. They should help us a lot with shaping the context

Nat: How?

Pat: Question time. (Orbits the lone figure of Jack) John James Robert McCann?

Jack (never directly addressing Pat or Nat: I am he

Pat: Commonly called 'Jack' by intimates

Jack: That's me

Pat: What is your profession?

Jack: Stockbroker

Pat: Of fixed abode?

Nat (looking around the room): I should say so

Jack: I live here in Simmonscourt

Nat (whistling): Nice little place you have here

Pat: Marital status?

Jack: I have a very dear wife

Pat: Children?

Jack: A boy and a girl – both very dear to me

Pat: What is your religion?

Jack: I'm a Roman Catholic

Nat: An English Catholic. Only English Catholics call themselves Roman Catholics.

Pat: Nationality?

Jack (sounding surprised): Irish

Pat: What are your political views?

Jack (frowning): My political views?

Pat: Yes. In relation to Ireland

Jack: I support Home Rule

Pat: What do you think of the North? (Jack frowns again) Do you think that Ulster should be given exemption from Home Rule?

Jack: I don't think so. And hopefully with all of us serving on the western front we'll get more united

Nat: Ah.... the old Redmondite dream. If the North and the South fight on the same side in Europe we'll love each other at home....impossible.....

Pat: What is your opinion of the Irish Republic?

Jack: The Irish Republic?

Pat: That's it

Jack: It can never happen. The Irish people have too many cultural and economic ties with England. A republic would jeopardize these ties. And....

Nat: Yes?

Jack: We are not ready for a republic. Perhaps in time....We need a good few years of Home Rule first

Pat: And what is your opinion of the physical force men?

Jack (frowning): Who are they?

Pat: They're the ones who say unless the Irish people fight for their freedom they will never get it.

Jack: I am against these people. We are fighting a bloody international war at the moment. Many Irish men have been recruited. Why should more Irish blood be shed at home?

Nat: Listen Jack – it's us who are asking the questions

Pat: Do you think there's a chance of a rising in Ireland?

Jack: A rising?

Pat: Yes. For the last few months there's been talk about England's difficulty being Ireland's opportunity. Well there's a world war going on – England is up to its neck in it. Is the time right for a rising against the English?

Jack: I think the Irish people would not support it. It would be madness. If we fought the English at the moment – how would we possibly be able to face the Germans alone?

Nat: Well now that's an interesting perspective. I've thought a lot about the Rising but that's a novel aspect worth pondering over

Pat: You have two children

Jack: Yes a son and a daughter. Both very dear to me

Nat: So we heard

Pat: Are they at school in Dublin?

Jack: Yes

Pat: Will they go to school in England in the future?

Jack: Probably yes

Pat: Why?

Nat: Answer please

Jack: There are several reasons

Pat: Name the most important one

Jack: I am very ambitious for my children. If they get an English schooling this will help them more in the future than if they complete their schooling here in Ireland

Pat: Well quite a lot of richer Irish parents at the time felt the same. Kate O'Brien's parents.....my godfather's parents.....even my grandparents thought this- but they couldn't live up to it as the money ran out

Nat: Can we get back to 1916 please?

Pat: Will these schools in England be Catholic – I mean Roman Catholic?

Jack: Of course

Pat: So religious loyalties are stronger than national loyalties – am I right?

Jack (frowning): I don't understand

Nat: Don't waste your time trying. Understanding the link between nation and religion has been an age-old problem in Ireland and it will take too long to explain it now

Pat: By sending your children to an English boarding-school doesn't in any way conflict with your feelings of being an Irishman?

Jack: Certainly not. If the English school is better that's the important thing

Pat: A pragmatic answer

Nat: Not much of the Easter dreamer about him

Pat: OK Jack you can go – for the present at least (Jack blacks out)

Nat: And now – where to?

Pat: Nothing more for the day

Nat: You mean we're not going to start on 1916 yet?

Pat: We have started on 1916

Nat: But I mean the drama – the leaders-

Pat: We'll start on them tomorrow

Nat: Tomorrow? (Pat nods) As you wish.....(Disappears into the laptop).

## Holy Thursday

(Pat sits motionless behind his laptop. Nat appears within)

Nat: Boo! (Pat jumps) What's eating you?

Pat: I don't think I can go on

Nat: You *must* go on

Pat: I can't go on

Nat: You *shall* go on. Go on about what by the way?

Pat: 1916

Nat: And sure why not?

Pat: We are getting into.....a delicate situation

Nat: Don't talk like a politician

Pat: It's OK writing about a private family with 1916 in the background but taking on real historical figures is a different matter

Nat: But sure you're only telling a story. That's how history was always written like in the past. You're not making any claims on anyone.

Pat: I'm frightened

Nat: Why?

Pat: They stare down at me. (Vague images of Eoin MacNeill, Bulmer Hobson and Pearse appearing in a Mount Rushmore setting are seen) If I do them injustice they will surely punish me.

Nat: Punish you? Not at all. 1916 was the greatest theatrical event in Irish history. Those 1916agers were actors. Actors will do anything for fame. They'll be thrilled about this – if they're watching from above.

(Pat sighs with resignation. The Mount Rushmore image fades. A dark study emerges. Two dark shadows shake hands with a third. Pat and Nat fade)

MacNeill: You know why we have come?

Pearse: I don't know that I do

Hobson: We have been informed that you have issued orders for company manoeuvres on Easter Sunday

Pearse: And if I have?

MacNeill: You had no right to do this! You must refer all these orders to me

Pearse: You are not in charge any more

MacNeill: Who are you to tell me this?

Pearse: Supreme authority has been withdrawn from the Irish Volunteers. It resides in the Irish Republican Brotherhood

MacNeill: And who says this? Are you trying to take power from me?

Pearse: Power is not in your hands – not any more

MacNeill: What do you mean?

Hobson: And what are you saying about the IRB?

Pearse: I am saying that power resides with us

Hobson: You sound as if the IRB and the Volunteers were rivals but we are working for a common cause

Pearse: The common cause that I am interested in is a rising against England

Hobson: We all agree with this

Pearse: So you are ready to support us then?

Hobson: Who do you mean by *us*?

Pearse: It is no matter

MacNeill: If you could stop talking in riddles it would be best for all of us. Getting back to the company manoeuvres- did you issue them or not? Well? Answer me!

Pearse: You're not in your lecture hall now – Professor MacNeill

Hobson: I can't make you out at all. You speak as if we were enemies. How will we ever be strong if we're not united?

Pearse: Some of us are united. And dedicated. Dedication is the first priority

MacNeill: I think you're trying to usurp my power

Pearse: Don't flatter yourself. Your power comes from the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The Irish Volunteers would not exist without us

Hobson: Pearse- you've only been with us for four years. You sound a little bit too much of the old IRB veteran for me

Pearse: I admit you have been in the movement for longer than me but time is not the only factor that makes a patriot

(MacNeill and Hobson look at each other doubtfully)

MacNeill: I want to know about the manoeuvres. Will you give me a straight answer or not?

Pearse: I would willingly give you the answer if you would ask me the question

MacNeill: I have already asked you the question twice

Pearse: Ask me again.

MacNeill: Did you issue company manoeuvres for Easter Sunday?

Pearse (yawns): I see I won't get to bed tonight if I don't answer you. (sighing with resignation) Yes I did issue the orders

MacNeill: How dare you do this without my consent!

Pearse: I fear that you both are not aware of the present situation. I see no point in holding back any longer. Power no longer lies in your hands

MacNeill: We'll see about that!

Pearse: The military council of the IRB has decided on a national rising that will begin on Easter Sunday

Hobson: I was not informed

Pearse: Unfortunately not. But then you haven't been following all that's been going on for some time have you?

MacNeill: How could you do this? You're a traitor to our cause!

Pearse: A traitor? Surely not. We'll be the ones doing all the fighting for Irish freedom

MacNeill: The Irish Volunteers have always claimed that there would be no rising unless there was a popular mandate for it

Pearse: What revolution ever had a popular mandate? We rise, we fight and the people follow us

MacNeill: Go back to your world of fairy tales! History shows a different picture. The people would not support us about this. The British have the biggest empire in the world and they

are fully mobilized for war. What chance do we have against them? If we fight at this stage – we'll just be mown down in a bloody massacre

Pearse: And what if we are? Bloodshed is a cleansing thing

Hobson: I think you gave us that one before Pearse. Was it at Rossa's funeral last year?

Pearse: If I repeat myself does it make my message less true?

Hobson: I don't know but I do know that a rising contravenes the constitution of the IRB

Pearse: You talk like a lawyer Hobson – you missed your calling

Hobson: It is clearly stated in our constitution that an armed rising against British authority cannot be ratified without the will of the Irish people

Pearse: And who can say that this is not the will of the Irish people? I am Irish and it is my will

Hobson: You are not the Irish people

Pearse: I speak for many Irish people. There'll never be any rising or any movement where everyone will be united

MacNeill: You have sowed the seeds of discord. You have done your best to weaken us by splitting us. I won't let you get any further with this. You seem to forget that I am the Chief of Staff of the Irish Volunteer Force

Pearse: And I am its Director of Organization

MacNeill: I am your superior in rank as you very well know. And now I – I officially request – I – I order you to cancel these manoeuvres

Pearse: I cannot do this

MacNeill: Then you will disobey me?

Pearse: It is not a question of disobeying you. Together with fellow members of the military council of the IRB I have helped to plan a national rising which will start on Easter Sunday

MacNeill: I will have none of it! This rising will not go ahead!

Pearse: You can do nothing to stop it now

MacNeill: I can do plenty to stop it. Information can be spread very quickly nowadays. You forget that we are living in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Pearse: Whatever you try to do – the rising will still go ahead

MacNeill: I will do everything – everything – short of informing Dublin Castle- to prevent this rising from taking place

Pearse: You may inform Dublin Castle if you wish- it will make no difference to the rising occurring

Hobson: But why have you gone against us like this? Don't you see-this will be the end of everything?

Pearse: If when you say *the end* you mean death I would agree with you. But this end will also be a new beginning. Life springs from death

Hobson: I think I heard that one before

MacNeill: Why have you caused this dissension? Honestly you act as though you were trying to destroy Irish independence

Pearse: On the contrary – I- we will be fighting for it on Easter Sunday. Your methods have proved to be too modest – too gentle- too lethargic. I would willingly have informed you both of all our plans if I had known you would support them

MacNeill: By rising at this time you will destroy any realistic chance Ireland has of gaining independence from England. Your romantic talk won't get us anywhere. You're a dreamer Pearse. You should never have got involved with us

Pearse: And what if my dream comes true? If we fight we will at least have renewed our cause for a generation

(MacNeill and Hobson look at each other bemused. Hobson shrugs and looks at his watch-chain)

Hobson: I don't think we're getting anywhere. We're just going round in circles

MacNeill: I know there are some on your side. They are either *poseurs* pretending to be the vanguard of a fairytale republic or they are fanatics who just love the thought of their own – and other people's - death. You have brought our cause to a sorry state

Pearse: Not a sorry state- a glorious state. The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church. So it will be with us

MacNeill: We could have done so much with our forces united. Instead of that you're planning for yet another pathetic blood-letting which hasn't the right to be called a rebellion

Pearse: This will be the greatest rebellion in Irish history. We will rise as one nation in the biggest insurrection we've ever had. You don't know what will happen

MacNeill: As I said- I will do my best not to let anything happen

Pearse: But it will. It will!

Hobson (standing): I've had enough of this fire and brimstone talk. Are you coming?

(MacNeill stands and gradually they all become shadows)

Nat: Now that didn't hurt did it?

Pat: What do you mean?

Nat: There you were – worrying about doing them all injustice.....and that they'd punish you.  
And we end up with this fine scene

Pat: Was it a fine scene?

Nat: Well what do you make of it?

Pat: Not bad. But I'm not entirely convinced about the historical side of it

Nat: I myself wouldn't have minded another question-time like yesterday

Pat: No – they spoke for themselves. Our questions were not needed. And somehow.....it seems inappropriate here.....

Nat: So are we all in for tonight?

Pat: I don't know

Nat (yawning): We are. At least I am. Good night. Don't stay up too late! (Disappears into the laptop. Pat continues to stare at the screen).

## Good Friday

(Pat sits at the laptop frowning and then suddenly looks animated)

Pat: Eureka!

Nat (from the laptop): Hey! You woke me up

Pat: Good – now we can work

Nat: Do you mean to say you've been at the machine all night?

Pat: Not exactly. I did nod a little before dawn

Nat: No sleep, no inspiration

Pat: But I have been inspired!

Nat: You have?

Pat: Oh yes

Nat: An epiphany?

Pat: Sort of

Nat: A revelation?

Pat: In a sense

Nat: The moment of artistic truth?

Pat: That might be going too far.

Nat: So tell me all about it!

Pat: About what?

Nat: About 1916

Pat: What about it?

Nat: How's it going?

Pat: OK. Listen – let's stop talking and start doing things

(The scene opens out into a police office. The RIC constable at his desk and the shadow of another man approaching)

Nat: Who do we have here?

Pat: Shhh. Let the characters speak for themselves.

Kearney: Well Doctor – and how is our patient? (Waves to a seat where Shanahan sits)

Dr Shanahan: He's a touch of the fever Mr Kearney I think. We must look after him very carefully

Kearney: And did he by any chance tell you who he was?

Dr Shanahan: That he didn't

Kearney: And have you any idea yourself?

Dr Shanahan: That I don't

Kearney (gesturing to Shanahan): Does it remind you of anyone?

(Shows him a photo)

Dr Shanahan: I don't know

Kearney: Do you recognize the man in the photo?

Dr Shanahan: I don't

Kearney: Oh come on now Doctor! Don't be so cautious. Sure you know whose side I'm on

Dr Shanahan: I don't exactly follow you Mr Kearney

Kearney: That man in the picture is Roger – Sir Roger Casement. You haven't heard of him?

Dr Shanahan: Well now that you mention him – I think I have

Kearney: He was on a mission to Germany. Consorting with the enemy. Trying to get guns for the IRB and all that follow them

Dr Shanahan: Ah yes – now I remember

Kearney: And our man in the room across the way – is one and the same.

Dr Shanahan: Are you sure?

Kearney: Look at the picture again

Dr Shanahan (looking carefully): Our man doesn't have a beard

Kearney: Oh come on Doctor! Spare me your innocence. Did you never hear of .....shaving off your beard?

Dr Shanahan: Aye. Oh I did

Kearney: We have in our custody one of the biggest traitors to the British crown – can you believe it? Here in peaceful Tralee we have a man who is at the top of the list of the most wanted criminals in the British empire

Dr Shanahan: But are you quite sure it's him?

Kearney: As sure as today's Good Friday

Dr Shanahan: And what are you going to do about it?

Kearney (bending over): Well Doctor – between you, me and the wall in all honesty and fairness – I don't know. If I hand him over to the administration it will mean certain promotion for me. I'll probably be made an inspector in Scotland Yard. But what's the good of promotion if my brains are blown out in six months' time? I'll myself be branded as a traitor and I won't have another peaceful minute in my life.

Dr Shanahan: Well-

Kearney: And it's not only that Doctor. I feel – for better or for worse – he's one of ourselves. Alright I know he's a Protestant and I know he's from Ulster. But – but you know what I mean.....

Dr Shanahan: I'm not sure that I do Mr Kearney

Kearney: I'm the head constable here. You don't become head constable of the RIC for being a strong Irish nationalist. If nationalists perpetrate crimes I'm down on them like a ton of bricks. But some of these chaps.....they're not real criminals at all. They think about an Irish republic, they dream about it, they may write about it- but nowadays you can't go to gaol for that. This isn't Russia, this is Ireland .....if you see my point

Dr Shanahan: Well I think I do

Kearney: Let these republicans think and write to their hearts' content. As long as they don't commit crimes – I – I prefer to look the other way. This chap Casement for instance. Between you, me and the wall I can tell you about him. He went on some crazy mission to Germany to get guns for the IRB. Something happened this morning – there was some communication failure- I don't know all the details yet –but it ended up with the guns being sent to the bottom of the sea. You see?

Dr Shanahan: I do

Kearney: So as a senior officer of the law my duty is to keep him in custody till I hear from the administration what to do next. Maybe they'll tell me he has to be transported to England. But I've a hunch they'll lie low till after Easter. So I've decided to keep him here as any law-abiding officer should do but if his friends rescue him I'll – I'll look the other way. I won't follow this up

Dr Shanahan: Do you not think you'll be putting yourself and your family at risk?

Kearney: Sure isn't it for their sakes' that I'm doing this? I don't want them to be mixed up in political shenanigans. You know when I joined the RIC over twenty years ago, there was much less of this. You could be an ordinary policeman, do your job and have no connexion with politics. Over the last few years the situation has heated up so much. I don't want to be part of this

Dr Shanahan: So you'll keep our patient here for the Easter weekend?

Kearney: Unless Dublin Castle says something to the contrary.

Dr Shanahan (standing): I'll come again tomorrow to visit him. He has a touch of the fever and needs to be looked after carefully

Kearney: I'll make sure he'll be looked after well. Doctor – before you go I would like to ask you something

Dr Shanahan: Well?

Kearney: I think that you're aware.....that there are a few volunteers in the local area

Dr Shanahan: Yes?

Kearney: If you can let any of them know – unofficially of course – that the RIC has Roger Casement here- I'd – I'd be very grateful

Dr Shanahan: You want them to take him?

Kearney: If they want him

Dr Shanahan: I think Mr Kearney you'll have to give me the details – not that I'm sure any volunteers will come

Kearney: The details?

Dr Shanahan: Yes. The time and place that would be most-

Kearney: Come on Doctor! If we go into details we'll start to compromise our positions if you know what I mean. Let's just say this – the door will be open all day

Dr Shanahan: I don't think he should leave here

Kearney: Have you got cold feet?

Dr Shanahan: I'm not sure that I understand you Mr Kearney

Kearney: You don't want to be dragged into this? Well that's perfectly understandable. But what I say is – if the local Irish Volunteer unit makes a raid on the local RIC station we fought

bravely to a man – but we couldn't beat them. They're a rough lot they are – we're not used to their brutality. We tried our best – but they escaped with the prisoner. A reward is being offered for his recapture. Any information leading to the prisoner can be given to John A. Kearney Head Constable of the RIC in Tralee. You see what I mean?

Dr Shanahan: That isn't what I meant when I said the patient should not leave here. I was thinking about his medical condition.

Kearney: Ah!

Dr Shanahan: It would be best for him to stay here resting

Kearney: Spoken like a doctor! Put health before political expedience- eh? Alright Doctor – say nothing. Follow your nose

Dr Shanahan: I'll try my best –

Kearney: Doctor – don't worry yourself. I'll have everything under control

Dr Shanahan: So.....can I leave now?

Kearney (standing and waving to an exit): The door is open

Dr Shanahan (at the door with some hesitation: Happy Easter Mr Kearney

Kearney: Happy Easter Dr Shanahan

(Kearney and Shanahan fade out. Lights on Pat at the laptop and Nat inside it)

Nat: Are you happy with the scene?

Pat: Quite. What did you think of it?

Nat: I thought there was one catch.

Pat: Which was?

Nat: Well this was the big Casement scene wasn't it?

Pat: I know what you're going to say

Nat: He never turned up

Pat: Neither did Godot

Nat: What?

Pat: You always know so much. Don't tell me that you haven't heard of *Waiting for Godot*

Nat: Of course I have!

Pat: So of course you know that the main character – Godot – never turns up

Nat: But that's a totally different situation-

Pat: I know. I know. You don't have to go on and on. All I'm saying is that Godot didn't turn up in his play and Casement didn't turn up here

Nat: But there's something wrong there. If Casement doesn't turn up on Good Friday 1916 there is something definitely wrong.

Pat: I tried my best to get him in. But he just wouldn't come

Nat: Why not?

Pat: He-he wouldn't speak to me

Nat: Are you alright?

Pat: Yes – why?

Nat: You sound a bit funny. I think you should stop working now. I think you've done enough for the day

Pat: No – I have to finish this scene. I have to! (Nat watches him warily from the laptop screen)

Nat: Pat!

Pat: What?

Nat: Leave off for the rest of the evening

Pat: No

Nat: You sound tired. You-

Pat: Look!

(An image of Casement slowly emerges)

Nat: Crikey!

Pat: Here he is

Nat: Say something to him

Pat: Why wouldn't you speak in the scene we've just done? I specially wrote it for you but you wouldn't say anything. Why not?

Nat: Maybe he can't hear you

Pat: Were we not important enough for your company? But MacNeill and Pearse spoke. If they – why not you?

Nat: Maybe he was shy

Pat: Were you embarrassed? Perhaps you didn't think we would do you justice. Will you speak now?

Nat: Obviously not. I think you hurt his feelings

Pat: How?

Nat: No idea

Pat: (To Casement) I'm sorry you wouldn't speak. I planned this scene to be an interview between you and Kearney. Or perhaps between you, Kearney and the doctor. They talked but you didn't. You've always been a mystery to me

Nat: Ah now we're getting there!

Pat: I wanted you to talk but you wouldn't

Nat: Maybe he'll say something later on

Pat: No I think not. This was his big scene

Nat: And he missed it. One character in search of a scene. I think I've heard that one before. Well this will add to the aura of mystery about Sir Roger Casement

(The image of Casement starts to fade)

Pat: It's a pity

Nat: It is but there you are. He's here.....(image gets smaller) he's there.....he's gone (Image disappears)

Pat: And you can go to

Nat: Me?

Pat: Yes. I didn't like your snide remarks about him.

Nat: What are you saying?

Pat: If you hadn't been continually yapping he might have been in the scene

Nat: Ah come on now.....

Pat: And also I need a rest. Goodbye. (Turns to the laptop)

Nat: Don't log me out.

Pat: I will

Nat: You never do

Pat: There's always a first time

Nat: No – please – no!

Pat: Yes!

Nat: I- wait – no! – I-

(Pat turns off the laptop and exits).

## Holy Saturday

(Pat sits behind his laptop but does not look at it. Nat appears on the screen)

Nat: Are you alright? Pat!

Pat: What?

Nat: Are you alright?

Pat: Yes – why?

Nat: Have you recovered after ...after last night?

Pat (frowns): I don't understand

Nat: You don't remember? When you logged me out?

Pat: Oh that! Sorry for logging you out. I had a little crisis

Nat: What exactly was the problem?

Pat: You don't remember?

Nat: Well I'd like to hear it from your side

Pat: I wrote a scene for Roger Casement and he wouldn't appear in it

Nat: But he did appear

Pat: But there were problems with the sound system. They wouldn't let him speak

Nat: You wouldn't let him speak

Pat: Uh-uh. *They* wouldn't let him speak

Nat: Who are they?

Pat: The voices

Nat: The voices? Are you hearing voices?

Pat: Every writer hears them

Nat: If you're hearing voices.....I think it's time to see a doctor

Pat: I don't think so. If writers were to visit doctors every time they heard voices – there'd be no doctors available for anyone else

Nat: I didn't know it was like that. I thought whenever a writer wants his character to say something he gives it to him to say.....if you know what I mean

