

WAVERING MARTIN (i)

By

J P Murtagh

*The performance rights of this piece are controlled by the writer **John P Murtagh**. No professional or non-professional performance of the play may be given without obtaining in advance the written permission of the writer. Those wishing to contact the writer should email info@greencurtaintheatre.co.uk*

INT. CARE-HOME. DAY

*An elderly care home in London and Mam (70s Irish) watches the television blankly. **Conor** enters with a tray of tea and sits it down next to her on a table.*

CONOR

Here you are.

MAM

Good lad.

CONOR

What you watching?

MAM

What?

CONOR

(Shouts). I said what's on the tele?

MAM

(A pause). Ah some old crap. I'm bored.

CONOR

Guess where I was yesterday? (*Silence.*) The Galtymore.

MAM

You're a bit past it for nightclubs now don't you think?

CONOR

Past it!? I'm not past it!

MAM

(*Thinks*) The Galtymore...now that brings back some memories.

CONOR

Isn't that where you met dad?

MAM

In the Galtymore!? Don't be ridiculous! It was always a bit

rough. Too much brandy in them men.

CONOR

I thought it was the place to be for dancing? For the Irish diaspora?

MAM

The wha?

CONOR

The diaspora?

MAM

194 Cricklewood Broadway.

CONOR

I'm sure I remember you telling me a story about the Galtymore.

MAM

I got into a spot of bother in there once.

CONOR

"A spot of bother"? That's a bit posh.

MAM

It was a long time ago. Of course it was your father that caused all the bother.

CONOR

That wouldn't surprise me.

MAM

We were at the Galtymore. Your father and I and a few of our friends. I'd had a few drinks I'll admit. You're father got up to dance. And another woman came along.

CONOR

What happened?

MAM

Well what do you think happened? She started dancing with him. I was sitting down with Breege. She knew he was taken sure. We'd been courting long enough.

CONOR

Why did Dad start dancing with her?

MAM

He'd an ego on him!

CONOR

What happened next?

MAM

What do you think happened? I glared at her. And Briege wanted to go up there and separate them. Ah sure we were all too gone for drink.

CONOR

I wonder why Dad thought--

MAM

Because it made him look good! But it made a fool out of me. Always was good at that you're father. Well I'd had enough of this and I got up and gave what for. I said, "you fuck off out of it, he's my man and you can fuck off and prick tease someone else you whore".

CONOR

Whoa. Way to go mum!

MAM

And then I threw my drink over her. Martini.

CONOR

Class.

MAM

I noticed blood on her lip. I must have clipped her face with the glass by accident.

CONOR

Shit.

MAM

It was an accident. I'm not one for going around glassing people!

CONOR

What happened after that?

MAM

Someone called the police or security or whatever. I was fecking arrested. She claimed I threw a glass at her.

CONOR

But it was just an accident. Right?

MAM

Mary O'Meara. Trying to steal my husband and put me in jail.

CONOR

You got arrested?

MAM

They were going to go to court over it!

CONOR

She was that badly injured?

MAM

She tried to make out as if I scarred her for life. Jesus she wasn't much of an oil painting in the first place I can tell you. *(To herself)* Oh Lord forgive me I shouldn't be bad mouthing people. Well there was a commotion of course. Couple of her friends tried to pick a fight with me.

CONOR

Oh man.

MAM

You're father stepped in. And your Uncle Jim. Anyway, we all got kicked out I think.

CONOR

So it could have gotten nasty, huh?

MAM

It could've yeah. Yeah.

CONOR

You don't seem too upset about it.

MAM

Upset? What would I be upset for?

CONOR

Getting into trouble with the police and that.

MAM

Ah, the police let me go, they knew everyone had had a drink. They couldn't be bothered dealing with us, "drunken paddies" one of them said.

CONOR

You wouldn't get that now.

MAM/CONOR

Not to your face I don't suppose.

CONOR

he didn't press charges or anything?

MAM

She was a fiery stupid woman from Kerry. You're father put her straight. He told her he was with me. And she shouldn't have provoked me.

CONOR

Interesting response.

MAM

Sure I scared him.

CONOR

Dad!?

MAM

Your father was a waverer.

CONOR

Waverer?

MAM

He wouldn't admit this now of course. But me and him weren't on solid ground. That night, well I sort of forced the issue in his mind. I had my sources. And I can tell you now that night made him realise that I was--

CONOR

A fighter?

MAM

You're not too old for a wack

MAM

He knew I wasn't to be messed around with. You know...emotionally.

CONOR

Bloody hell. I should tell you where I've been more often!

MAM

Long time ago.

CONOR

Yeh, but I'm here because of it! If you hadn't glassed-

MAM

Now Conor! It was an accident.

CONOR

'thrown' your Martini over that woman which looked quite aggressive and determined to your wavering boyfriend at the time.

MAM

That's it. I blame the Martini.

CONOR

I thank Martini. This tea is brewed now.

MAM

Give it another couple of minutes. I like my tea strong.

CONOR and **MAM** sit back and watch the TV.

FADE OUT