**MICHAEL 30s / 40s. Irish. Dublin specified in script but Northern Irish / West accents acceptable. Shaggy-looking. A lost soul.**

**FRANCES 30s / 40s English, London-based, a corporate high-flyer.**

MICHAEL You’re English.

FRANCES What?

MICHAEL You’re English. You’re from England?

FRANCES No, yes. I live in London. But I’m from all over.

MICHAEL ‘All over’. I’d love that. My mum grew up in this house. I grew up in this

house. I was the one who ‘got out’. By which I mean I crossed the fucking

Liffey.

*He sees this is lost on her.*

So, you here for the thing?

*She exhales, nods.*

I don’t mean to be rude but - who are you?

FRANCES Frances.

MICHAEL Frances. I’ll need a bit more than that now.

FRANCES Right. I’m Judi’s daughter? *(At his blank look)* Judi - she was a friend of

Eileen’s? In England. And I was here on business -

MICHAEL Fancy.

FRANCES - so I thought I’d pop by. Pay my respects. I feel a bit weird now… Did you

say you were her -

MICHAEL Son, yes. For my sins. Michael.

*They shake hands. A bit too formal. They both smoke.*

FRANCES Can I ask?

MICHAEL Mm-hmm.

FRANCES Is this the wake? The thing before? ’Cause in England, we call the wake

the thing after, so…

MICHAEL Welcome to an Irish funeral. Three rounds. This is the wake - hence my

mother laid out on the dining room table there for all the neighbours to

see. Tomorrow, the funeral - with all the bells and whistles. Then, to round

it off, the reception. Open bar, naturally.

FRANCES Sounds like a wedding… *(She steps forward)* Busy in there.

MICHAEL You wouldn’t believe the people who come out of the

woodwork at these things.

You don’t know a soul in there, do you?

FRANCES I might just go -

MICHAEL Nonsense. I’ll give you a quick run-down. The dramatis

bloody personae.

FRANCES Alright then.

*Throughout the following, he points out the people he describes, but continues to periodically turn away from the window, in a way he thinks is subtle.*

MICHAEL Where to begin… The big fella, that’s Barry, my

brother - hard to avoid but well worth the effort

And that beanpole there is JP, God knows where he came

from, and there’s Dec beside him -

FRANCES And, sorry, they are?

MICHAEL My brothers.

FRANCES Wow. Big family.

MICHAEL Oh, we’re just getting started…

ENDS