

**BLIGHT; THE TRAGEDY  
OF DUBLIN. AN  
EXPOSITION IN 3 ACTS**

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Blight; the tragedy of Dublin. An exposition in 3 acts by Alpha and Omega

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**ALPHA AND OMEGA**

**BLIGHT; THE TRAGEDY  
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**BLIGHT**  
**THE TRAGEDY OF DUBLIN**

AN EXPOSITION IN 3 ACTS

BY  
**ALPHA AND OMEGA**



DUBLIN  
**THE TALBOT PRESS, LIMITED**

1917

THE VOICES IN THE PLAY ARE

STANISLAUS TULLY	<i>An Unskilled Labourer</i>
MRS. MARY FOLEY	<i>His Sister</i>
LILY	<i>- Her Daughter</i>
JIMMY	<i>Her Crippled Son</i>
GEORGE FOLEY	<i>(a discharged soldier) her Husband</i>
MISS MAXWELL-KNOX	<i>District Visitor</i>
MRS. LARISSEY	<i>A Neighbour</i>
JIMMY LARISSEY	<i>A Cabman</i>
MR. BANNERMAN	<i>Landlord of the Tenement</i>
MEDICAL DICK	} <i>nth Year Students</i>
MEDICAL DAVY	
TISDALL TOWNSLEY	} <i>Members of the Board of the Townsend Thanatorion</i>
NORRIS GALBRAITH	
WM. MCWHIRTER	
MR. MCNULTY	
MR. MORPHY	
MR. TUMULTY	
A CHARWOMAN.	

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# BLIGHT

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A dilapidated, beautiful room in a tenement house. Beds right, left and in front left. A clothes-line crosses diagonally, so that a hanging quilt drawn may screen a bed. Beside one bed is a jam-pot on a chair. Washstand and screen at foot between beds at window. A chair for cripple beside fire-place.*

*Tully (lying in bed, right).* Eh, Mary, are ye awake yet? . . . Are ye awake, Mary. . . ?  
Mary, surely yet not asleep at this hour.

*Mary (lying in bed, left).* Well, then, indeed I'm not. Can't ye be awake for a minute without thinking that everyone else is asleep? Sorra much sleep I get between the children and yer-self. I suppose it's a drink ye want?

*Tully.* Go on; that's right! Why don't you say I'm drunk once for all and aise yer mind, instead of keepin' it in yer brain simmerin'?

*Mary.* Well if yer not drunk—yer fidgetin' for it. What is it you want?

*Tully.* I want to know what's keeping little Jim.

*Mary.* How do I know what's keeping him except the weight of the jug. Don't ye know it's a shame to ask a child like that to go a public-house—to say nothing of the burden on his poor little limbs?

*Tully.* Don't ye know damn well I can't show me nose out or I'd go meself? I, that am lying here trying to bear up this three weeks to take yez all out of poverty.

*Mary.* And sorra much ye ever bore; ye haven't as much patience as would get you caught in a shower of rain. How bad ye are can be judged from the food ye ate and the drink ye can lower.

*Tully.* It's not for us to judge, Mary. That's a matter for the medical profession. Ye mustn't fly in the face of science. If ye could only realise the pain I'm bearing and the agony I'm in—and ye would realise it if ye heard what the doctor said to the solicitor. "Shock," sez he; "collapse," sez he; "incapacitated" and "complete prostration" sez he; then ye would understand how mental suffering is far worse than mere physical suffering, and this will be me evidence: "After hitching wan bag on to the crane an' the ganger gave the signal to hoist, I was in th' act iv bendin' to tie the rope round the next bag to have it ready when the



ring bruck and the bag that was hoisted fell on me spine and left me flat. I remember no more til I woke up in th' hospital a cripple for life, wud a pain in me back an' a drag in me walk that leaves me as wake as a cat when I cross the flure of the room." Them's me symptoms, sorra bit alleviated, and it comes badly from me own sisher to doubt or contradict them, for if ye do yer contradicting yer own future.

*Mary.* I'm not' doubting them. I hope ye'll be well compensated—though it's the only day's work ye ever did that the company's paying for—but it's no reason why ye should have sent that poor child out. How can his poor little back carry a full jug up three flights of stairs?

*Tully (mimicking her).* How can his poor little back carry the buckets of slops ye send him down three flights of stairs with?

*Mary (with a gesture of despair).* Sure, what can I do? I can't get up and I can't leave the place in filth?

*Tully.* Well then, why do ye run away wid the idea that because I wasn't stirring out of bed I wasn't working? There's many a wan works hard without putting a hand to a tool—brain working. Is it because I'm not running round clucking like a hen that ye think I wasn't working out a great idea? That's what I was at and

ye'll see the result of it this very day if they give me compensation in the courts. Sure, my God, woman dear, don't ye know it's a rule of life the less the work the more the wages. Ye have only to look at the judges themselves and the Town Councillors.

*Mary.* A nice judge you'd make.

*Tully (significantly).* No, but I'd make a likely town councillor.

*Mary.* That'll do yeh!

*Tully.* If I get compensated according to me injuries I'll buy up Bannermann and go up for the election to the Ward the week after.

*Mary.* Buy up Bannermann? Sure we can't even pay his week's rent. It's not likely he'll sell either.

*Tully.* I said *if* I get compensation, then it's all plain sailing.

*Mary.* But Bannerman—

*Tully.* Ah, leave that fellow to me! There are sanitary laws in existence that would wipe out Bannermann if they were only put in force. And I'll put them in force to force him to part with this house and the wan next door to it too, or I'm not Stanislaus Tully!

*(Enter Jimmy.)*

*Tully.* Ah, Jimmy, I thought ye had forgotten yer uncle! *(Jimmy limps in with a washing-jug full of porter and carries it to the wash-stand, leaving it in the basin).*

*Tully (turning half out of bed).* Just walk up to the fireplace and back again until I show your mother the reasons I had for sending you out. (*Jimmy goes back and loiters by door. Tully rises and limps in imitation to close the door.*)

*Mary.* Mocking is catching.

*Tully.* I know what's catching (*ladles out a glassful of porter*)—and who's going to catch it. The trial's coming off at twelve o'clock. I must get back now (*returns to bed*) and wait for Jimmy Laroissey and his cab.

*Jimmy.* Here's Miss Maxwell-Knox!

(*Tully inverts a jam-pot over his glass of stout, gets under the bed-clothes hurriedly, and turns a card on the wall over bed, which reads: "The Kingdom of God is within you." Enter Miss Maxwell-Knox, consulting note-book.*)

*Miss M-K.* This is Mrs. Foley's room?

*Mary.* Yes, Miss! Come in, Miss. God bless ye, Miss! Yer very welcome! Were ye able to get Jimmy into hospital?

*Tully (in a weak voice, with his eyes fixed on card).* Come in, Miss! Yer very welcome, Miss—and so is anywan that's always doin' good. (*Louder*) Get a chair for Miss Maxwell-Knox, ye little blackguard, Jimmy!

*Miss M-K.* I hope you are better to-day, Tully.

*Tully.* Ah, I wouldn't say that; I wouldn't say that—