

(Brian runs on and sits. Maggie calls upstairs to Gramma.)

Maggie: Dinner Mother! We're sitting down! (She sits opposite Gerald.)

Brian: (to his father.) I rode on Joe Pivott's dray all through town today.

Gerald: Yes, I saw you from the store. You hang on when you ride with him.

Maggie: I think you're a might young to be riding on an open wagon like that.  
If you ever fell off -

Brian: I won't fall off.

(Gramma enters.)

Maggie: Hello Mother. Feeling any better?

Gramma: Well this heat doesn't help. (She sits. They begin passing the food. Gerald fills his plate and Brian's. Maggie lifts for Bobbie and herself.)

Brian: I saw a pair of ice skates at Parson's Hardware.

Gerald: Did you now?

Brian: That's what I want for Christmas. My own skates.

(beat. Gerald and Maggie exchange a look.)

Maggie: Brian, you're too young.

Brian: No I'm not. Art Sherry has skates.

Maggie: Art Sherry is almost two years older than you.

Brian: Please Dad.

Gerald: Well you do seem a bit young to me Spalpeen. To be out on the river.

Gramma: Oh no carrots for me. They don't agree with me. (She passes them to Gerald.)

Brian: But Christmas is a long time away. By then I'll be old enough.

Gerald: We'll see.

(Gerald lifts carrots for Brian.)

Brian: No carrots for me thank you.

Maggie: Carrots are good for you, son.

Gramma: I'm fond of them myself -

Brian: You can have mine.

(beat.)

Maggie: Let's all bow our heads while father says Grace for us.

(They bow their heads.)

Gerald: For what we are about to receive at this time, O Lord, make us truly grateful.

Brian: R.W.

Gerald: Amen.

Maggie: Amen. Brian, please wait until your father has finished Grace before you speak.

Brian: I did. R.W. is his name. (turning to Gerald.) Carrots are bloody.

Maggie: Where did you pick that up?

Gerald: Don't say it any more, Spalpeen.

Brian: Why?

Gerald: It isn't nice.

Brian: Then, I don't have to eat them?

Maggie: Eat your carrots.

Gramma: (To the baby.) Aren't you the comical one? He's an O'Connal, that's for sure. (Referring to Brian.) The other's MacMurray to the gizzard.

(Brian has been drinking milk, and now burps, loudly.)

Maggie: Brian! I don't know what's got into you today -

Brian: I didn't do anything!

Gerald: We just heard you -

Brian: It wasn't me! It was R.W.

(beat. The women look at Gerald.)

Gerald: I think that's enough dinner for you young man.

Brian: But -

Gerald: I'll see you in your room.

(Brian stands and moves toward centre, as the dining room begins to move off. Gerald follows him. Brian climbs into his bed which is revealed upstage of the dining room.)

Gerald: Now what's this about fibs, Spalpeen?

Brian: But I didn't. God did it.

Gerald: Just a minute -

Brian: Mr. R.W. God.

Gerald: All right. Could you tell me about R.W.?

Brian: He rides a vacuum cleaner.

Gerald: Does He!

Brian: Yes - with rubber boots on! And he recites Casey at the Bat, and When Father Rode the Goat.

Gerald: As well as I do?

Brian: He can't remember sometimes - all the things.

Gerald: I see. (beat.) Spalpeen, God is - He isn't - a gentleman who rides a vacuum cleaner. It's not right.

Brian: Why?

Gerald: You don't talk to him do you?

Brian: Yes. (The Young Ben appears on the darkened prairie, watching the house.)

Gerald: Well - I'd like you just to forget about it. Say your prayers and go to sleep.

Brian: Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take. God Bless Mother, and Daddy, and Gramma, and Bobbie, and Uncle Sean, and Forbsie, and - the boy on the prairie. Is that all?

Gerald: Who's the boy on the prairie?

Brian: I saw him once - he's always on the prairie - he likes it.

Gerald: All right. Good night Spalpeen.

Brian: I didn't say Amen.

Gerald: Well - go ahead.

Brian: Amen. (beat.) R.W.