

to an *f*, as in Culdaff, *Cul-dabhabh*; the back of the pool.” (*Beat*)  
 PHYLLIS. (*She knows.*) And what is — An eclipse, again? Remind me?

DAVID. (*He knows she knows.*) An eclipse — An eclipsed consonant — Has its sound completely suppressed, the sound of another consonant which is prefixed, being heard instead.

PHYLLIS. Right. Of course.

DAVID. When *c*, for example, is eclipsed by *g*, it is written, *g-c*, but the *g* alone is pronounced. In written English, the eclipsed letter does not — exist, being always omitted. (*Beat*)

PHYLLIS. Read me the places themselves. (*Beat*)

DAVID. Cortat; the round grey hill of the sepulchres. Cortea; grey round hill. Corlough; the lake of the *corrs* or herons. Cormeen; smooth round hill. Cornacreve; the round hill of the branchy tree. Cornagee, Corragheeha; the round hill of the wind. Cornahoe; the round hill of the cave. Cornamucklagh; the round hill of the piggeries. (*Beat*) Cornaveagh; the round hill of the ravens. Corratober; the round hill of the well. Corrinshigo, Corrinshigagh; the round hill of the ash trees. Corrofin; the weir of Finna, a woman’s name. Corskeagh; the round hill of the white thorns. (*Silence. Phyllis’s eyes are closed. She sighs. Beat.*)

PHYLLIS. In a couple of weeks, perhaps, when things have settled down. We should take a trip up to Donegal, maybe. For the day. Or we could spend the night.

DAVID. Donegal.

PHYLLIS. Drive down. The two of us. Clover and Poppy are old enough to look after themselves for a night, and /

DAVID. *Dun-na-n-Gall*, the fortress of the *Galls*, or foreigners.

PHYLLIS. Lori will be here anyway, of course. (*Beat*)

DAVID. Long before the Anglo-Norman invasion, the Danes founded a settlement there, hence its name in Irish.

PHYLLIS. You need a break from it, David. We need a break from — from it all. It would be good to get away for a bit, you and me. Get out of Belfast. Just for a night or so. You know?

DAVID. Belfast.

PHYLLIS. We need to talk, David.

DAVID. *Bellefaisne*. The *bel* or ford of the *farset*, or riverbank ... /

PHYLLIS. / David —

DAVID. A crossing point. The Irish *bel* does not signify beauty. PHYLLIS. Come here to me, David. We’ll drive up. I’ll drive.

We’ll leave early morning, and take sandwiches with us that we’ve made the night before. We’ll take tea in a flask, stop on the edge of the road, on the outskirts of Toome. We’ll cross over the Pass, and perhaps it will be misty, so that — so that we will feel as if we are flying, or as the road climbs higher, that we really are leaving the world behind.

DAVID. Right.

PHYLLIS. Don’t you think?

DAVID. Aye.

PHYLLIS. What?

DAVID. Maybe. (*Beat*)

PHYLLIS. David? Are you going to tell me what Toome means now, is it? (*Beat*)

DAVID. “Dolores.” The name means “sorrow.” Why ever did we choose such a name, ey?

PHYLLIS. Don’t.

DAVID. We should have known better.

PHYLLIS. Please, David.

DAVID. Tempting fate is what it was! Tempting / fate.

PHYLLIS. Please!

DAVID. We should have known.

PHYLLIS. A place or a person is more than a name.

DAVID. Aye, but names are powerful. Naming something creates

a power over —

PHYLLIS. As you know fine rightly she was named after my

grandmother /

DAVID. And I shouldn’t ever have agreed to it.

PHYLLIS. What? Don’t you dare! Because names mean nothing! Not in the way that you believe they do. You can study places and names until the bloody cows come home but you’re not going to find out what happened to her. And you’re not the only one. You’re acting as if you’re the only one. You’ve got two other daughters. And me. What about me? Where do I fit in? (*Beat*) I’m sorry. (*Beat*) Oh Christ. I’m sorry, David. I didn’t mean — I’m just — Well all of us, aren’t we, we’re all just — (*Silence*) I mean we’re just nice, normal people, living in a nice, normal house. And she had a happy childhood. None of those English doctors or nurses is going to dare tell me she didn’t! Whatever it was, it wasn’t us! Because we did our best. We made sure we were out of the country over the Twelfth, we made sure they didn’t see the worst of the news, we explained to them