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Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

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Irish American Charm

by

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Dierdre and Tom arrived at Philadelphia via Spirit Airlines at precisely 4:00 PM, the scheduled arrival time. She would have to pass the information on to Maeve who believes that Spirit Airlines has no concept of time. On their way to call an Uber, they heard a shout, Farrell, a party of two. Startled, they spied Joe O'Grady, her associate Director of Security at Garvey Legal. He brought the company van to meet them and drive them home. Dierdre greeting him with a hug, thanked him profusely. She had purchased every trinket that was sold on Barbados to spread around to their friends. When Joe saw their luggage he went for a wheeled cart and loaded the luggage onto that. "Joe I can't believe you are here. I had no idea about what to do with that luggage."

"Well, you are permitted a few lapses after a honeymoon."

"Oh no, I want it to last forever."

"It never does," said Joe. And quickly added, "it only gets better from this point on."

"I wanted to buy Barbados and bring it home with us and put it in Delaware Bay"

"Well, it looks like you did bring most of it home with you," laughed Joe. "You have a lot on your desk waiting for you."

"Oh right, I have an office and a desk, don't I. I suppose It would be out of the question to have another month off."

"Not when your genius is needed."

"Sounds ominous."

"Not that bad," said Joe, "but it is bothersome."

"OK....don't brief me until tomorrow and remember, I'll still be mentally in Barbados."

Joe and Tommy brought the bags to the elevator and from there to the eighth-floor apartment.

"Now we start another chapter in our lives," thought Dierdre.

"Joe, join us for dinner. We want to finish off with a grand dinner at Bookbinders."

"Are you sure you want me to join you?"

"We wouldn't have asked if we didn't think so," said Tommy

"Right, I knew you wouldn't."

Dinner was delightful. Desmond leaked the news of the day. He told her to pretend it is new information when they tell her. Maria, June, and Theresa are pregnant. Dierdre and Tommy both beamed with delight for their friends and showered Desmond with congratulations.

On the way home, Dierdre asked if they could organize their luggage sometime later in the week. "Bless you for that, but I need my toothbrush," said Tommy. "And I need mine, laughed Dierdre. It will remind us that we are living simply."

"What are you facing at work tomorrow," asked Dierdre.

"I'm going to establish some goals and achievement strategies," replied Tommy. "I think I will discuss them with Fr. Jim and then with other key staff. I've been too much of a loner in my job because that is what was required. I can still do that and achieve more if I have a group. I think I can do better. I keep thinking about the way you trained your soccer team and your Search and Rescue team.. I think we can do the job better if we expand the job description. I'll let you know tomorrow."

"We'll have ambulance duty on Tuesday evening."

"Yeah, hopefully lots of time to dream and then make them concrete."

"Enough of this, Tommy, let's make love so we can wake up smiling."

Love was the narcotic that relaxed them and gave them the opportunity to totally focus on each other and to fall into the deep sleep of contented lovers, still clinging to each other.

At her office on Monday, Joe presented the Nicosia file. Dierdre read the file and then reread it slowly, with attention to every word and paragraph. When Joe came back, Dierdre asked, "Who wrote the file?"

"I did," said Joe. "It's perfect." Joe. Of course, you knew that. The policy is effective. It worked."

"Do you think the judge will accept to videos of the incident?"

"There is certainly plenty of precedent for it. In the local courts, the videotapes in John's parking lot were effective for an indictment and a conviction," replied Dierdre. "We worked on developing that policy for months and our total of over five hundred employees on three sites agreed to it, stated that they read it, and signed their names to it. I noted that you included a copy of Sal's signed agreement. I think he should be sentenced to a hospital like Susan's dad. He really needs help. He threw away everything. His Law License should be currently suspended and will be revoked when he is convicted. I believe that there is no question that we did everything right."

"Ok, please call Dave and tell him that," asked Joe.

"Joe," asked Dierdre, "you handled everything perfectly. Why are you disturbed?"

"This is the first investigation I lead in a long time. I'm here because I like to be. It is my retirement recreation. Work, without you around, makes me uncomfortable."

"I guess I'll accept that as a compliment. But you taught me everything you thought you know. I am your *alter ego*."

"Dierdre, you have all the basics, everything you need to know to do a great job. But there is nobody here with your charismatic talent, your ability to see things that the rest of us can't see. Your teammates were correct. It is pure witchcraft."

"I prefer to think of it as skills learned from geniuses such as you and honed at a high level of perfection."

"I'll take that as a compliment but these days my biggest joyful task is taking you to the lunchroom or driving you and Dave to your important meetings in the company limo."

"I'll respect that but understand, we are associates. Everything that demands my attention will be brought to your attention. You don't have to come to the gym for physical training. I have to go upstairs and see Dave."

"Mrs. Farrell, welcome to the tenth floor."

"Thank you, Mr. Garvey. It is an honor to be here. I understand that you had the opportunity to *Beta Test* our harassment policy."

"Your policy was effective, Dierdre."

"It wasn't exactly my policy, Dave. Half the firm worked on it for over three months. I got what I thought we needed, and the firm got what they thought we needed. I hoped we would never have to enforce it but that was an unrealistic expectation."

"Do you think a judge will approve our strategy?"

"We have a lot of precedents in our favor about that, including the surveillance of the parking lot at John's club."

"You're right. I had forgotten about that."

"Sal was always a good person, or I thought he was during the short time that I have known him."

"He wouldn't have been in the position I put him in if he hadn't shown impressive professional credentials and achievements as well as the highest levels of personal integrity," said Dave. "His behavior was certainly uncharacteristic. and Sarah, our victim, one of 39 complainants, is a close friend of his daughter. My hope is that they sentence him to psychiatric rehabilitation. We can secretly help his family. I wouldn't want anyone but our accountant to know that."

"I have a hunch about this," said Dierdre. "Can I make a recommendation even though I really know nothing about the case? Ask John if he will be the lead investigator and attorney for the interests of the firm. We won't be able to get much medical history, but maybe we can piece a few things together. I would love the opportunity to work with John on a project like this."

"You are thinking about culpability."

"Be careful boss, witchcraft is catching."

"I only wish I had some of your gifts."

"And I wish I could be the country's leading attorney. Boss, we are stuck with who we are, and we can work very well with that."

"We'll have lunch today. I want to hear about your project in Rochester. The men and women in accounting are reviewing your tax returns to see how we can help you. I also want to hear all about your honeymoon."

"About that, I gave a million dollars to my high school and a quarter million to the parish to help them start over again. Anything left over will start the Patrick and Nora O'Rourke Scholarship Fund. I am very proud to be able to fix something that was broken. St. Patrick's is a special place, I would love to see it grow again."

"You couldn't have spent the money better. But be careful of spending sprees. You'll want that money for a lot of things."

“Tommy and I have resolved to live on our salaries. We will spend the money on a home when that becomes necessary. And we’ll purchase our cars from the fund and save money on interest payments.”

“You might want to find a good attorney to help you rewrite your will.”

Maeve, Susan, and Theresa had a long lunch meeting in their break room to plan one of their “Shower” days for Grace. “What do you give to a girl that has everything?”

“Susan uncovered her \$40 million investment account,” said Maeve. “You know we should never mention that,” said Susan. “You can be sure that she’ll never mention it. After the torture of a bridezilla mother, she wants to live simply. She told us her dad insists on paying for the wedding. His net worth is about six billion dollars.”

“I looked that up after he guaranteed the Jesuit Urban Mission ten million dollars over ten years,” said Maeve. “June said that it is a small installment for what he really owes his daughter for neglecting her for thirty years.”

“From our dinners with him recently, I think my dad helped him out getting settled in Philadelphia. When we find a suitable house, he wants to buy my apartment.” said Maeve. “He is setting up an investment practice in Desmond’s cottage, where he also lives temporarily. He has a housekeeper there as well.”

“For our party,” said Theresa, “we’ll give her lots of love. We’ll enjoy all of John’s facilities. Susan, can you make up a certificate, somewhat like a fancy marriage certificate that celebrates our friendship with her, and we’ll all sign it? I’ll go shopping for silly gifts if the boss gives me some time off to do it.”

“You can always take time off. Just organize that slew of clients that you keep bringing in,” said Maeve.

“Maybe this is a good time to mention this,” said Susan. “Our corporate relations accounts have generated a 30% increase over this time last year and our revenues are up over 50% thanks to the incredible corporate earnings of Theresa’s department.”

“See, I told you that you would make this company a huge success,” said Maeve, as she gently punched her friend’s shoulder. “Thank God we have Hugh Quinn around to help us keep track of where everything is coming from and where it is going.”

“How is it going with the babies upstairs,” asked Maeve?

“They are having fun playing together. They are still crawling around. The nurse is a very loving person and gives them a lot of attention,” said Theresa.

“I’m looking into our future,” said Maeve. “We’ve used up the space that we have here. I want dedicated space for a nursery and early childhood education. Theresa’s department is bursting at the seams. Visuals count in our work, and we should have an attractive and comfortable space for men and women clients seeking employment and counseling. I’m thinking of hiring Rosellen to work with you, Theresa. She is extremely bright, she fits in nicely with our group. Patrick took a big chance lobbying for her scholarship, and she is at or very near the top of her class. She can work part-time, and continue her studies, she finishes this year. She can work with poor people, her goal in life and use that project as applied data for her graduation paper. And it is actually one of my goals and maybe she can help me reach it. Michael and Brian will be blending their practices with my Dad’s firm. Michael owns his building. His work with us is impressive but I don’t know how long it can last. Nothing is carved in stone. Does that work for you, Theresa?”

"I would love to work with, Rosellen. I hope it works out. I also need some male help. If you look around, Jimmy is the only guy here except for Hugh Quinn who works with several other clients. Jimmy is also due for an ownership role. He was the third employee. Susan and I were planning to speak with him later this week and, Theresa, since he will be working for you, you should be part of the conversation."

"Jimmy is doing pre - post sales work. He has become really good at researching companies and discovering problems that we can solve for them. He can still do some of that and work for you. Can you train him? He learns well and has the appropriate skills?" Theresa replied, "Absolutely, I like Jimmy and he would fit in perfectly. One more thing, I need a secretary."

"Theresa, we'll have to make you one of the owners of our company. You have more than earned it. I'll ask John to draw up the appropriate contracts. It will be the same as we have for Susan and me. I still have a leadership role as Chief Executive, but we are all equal. I don't make any decisions without you. We are more than partners. We own equal shares in the company. Beside that. I love you all and our life together. The revenues aren't bad either."

"You are right. We need some males in the company, and we need some people of color. You'll have the title of Vice President of the Human Relations Division."

"Those are my dreams and the one that is fulfilled is that we are working together. Theresa, you, Susan and I will invite Rosellen to lunch sometime in the near future."

"Are we really ready for this," asked Theresa? "More than ready, thanks to you." replied Susan. Dave is also an owner, and we might be able to bring him in to quarterback our dreams and help with training."

"Wow! I didn't intend to talk about this today, but I'm glad we did. I'll still be the rain-maker, but I love to dream. That is what Chief Executives do. The day is over, and we have to collect our babies. So much for being a Chief Executive."

The babies were laughing when they went upstairs to pick them up.

Dave and Dierdre went to lunch together. It took them a half hour to get to Dave's table. Wedding congratulations, nuanced honeymoon jokes, and general good cheer as Dierdre walked through the dining room. She actually generated more attention than Dave who also stopped at a number of tables to exchange greetings.

When they finally reached their table, Dave noted to Dierdre that he thought she generated more enthusiasm than he did. Sorry Boss. "I try to come in here a couple of times a week. I get some energy from the greetings and I'm getting to know more and more people. I think my first year everyone thought I was just a cop from the Security Department. The fire that Tommy and I were in with that photo in the Inquirer seemed to get everyone's attention. Then came the Medal of Honor and that big party you threw for me. I got to enjoy meeting my co-workers and even the attorneys. I grew to appreciate the Marine camaraderie and it was a real boost every day. Walking through the cafeteria also gives me a boost."

"It is important for the good spirit of the firm that we are here and that we are seen."

"That *you* are seen here, Boss. I'm just one of the pawns in the basement offices. You just don't understand your own celebrity."

"Anyway, tell me about Rochester. Ed O'Leary told me that your plan worked like a charm."

"I am grateful to God that it did. We had a big collection of evidence about some of the pastor's behaviors. He wasn't terribly bad but for a priest, it was awful. We had indicting photographs and they didn't have to wait a long time to get them. They indicated that he had lost his spiritual mojo and he ruled his parish like a dictator. He is a genuine traditionalist and just didn't fit into the culture of St. Patrick's. He tried to change that culture and it didn't work. The people walked out on him. We collected comparative data on numbers of Sacraments administered compared with the period of Fr. Horan's ministry. There was an awful fall off. He couldn't legally close the school but if he neglected maintenance on the building, it would discourage attendance. Fortunately, there are enough students, and my donation should repair the building, air condition it, and have proper ventilation. We were able to get a donation of computers for each student so they can have a complete library at their fingertips. The bishop insisted that he make a thirty-day Jesuit retreat to awaken his dormant spirituality. After that he will be assigned to the Chancery Office to work with the Propagation of Faith Office. That way they can keep their eye on him. People are starting to return to the parish. The two young priests there are filled with the Spirit, and it is catching on."

"That is a great story, Dierdre. Congratulations! You did this after hours.?"

"Once the plan was set, it didn't require much input from me. I would check in a couple of times a week by telephone or Facetime with the investigator who wouldn't charge us. He has returned to attending Mass at St. Patrick's and is very pleased with himself. He is an old friend of Msgr. Horan and visits him regularly at the Priest's Retirement Home. The bishop greatly respects Msgr. Horan and has renewed his friendship with him and takes him out to dinner from time to time. And all is well on God's green earth. My classmates, led by my old boyfriend and his family are drumming up support for St. Patrick's. That venerable old parish is alive once again."

"Dierdre, that is an amazing story. And you put your wedding together besides."

"I have a million 'thank you' notes to write. That will require more work than the wedding did," replied Dierdre. "I think a lot of money will go to the soup pantry."

"Well, on Friday we have our meeting with the Philadelphia City Council."

"I'm basically ready for it," said Dierdre. "This is the big one. If they buy into it, all systems are go. Is there anything I need to know that is unique to this meeting?"

"Just remember that all politics are local. We have to focus precisely about how this plan can help their city...our city, as well. You are right about the seriousness of this presentation. The others were all practice for this one.'

"I know that Boss, I scheduled it that way. I have done some research on the various districts of the city. Did you know that ritzy, glitzy District Two gets the lion's share of Federal money for what they call infrastructure maintenance? It is District Four that needs the most help for upgraded sewer and water pipes. I wouldn't be surprised if the water pipes were lead. That is the poorest section of the city. The Jesuit Urban Mission is in adjacent District Three

"That's interesting Dierdre. I'm going to have an engineer check that out for us. Those Wards have the highest voting population, as well."

"We have eighteen districts in the city," said Dierdre. "My research didn't uncover much. They have infrastructure needs. Beautification with trees, parks maintenance, upgraded exercise facilities and playgrounds. They need zoning help. Some builders are lobbying to build skyscrapers in residential areas. They

are mostly one- and two-family homes. There are a number of four family homes from older housing stock. On the perimeter of the south side of the city there are a few large apartment buildings. I live in one. It is eight stories and I live on the eighth floor. There is nothing imaginative to it. I have two bedrooms one of which is stuffed with wedding presents that we'll work on over the weekend. I am not against apartment buildings. However, we have to think in terms of infrastructure, what neighborhoods will look like in the near future, schools, traffic, parking, basic safety, shopping, supermarkets, restaurants, and service businesses like barber shops, nail salons and beauty parlors. I would love to see a security camera in every home of the city. We could eradicate our crime rate with surveillance like that. We can link parks together with hiking and jogging trails. Of course, we have to lay it out so these guys will look good for their constituents."

"That might be something to bring up," said Dave. "Philadelphia is more than the City Center. It is also a beautiful city. Ascetics count. Many of our streets could be tree lined."

"This afternoon, I'm meeting with John on our Nicosia project."

"What are you looking for?"

"I don't know yet, but I'll recognize it when I find it."

Later on, in the afternoon, John Garvey led Dierdre up the stairs to the apartment he shared with his wife, Theresa. Dierdre had been there before for gatherings with her friends. The apartment space was as large as the floor of a one family ranch house. They walked up the stairs, but they could have taken the elevator instead. John unlocked the door to his computer room. "The only other person who has seen this room is Theresa. I was amazed at Theresa's computer skills. When I asked her how she developed them, she told me that everyone in college was so computer savvy she just decided to learn as much as she could. Sometimes she uses this to do research on her companies to get information that isn't available anyplace else."

"Your setup is similar to my Marine Corps setup."

"I'm having trouble keeping up with the new software developments," said John. "What are we looking for?"

"I have a feeling that we don't know enough about Sal Nicosia. I don't know what we are looking for, but I'll recognize it when I see it. Let's start with the basics, from date of birth. Who were his parents? What did they do for a living? What kind of income did they have? Who were his brothers and sisters? Who did they marry? What do they do for a living?"

"So far, there is nothing out of the ordinary. All these pieces fit together."

"So far," replied Dierdre.

"Where did he go to school? St. Anselm's grammar school. Somewhat better than average grades, just what we expected."

"He went to a private school, Gilmore Academy, near Harrisburg."

"What is the tuition there," asked Dierdre? "When he was there, it was over \$20,000 a year. That is a high tuition for a high school in the 1970s. The board was \$9,000 a semester. His dad was a pipefitter. How did he afford that? Where did the other kids go to school?"

"Gilmore Academy came up again for the three brothers. His sister attended St. Joseph's Academy."

“Alright, we have an anomaly. Let’s look at his dad’s finances. He did well for a pipefitter at that time but not unusual with overtime. See if he or his wife were heirs. Maybe she is the Queen of Calabria.”

“There is no indication of that. I’m going to check their bank accounts.”

“They had a savings and a checking account. They had about \$20,000 in savings and their Social Security maintained their household. I am going to check the school to see how those tuitions were paid.”

“There is nothing unusual there. I wonder if they had a lot of money at the beginning of their marriage.”

“Here is something. His mother was an actress and singer. She had a stage name, Gina LaScala. Let me find Gina’s career. She had quite a career and amassed almost three quarters of a million dollars, She gave up her career to marry Joseph Nicosia. She continued singing gigs until her children were born. She is a cantor in her parish.”

“So, she spent all her money on her children’s education and sacrificed her career for her marriage. That is quite a love story,” said Dierdre.

“Consistent with Italian marriages of the time. She was the homemaker and mother of five children, and she gave them the best education she could,” said Dierdre. “How did Sal pay for college?”

“Scholarship to Penn State for football. That is a party school. It is also where he received his Law Degree, earned while he was teaching at his high school alma mater.”

“Were there any problems associated with student relationships?”

“Nothing that is reported. Those things were successfully covered up in those days. He taught as a substitute to study for the Bar Exam that he passed on the first try. That means that he had no public problems as a teacher. He did well enough at Penn State to earn admittance to their Law School.”

“I wonder what led them to a private school. There are excellent schools in the Philadelphia area.”

“So far we have picked up nothing.”

“We’ll have our investigators track his mom’s career. And we’ll send someone to the school and to Penn State,” said Dierdre. So far, my hunch has generated nothing.”

“Can we get into Sal’s computer and see what’s there before we give up?”

“Wow, look at this. A lot of well-hidden pornography. He knows how to get into the dark web and open things that are considered illegal, such as child porn. He has some serious sexual proclivities,” said Dierdre.

“I thought we monitored computer use.” remarked John?

“We have the right to, but we don’t exercise it. We have about 500 computers. We can’t possibly monitor them,” replied Dierdre. “If someone runs off the rails like Sal did, we can and are scrutinizing his computer.”

“He has been writing to someone named Veronica. These aren’t sexy, these are filthy.”

“Can you track the source?”

“I already have it. It is one of those anonymous sex phone banks. They have women who work the phones in shifts. And one of the women is Veronica Leftkowitz. That is probably a real name.”

“Did she respond, correspond with him?”

“I don’t see any evidence that she did. There was nothing from her on Sal’s computer.”

“As a Department Director, Sal was a pretty busy guy. Are there any time indicators?”

“Yes, all after six PM, just before he left for home. He was in touch with her just before he attacked Sarah.”

“The question that all of this begs is what kind of sex life does he have at home.”

“John, all of this goes into your evidence folder. I’ll send an investigator to his schools and to his previous employer. Your Dad says that he had impeccable credentials for the job. All of that would have been carefully vetted by us. I’ll speak with Human Resources to see who interviewed and vetted him.”

“Let me know who they are, Dierdre. I’ll want to interview them under oath. Don’t let Veronica know that we know who she is. Quite likely she doesn’t know about Sal’s crime or even his real name. Let me know if you pick up any information from or about her. How will you go about it?”

“I’m not sure. I might just try to apply for a job. Better, I might let one of my female investigators try some undercover work. They are easily bored if there isn’t much crime.”

“He reported to Ed Cizcek, who had the final say to hiring him,” said John, “Leave him to me. I want to interview him.”

“You have it, babe. We’ll touch base in a couple of days. I don’t expect any results for at least a week. Oh, by the way, you should check Sal’s home to see if he has a home office with a lot of locked cabinets and drawers and another computer. You might have to go with a detective and a search warrant.”

“I’m ahead of you on that,” replied John.

On the mid-October Saturday, Maeve, Susan, June, Maria, Theresa, Rosellen, Brigid, Dierdre and Grace arrived at Coral Gables Country Club for a spa day and a shower celebration for Grace. They started the day with a swim in the indoor pool, followed by a steam bath, sauna, and a soaking in the jacuzzi. Now that they were totally relaxed, it was time for lunch. The day was warm and sunny, and they had lunch out of doors on the patio. After lunch, Maeve, Theresa, June, Dierdre and Grace decided to walk around the golf course. The conversation among the walkers was about the wedding. Grace regaled the group with stories of what her wedding would have looked like if her mother was in charge.” First of all, there would be an endless string of parties hosted by her society friends. My father would have to attend them all because after all, they were honoring his daughter. My mother would want the Cathedral for the wedding, but I would have strongly opted for the local parish. It would be the social event of the year. The pastor would celebrate the Mass, the Cardinal would preach, preside over the exchange of vows, and bless the rings. There would be announcements in the local paper of each party event with photographs of the host and hostess.” Grace did say that she sent an announcement to the local paper with a selfie she took with Charlie with her cell phone camera. She also sent invitations to her mom’s society friends. She hasn’t heard from anyone from her hometown though her father still officially lives there. “Sic transit gloria mundi. Out of sight, out of mind (Thus passes the glory of the world .)”

“Charlie would be very gracious and accepting because that is who Charlie is. But he would be dying inside. We love Fr. Fred who will celebrate the Mass. Fr. Jim and several Jesuits will concelebrate the Mass and preside over the wedding. Fr. Damian Kelly who was our Pre-Cana moderator will preach. We really grew to love him.

Maeve joked, "Your Pre-Cana lasted longer than some marriages."

"No, I hold the record for that," said Theresa. "I don't know why, except that it was fun to participate. Damian was our Pre-Cana moderator, and he was my Spiritual Director during my Paul interlude."

"Gee, I almost forgot about that," said Maeve. "That seems like a hundred years ago. I remember having to bring home gallons of ice cream during that *interlude*."

"You are responsible for John and me, aren't you?"

"Absolutely not. I admit that I did consider it. But before I had a chance to do anything, John came to me and asked a lot of questions about you. He denied he was interested but he was obviously very interested. I might have done a little coaching because, even though you and Paul did the right thing, I knew that you weren't ready for another romance. I should have kept all the empty ice cream cartons. All of this was new to Dierdre and Grace, and they were fascinated with the story.

"Who was Paul?"

"Paul Moran was our pastor at St. Paul's. Fr. Fred was his associate. Paul was Patrick's roommate at Notre Dame. When Patrick moved here from Chicago where he was teaching, Paul joined us for our after-Mass lunches. By the accident of a spontaneous seating arrangement Paul and Theresa were sitting across from each other at the very end of the table. The spark of Cupid lighted and burst into a conflagration of passionate love. Though a marriage would have been a disaster, God bless human love."

"It was a wonderful but turbulent experience. I had boyfriends in high school and college, but those relationships were nothing like this. We both had spiritual directors who carefully guided us for months. Our options were to continue as we were, illicit lovers sneaking around; Paul thought about joining the Episcopal Church; or for Paul to get a dispensation which meant giving up the priesthood and getting a job and get into a life-style for which he was totally unprepared. He was as shocked as I was about the intensity of our feelings.

After several months, Damian asked me if I had taken a vow of chastity. Of course, I hadn't and that eliminated option one. Paul was in love with being a priest as well. That eliminated option three. For either one of us to become Episcopalians would have been like registering as Republicans. It really didn't fit either of us. Paul's spiritual director led him through a similar scenario.

Paul resigned from the Diocese and returned to Notre Dame as spiritual director for the student body. Our break-up was painful, but we parted friends. I haven't seen or heard from him since Maeve's wedding. With all its intensity, it was a very chaste relationship. We both hung on to our values and to tell the truth, I felt badly about that for a couple of months.

However, as intense as my relationship with Paul was, my relationship with John is infinitely better and far more intense. We are relaxed; we are having fun. There was no pressure on us. And now we are having a baby."

"Get back to the story" exclaimed Dierdre. "How did you get interested in John?"

Well, when we were in high school, John was the big oldest brother. He, Michael, and Brian were always big teases.

Maeve and I had just graduated from different high schools. My parents had died. My big brother had a scholarship to Notre Dame. And the following year, I received a scholarship to Villanova as a hardship case with very high SAT scores. Maeve was going to Immaculata, and her parents gave me a room in their big

house. I loved to go there for Brigid's great meals. I loved weekends and holidays. Maeve brought June home for some vacations and it was great fun. At one point, Maeve had a Black boyfriend and June had a White boyfriend. At the time, Villanova was the top party school in the country, not the acclaim that made the Augustinians proud. They offered an orientation course in martial arts for the girls to fend off the boys. It was only a week and I loved it. I took Karate as an elective for all four years and earned a Black Belt. I never used it until the attack on all of us, but their primary goal was to kill Dave. John and I were preparing to become engaged by then. John was wounded by a stray bullet. John had cooked a lasagna dinner for his parents that we never got to eat. And that is when we met you, Deirdre. You had just started at Garvey Legal."

"I couldn't believe it," said Theresa. "I disarmed and knocked out the first assailant and pummeled the second. One of the guys was ready to shoot Dave. I pushed him to distract the shot. At the same instant Dierdre came flying in, spinning in the air and shot the killer before he could get another shot off. His shot went through Dierdre's hair and eventually hit John who was subduing the fifth killer."

Grace was amazed. "I never heard these stories."

Dierdre interrupted and said, "One of my first days on the job was to protect the Boss. I was fortunate that Theresa was there. I would have had to shoot them all."

Theresa. tell us the story of how you and John connected."

"In the poverty days of the Jesuit Urban Mission, I was barely able to get a cheap apartment. Thank God I had a great friend with a compassionate soul who listened to me for hours, through gallons of ice cream. At times, I went to her apartment for a crying jag until I fell asleep on the couch."

"I don't know how John became connected with the Jesuit Urban Mission. He was our 'go to' whenever we were running out of supplies. I don't know where he got whatever he had to get but he was incredibly reliable. Meanwhile, Maeve and I used to tease John accusing him of being on a quest to date every single girl in Philadelphia."

"He came by with some of the things that Fr. Jim needed. I very kindly offered him a cup of coffee. He stayed for coffee and chatted as easily as we always have. He seemed to come around at least once week. For some reason, I never remembered him coming that often. What I didn't realize was that Maeve, the witch, was pulling the strings and guiding the whole enterprise."

"One day John came by with his club's pickup truck loaded with clothes from his pro shop that weren't sold during the golf season. Fortunately, there were volunteers there who could offload the truck. While they were doing that we chatted, and he asked if he could treat me to a bite to eat. I hadn't eaten since the day before and jumped at his offer. He took me to the Philly Cheese Steak Restaurant where Paul and I broke up. I bit my lower lip and said nothing. I had a delightful time with John. He was not so old anymore, nor was I so young. Then he started to come around in the afternoon inviting me to walk around the block. OK! That was nice too. I used to walk with Maeve, June, and Maria to brainstorm a future for the Jesuit Mission. That is when the Gala was born."

"Finally, he asked me to dinner at his friend's Country Club on a Saturday night."

"I gasped as it broke in on me. A date.....with John.....on a Saturday night. Holy Mackerel."

"Thank you, John. I would love to. John being John within his network, we were treated like royalty. On the way home, he pulled into a park, and we watched the moon slowly rise above the trees. He kissed me. I think my eyes tripled in size. I looked him square in the eye and kissed him right back. I don't know what happened

to the moon, but I was in love again. We started dating more seriously. Eventually, I moved into his apartment. You guys all know the drill about our theory that it is perfectly alright to sleep together as long as we don't have sex.

We waited a year before marrying because we knew that Michael and Brian were getting married. We became formally engaged at Christmas and married the following December, the day after Christmas. And now we are expecting a baby in March."

"What a beautiful story," said Dierdre. "I think I'm going to cry". And she had to wipe her moist eyes. "Marines cry, believe me."

"Dierdre," asked Grace, "how did you meet Tommy?"

"This is a fantastic but true story. Please promise you won't smirk. Tommy's unit had not called in on the assigned schedule, so they were considered missing in action. My team and I knew where they were supposed to be, and we went out to find them. They weren't far from where they were supposed to be, but they were pinned down by a large Taliban force. Tommy's squad was in a trench. Tommy was wounded, two of his squad were dead. I gave my teammates, whom you have met, my entire explosives bag. I directed them to get behind this force. I was going into the trench to try to stop the enemy attack. There was no surrender in Afghanistan. If the enemy got to you, they killed you. I was a sharpshooter, so I started firing one bullet at a time. I had five clips in my vest. I fired single shots in rapid succession. While firing, I caught Tommy crawling to a firing spot. The other guys who were pretty badly beaten up started to fire as well. I fired fifty shots and struck fifty enemy soldiers. When I changed my clip, the other guys were following Tommy's lead. I said to myself, this is the guy you are going to marry. I honestly thought we would be walking hand in hand into heaven that afternoon. My team got behind their line and all the fireworks and grenades went off. I called in a jet to go after their runners and a medivac chopper to help with the bodies of the dead and the wounded. I carried Tommy to the Medivac. I visited him the next day in our base hospital and started our friendship. They sent him to Germany to save his leg. He came back to us in Afghanistan, this time as a nurse. Tommy is a top-of-the-line paramedic. We mustered out at the end of our respective tours on the same day. Tommy is Army and I am a Marine. He came to Philadelphia with me because I had a job opportunity to work as a security advisor for a law firm."

Tommy has PTSD. He worked for a year with Psychiatrists at the Veterans' Administration Hospital and at the same time was counselled by Fr. Fred. After the hit attempt on Dave Garvey, Maeve and Theresa invited us to Mass with them, and lunch. That was about three years ago. Now Grace was going to cry. I'll do a brief biography tonight. Like Theresa I am an orphan. My mother died of cancer when I was three and my father was killed in a construction accident during my senior year of high school. I was the top female soccer player in New York State and had a scholarship to Notre Dame plus perfect SAT scores. I just couldn't do it after my father's death, so I joined the Marines. I needed something bigger than myself to recover from mourning."

"The Marines sent me to the University of North Carolina for a degree in Computer Science. I became the top hacker in the military and all the services used me. I'm still under contract to them for computer work. They haven't called yet. You know the stories of the Croix de Guerre and the Congressional Medal of Honor."

"Tommy recovered well, and June needed a job developer at the Jesuit mission. He and I volunteered to be EMTs about two nights a week. Tommy discovered that many of the homeless in the area were veterans. He started by simply connecting with them. I think he has forty employed and living in the apartment building that the mission owns. He has connected with a number of companies and has places that have hired the unemployed. I don't have a number, but it seems to be a lot. June, do you know?"

“I don’t know an exact number off the top of my head, but I know it is an impressive number. I asked him how he made all those contacts. He said, ‘I walk in the door and tell them that I’m the fiancé of Dierdre O’Rourke, and they give me anything I need.’”

Dierdre blushed while everyone laughed.

Dierdre then asked how Grace met Charlie. “Actually, by accident. Soon after the Gala, June and Maeve invited me to join them for Mass and brunch on Sundays. I was really pleased to reconnect with them, and I was starting to get careless about Sunday Mass. I wanted to reconnect with them as well as the Church. Hanging around the colleges that was my beat at the time and I had the opportunity to have a lot of male non-romantic friends. So, I invited them to accompany me to Mass and brunch with my friends. I was booked for a ‘no pressure’ date every Sunday. The guys really enjoyed meeting everyone and the opportunity to reconnect with Sunday Mass. I appreciated the opportunity to meet up close and personal with Fr. Fred and really liked him. I made a date with Fr. Fred for a session of confession and discussion. That was a memorable evening and my next date after that was from my office. You might remember that he came twice with me. He was transferred to our California office and couldn’t come with me for a third time. Charlie was in our office that Friday to see someone else who was detained so I chatted with him while he waited, and I liked him. I boldly asked him if he was Catholic and did he go to Church. He answered yes to both questions, and I invited him on a date with me for the 10:30 Mass at St. Paul’s and brunch in an Italian restaurant. He said, “that sounds delightful. I’m already looking forward to it.” “He loved it, and everyone loved him. On the way home, I asked him if he was married and was he seeing anyone. He was not married and while an active dater, he was not in a relationship. I invited him to Mass the next week and out to dinner on Friday night. He finally asked me out the following week. When I look back on it, I had at least one date a week, every Sunday for about two years before Charlie. I introduced him to my zillionaire father, and they hit it off like two college kids. I accompanied Charlie to Thanksgiving dinner with his family. And I loved them. We had great fun. Knowing the direction, we were heading in, we started the pre-Cana with Damian Kelly. We saw him or rarely saw him though he was there, for about six months. The pre-Cana was amazing. We talked about everything and resolved any doubts or fears. I really don’t think either of us had any. In the fourth month of pre-Cana, Charlie proposed during our session. He had previously arranged this with Fr. Kelly. My dad visited that weekend and we told him the news. We visited with Charlie’s parents on one of the Sundays we were absent from St. Paul’s. We went to the noon Mass with his parents and announced our engagement at the usual extended family dinner.”

“I really love Charlie. “

“Wow! Talk about the action of the Spirit,” said Maria.

“What a great story. I’m crying again,” said Dierdre.

“Where are you going on your honeymoon.?”

“We have three days at Mackinac Lake and ten days on a luxury Mississippi cruise to New Orleans.

They had a great time laughing and teasing Grace. They gave her a bunch of sexy night-gowns, The Dr. Comfort book, the Joy of Sex, and a bunch of little fun gifts.

At the end of the evening it was Grace in joyful tears. “You guys make me feel so loved.”

Maeve, sniffled back a tear and remarked, “You are so easy to love.”

The Bold Fenian Men

*'Twas down by the glenside, I met an old woman
A-plucking young nettles, she ne'er saw me coming
I listened a while to the song she was humming
Glory O, Glory O, to the bold Fenian men...*

'Tis nearly a hundred years since Peadar Kearney wrote those words about **The Bold Fenian Men**, and a century-and-a-half since seven Irish exiles, in **New York City**, got together to do something which was revolutionary from the start. The United Irishmen of **1798** had begun as reformers. Daniel O'Connell's movement to Repeal the "Act of Union," though emphatically non-violent, was confronted by the threat to visit slaughter upon those unarmed Irish people who might show up at his "Monster Meeting" at Clontarf. The Young Ireland movement, which took up arms in 1848, had its roots in reform. After the failure of the Rising in **1848**, the locus of Irish revolutionary activity had shifted from Dublin to New York. For the men who gathered in the law office of Michael Doheny of Tipperary (Chairman, **Emmet Monument Association**), as it would later be articulated by Brian O'Higgins in the Wolfe Tone Annual, the lesson of history was clear: **Ireland had made progress toward freedom only through physical force, or the threat of physical force. This was the cornerstone of the purpose of The Bold Fenian Men – The Fenian Faith.**

An Gorta Mór, the Great Hunger of mid-19th century Ireland, which saw the population reduced by a half, was proof positive of the necessity, as Wolfe Tone had said in the 18th century, to **break the connection with England**. Archbishop "Dagger John" Hughes of New York stated that the food, which could have fed the Irish, was "exported to a better market, and left the people to die of famine..." The "Famine" period would take on, for the Irish of the mid-19th century, the same psychological significance as the Nazi period has for the Jews of the 20th and 21st centuries.

A conspiratorial élite of Irish exiles would seek to create an Irish Republican military force. The **69th Regiment of New York** came into existence on 12th October 1851 (with Michael Doheny as its first Lieutenant Colonel) for the purpose of training exiles for the future liberation of Ireland. Nor was the 69th the only such Irish regiment in the organized militias of the several States. Realizing that any activity in America would be futile without cooperation in Ireland, these exiles, Michael Doheny, John O'Mahony, Michael Corcoran, Thomas J. Kelly, James Roche, Oliver Byrne and Patrick O'Rourke, meeting in New York, reached out to their former comrades-in-arms at home, with the result that Joseph Denieffe, Thomas Clark Luby and James Stephens brought **the Irish Revolutionary/Republican Brotherhood (the IRB) – the Fenians - into existence in Dublin on Saint Patrick's Day 1858.**

The IRB, which brought about the Rising in Dublin and the Proclamation of the Irish Republic during Easter Week 1916, can trace its origin to this band of 1848 exiles, meeting first at 6 Centre Street, and then often in the Hibernian Hall managed by Michael Corcoran (of the 69th NYSM), near Saint Patrick's old Cathedral on Prince Street in New York City.

Professor Eoin McKiernan, founder of the Irish American Cultural Institute, felt that Ireland's best chance for freedom was probably the Fenians – **The Bold Fenian Men**. At the grave of O'Donovan Rossa in 1915, Pádraig Pearse would say, **"They have left us our Fenian dead, ..."**

Glory O, Glory O, to the bold Fenian men

A Decidedly Strange Tale with a Very Strange Ending

By Leon O'Chruadhlaich



In a far-off land, the villagers were lazy, uncouth, and irresponsible as all their needs had been fulfilled by a very generous king. Their vineyards were overcome with weeds, their flower gardens overcome with insects, and their fields lying fallow. They searched far and wide for help and assistance and were fortunate enough to discover a diminutive, apparently homeless man lying under a blanket in the city square. He was wearing a cocked hat, a leather apron, and had a cobbler's hammer laying by his side. He stated that he was an expert horticulturist from an Emerald Kingdom, and when asked his name, he answered "I am nobody."

He set to, and in no time the grass was cut in the fields, the foliage was removed from the vineyard, and the flower gardens were weeded, exposing the dying flowers to the sun. When the villagers saw (what they perceived to be a rape and pillage of their lands) they dragged the poor unfortunate horticulturist before the king and demanded he be put to the sword. "There are no leaves upon the trees, there are no vines upon the vineyards, and the gardens are naked and barren." They accused the horticulturist of being at the forefront of this travesty. The king had an ominous portent about the situation yet agreed that the delightful horticulturist seemed to have done a severe job of decimating the land, the vineyards, and the flower gardens, but had enough benevolence to at least impose a life sentence upon the poor horticulturist and deliver him to the deepest and most secure dungeon and then throw away the key. The King ordered a daily check on the prisoner by his armed guards. Despite the forgiving of a death sentence, the king now felt very uneasy about the whole situation

Autumn turned to winter, winter turned to spring and spring turned into summer. The villagers strayed into the fields, through the vineyards and walked the flower gardens, and were amazed at the succulence of the vines, the beautiful display of flowers, and the lush green grass across the meadows. They rejoiced, and agreed to inform the king once again, and, feeling a wave of community guilt, the villagers decided to appeal the life sentence for the horticulturist. So, a deputation of villagers arrived at the king's palace.

When they entered the throne room, the king was sitting, dead and cold upon the throne. On enquiring about the horticulturist, they discovered the deep and secure dungeon was empty and the multiple locks were all in the right place, and fully secured. The whereabouts of the horticulturist was unknown.

Now here is the very strange ending. At the bottom of the dungeon was a tiny hole through which the prisoner could see and hear water. He decided that he would have to change back to his former self otherwise he would never get through the hole. He had fortuitously saved some grapes from the vineyard from between the weeds and stinging nettles and had gathered several green pea pods from the vegetable patch, which he secretly contained within his pocket.

He then opened a pea pod and then ate one of the succulent grapes. No sooner had the grape been swallowed when he reappeared into his true form, as Leo the leprechaun. Now dressed in his red and green

tunic and hat, and carrying a pea pod, he splashed down into the stream using the pea pod as a boat. What a relief it was to breathe sweet fresh air and drink the cool, clear water from the stream.

Luckily some branches brushed the water, and he was able to grab one and heave himself up on the riverbank. He then found himself amongst the very gardens, vineyards, and fields that he had carefully cultivated, but he knew they would need constant care throughout the upcoming seasons. He ran back along the riverbank, under the little wooden bridge and there he found the small hole from which he had escaped. It was hard work but at last he managed to get back into the dungeon. He removed the pea pods and the grapes from his pocket and covertly hid them in the cell. He was then able to change back to his former non-descript self, so that the daily visit by the King's armed guards was without alarm or incident.

Initially, on one of his earlier nightly trips to the village, he saw how sad, hungry, and disillusioned the villagers were. So, he hid amongst the flowers quite easily, with his red and green clothes being unseen amongst the colorful petals of the flowers. Every night, after the villagers had gone to bed, he would tend the meadows, vineyards, and flower beds. No one in the village knew what happened to the diminutive, homeless horticulturist, and had no idea who looked after their village gardens, vineyards, and fields, because leprechauns were never ever seen, as they were reputed to be invisible to normal human beings. Leo chuckled to himself every time he saw the looks of astonishment on their faces. It was a sight to see.

ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY - OCTOBER

1st 1812 - English balloonist James Sadler attempts to cross the Irish Sea in a balloon. He fails and almost drowns.

2nd 1957 - The Voluntary Health Insurance Board is launched.

3rd

1938 - Britain's last remaining forts in the twenty-six counties are handed back to Ireland.

1940 - The German government announced it was willing to compensate Ireland for bombs dropped on Dublin.

1970 - US President Nixon arrives in Ireland.

1975 - Businessman Tiede Herrema is kidnapped by the IRA.

5th 1968 - Police in Derry baton-charge a civil rights march.

6th

1891 - Death of Charles Stewart Parnell.

1980 - Mella Carroll becomes Ireland's first female high court judge.

7th 1843 - Daniel O'Connell succumbs to government pressure and bans a Monster Meeting at Clontarf.

9th 1932 - Shots fired at a Cumann na nGaedhael meeting in Limerick.

10th

1918 - RMS Leinster is sunk by a German submarine with the loss of around 500 lives.

1957 - Fire at Windscale Nuclear Power Station in England, believed to have caused birth defects in Ireland.

1969 - The Hunt Committee report recommends an unarmed police force in Northern Ireland.

1977 - Mairéad Corrigan and Betty Williams win the Nobel Prize for Peace.

12th

1940 - The Kerry Head ship is bombed with the loss of twelve lives, months after surviving another attack.

1975 - Oliver Plunkett is canonised.

1984 - The IRA kill five people on an attack on a Brighton hotel during the Conservative Party Conference.

13th 1994 - Loyalist paramilitary groups announce a ceasefire.

18th

1880 - Ballycastle railway opens between Ballymoney and Ballycastle.

1881 - "No Rent" manifesto issued by Irish National Land League.

19th

1881 - Irish National Land League proclaimed illegal.

1989 - Three of the Guildford Four are released.

21st 1879 - Irish National Land League founded at Dublin.

22nd

1884 - Alice Walkington becomes the first woman to be awarded a degree in Ireland.

1976 - President Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh resigns over a furore about the Emergency Powers Bill, which led to the Minister for Defence describing him as a 'thundering disgrace'.

23rd

1911 - 70,000 Unionists march against Home Rule.

1970 - Charles Haughey, James Kelly, Albert Luykx and John Kelly are acquitted of conspiracy to import arms.

24th 1990 - The IRA forces three men to act as suicide bombers, resulting in seven deaths.

25th

1917 - De Valera becomes the President of Sinn Féin.

1920 - Lord Mayor of Cork Thomas MacSwiney dies on hunger strike in Brixton Prison.

1968 - The New University of Ulster is opened.

27th

1913 - James Larkin of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union sent to prison for seditious language.

30th

1939 - More than two dozen air-raid sirens are tested across Dublin.

31st

1909 - The Royal University of Ireland is dissolved.

1973 - Three IRA prisoners escape from Mountjoy Prison in a hijacked helicopter.

1990 - Brian Lenihan is sacked from government over dishonesty allegations.

1996 - First Irish language TV station, Teilifís na Gaeilge (TnaG), is launched.