

## FIRST ENCOUNTER THE EGG BROKE

**Amy Ní Fhearraigh, Soprano  
& Bill Dowdall, Flute**

I.

I love being a part of this family. Most women in my shoes would have been threatened by their husband's family that they would be returned to their parents for being unsatisfactory.

II.

As soon as the twins are delivered, the Chief Priest will come to take them away.

A lot of rituals and cleansing will need to be performed. The gods need to be appeased.

'They – them, they – them.' I could no longer contain the pain of the last few months. 'It is my sons you are talking about?

Do you know I have named them? I feel them all the time, you know. I know when they are sleeping and when they are moving. They know my voice and they listen to me when I am singing to them.'



III.

It is now two market weeks since their birth, eight days since my sons were snatched away from me and not a single tear has dropped from these eyes of mine. I have travelled the length and width of Ugwuoba looking for them.

I have entered places where women do not go, and I have entered places where humans do not go.

I have walked fearlessly through great forests, crossed deep rivers and marched into sacred places, my breasts heavy with milk and mix of their blood and mine dripping down my legs.

I have refused to live with hope. It's for people with fear.  
I have called on every god.  
I have knocked on every door.  
I will search more forests and  
I will swim across more rivers.  
I will even try the strangers' religion if it will bring back my sons.

## SECOND ENCOUNTER THIS HOSTEL LIFE

**Andrew Gavin, Tenor  
& Fintan Sutton, Bass Clarinet**

I.

In my last hostel, they give you provision any day, but it's gonna be one month since you collected the last. So if you get toilet paper today, it's gonna be one month before you get another. That is why I am happy when they give me every week for here, but now, I don't feel happy again. This direct provision business is all the same, you see, because even if you collect provision for every week or you collect for every month, it is still somebody that gives you the provision.

Nothing is better than when you decide something for yourself.

But I still like this hostel more than my last hostel.

II.

'From laundry to collect provision, from collect provision to check laundry, from check laundry to see the GP, from see the GP to collect

food, from collect food to check laundry.'

Mummy Dayo start to count for her finger.

'Up and down, up and down from morning till evening!'

Mummy Dayo is a small woman like this, but she talk fight fight all the time.

I know her now, but before if I see her talking to somebody and shaking her head that she always tie with scarf, I use to think she's gonna fight them.

Even now, she rolls her eyes and looks me up and down as she is talking.

'I just do the things I can do and leave the rest for God'.

III.

Monday morning is crazy crazy for this hostel because everybody like to go collect provision and toilet – things.

But you can go for

Tuesday and they tell you, 'We've run out of toiletries!', and that's the end.

Everybody likes to see the GP for Monday too. They say the GP for Monday is better than the GP for Tuesday because he gives better medicine. And sometimes, when you go to see the GP,

you remember that you need

to see the social for something because they share the same building and those

social people can put up a sign anytime

changing the time they see people.

Sometimes, I tell

myself, it is not good to do everything on Monday

because you stay like this,

nothing to do, for all the other days but it is not good to start the week lazy too.



## THIRD ENCOUNTER

### Choir/ Chorus NEW DUBLIN VOICES

Direct provision is like being in an abusive relationship.

This Hostel has changed drastically in recent times and everyone has turned a blind eye to it.

Residents are now mainly asylum seekers who were transferred from other hostels.

Direct provision is like being in an abusive relationship.

Abuse in itself is homegenous, no matter what race, class, or in this case, the hostel of the abused.

'This Hostel' is made up of rules that are almost Machiavellian, inane in nature.

You never know what you're going to wake up to each morning.

I, like other residents, have learnt to live under these almost tyrannical conditions.

Direct provision is like being in an abusive relationship.

Apart from the arbitrary changes to our daily routine, the security men also try to intimidate residents like myself who they know will complain about the food options.

I would usually find two of them standing directly behind me whenever I'm in the que for food. It became obvious to me that it was a way of breaking my spirit more than anything else.

There are tons of cameras in 'This Hostel', but I would find these security men trailing after me, sometimes, as I walk to my room.

Direct provision is like being in an abusive relationship.

I was ready to endure the intimidating and bullying behavior of some of the security men and the condescending tone of some of the staff, however, my frustration has grown so much in the past few weeks, I stopped going to the dining room in the evenings.

I tried hiding away in my room and buying my own food just to avoid seeing them, but with a child and 28.70 Euro as weekly money I could not sustain that.

At first, I was very grateful for a safe space to lay my head, a bed, a roof over my head, anonymity. All of that, I was very grateful for.

I spend eight and a half years in direct provision.

Direct provision is like being in an abusive relationship.

**FOURTH ENCOUNTER -  
UNDER THE AWNING**

**Rachel Croash, Soprano  
& Richard O'Donnell, Percussion**

I.

You stood under the awning outside the Spar shop, staring  
straight ahead, barely moving, a pink plastic folder tucked under  
your arm,  
waiting for the drizzle to stop. You felt uncomfortable not standing  
at the bus  
stop on the edge of the pavement because you knew that back  
home, life would  
not stop over 'this small rain'.

Back home, rainfall meant other things to you rather than  
discomfort.

It meant that the flat you shared with your mother's sister  
and her husband and your three cousins would not be stuffy. It  
meant that you  
wouldn't go to the well to fill the jelly-cans in the flat with water.  
It meant  
that there would be corn sellers lined up along your street selling  
your  
favorite fresh roast corn the next morning.



RIGAKI & OKORIE

**THIS HOSTEL  
LIFE**

II.

It was after you met Dermot that you started to write. He  
came to visit your mother four months after you arrived.

You could tell him things you could not bring yourself to  
tell your mother, how you hurried with your shopping because the  
security men  
followed you around the shops blatantly and about the man who  
got on the same  
bus with you from school, and how he would wave and smile, and  
you would wave  
and smile back, until the day he told you he would give you 100  
Euro if you  
slept with him.

III.

And you wanted to tell him about the woman at church who  
told you that a Traveller woman had said that Travellers were no  
longer the  
lowest class since the arrival of Africans.

And you wanted to tell him about the man who followed your  
mother to a supermarket car park and told her that he wanted a  
BJ, and how your  
mother told you she had felt bad she didn't have what he wanted  
until she  
realised what he meant.