**GONE VIRAL**

SETTING: A kitchen apartment.

AT RISE: MIMI is puttering around her kitchen.

*(doorbell rings)*

***MIMI***

Who in God’s name would that be now? We’re all supposed to be stayin’ put.

*(MIMI answers the door; it’s NORA holding a small bag)*

For feck sake, Nora, what are ya doin’ out and about for yaself now? Ya supposed to be ahh, whaddya call it, shelterin’ in place, not traipsin’ over to see me. The Governor will be cross if he finds ya out gallivantin’ during his pandemic. They’ll be takin’ ya into custody the packa bastards.

*(starts spraying NORA with Febreeze)*

***NORA***

*(gagging)*

Is that Febreeze?

***MIMI***

Tis’.

***NORA***

What good will Febreeze do now in the face of a pandemic?

***MIMI***

Ya can’t be too careful.

***NORA***

Well, I’ll smell grand layin’ in me hospital bed, I s’pose, or me coffin.

***MIMI***

Aye, ya’ll look and smell lovely laid out for yaself..

***NORA***

Did ya forget, now?

**MIMI**

*(MIMI looks in NORA’S bag ignoring NORA)*

What’s in ya bag then? Did ya bring something nice to have with tea?

***NORA***

Feck me, ya did forget. Do ya not remember callin’ me in a holy panic askin’ me to run some Metamucil over to ya.

***MIMI***

Why wouldn’t I be callin’ ya, then? Those feckin’ grilled cheese sandwiches I’m livin’ on have bound me up, awful; and not a suppository in me medicine cabinet.

***NORA***

*(exasperated)*

God help us and save us.

***MIMI***

Well come in before you let that virus and all its nasty bits in here. Where is the mask ya supposed to be wearin’?

***NORA***

It was suffocatin’, me. I couldn’t tolerate it another minute, and it made me look fat.

***MIMI***

And, no gloves on ya as well. You’ve no personal protection equipment they’re all goin’ on about. I’m after readin’ about this fearful virus for two weeks or three, and not a word of recovery from it. Here you are big as life with nary any personal protection equipment bringin’ the fright of that plague to me home.

***NORA***

The gloves chafed me, so.

***MIMI***

Wait there til I get the Holy Water.

*(MIMI runs to get the Holy Water, and returns with a small bowl, dips her fingers in it, and sprinkles Nora with the holy water)*

Jayzus, you’ll be comin’ down with it and passin’ it on to me, and we’ll both be destroyed.

***MIMI (cont)***

The two of us at death’s door lying there in hospital. They’ll have no pang of pity for us either with ya not wearin’ ya gloves or mask.

***NORA***

*(sheepish)*

Maybe the Doctor boys can clean ya out while we’re there.

***MIMI***

Feck, Nora, if I thought ya were going to be so stubborn; I would have never called ya to do me the favor.

***NORA***

Nor the now, Mimi. I was comin’ out to play me numbers anyway; the divil with that stay-at-home shite.

***MIMI***

Did ya see anyone while ya were out?

***NORA***

I saw Mrs. Decourcy down Charles street. We yelled at each other from across the way because of this social distancing rubbish. So, now everyone on Charles Street and three blocks in either direction knows all about Mrs. Decourcy’s dysentery. In detail!

***MIMI***

Ah, for the love of God that one has more aches and pains than a small hospital. She’s been circlin’ the drain for years

***NORA***

Aye, Mimi she’s awful needy, that one.

***MIMI***

Sit, and I’ll get the tea wet. It won’t pour itself. We’ll catch up.

*(MIMI gets the tea pot as NORA sits at the kitchen table)*

***NORA***

So, how are ya makin’ out for yaself durin’ this pandemic.

***MIMI***

Jayzuz Nora, it’s me routine, now, isn’t it? Me routine is all bollixed.

***MIMI***

Aye, they’ve queered everyone’s routine to a certainty. It’s ya routine now they’re sayin’ will get ya into trouble.

***NORA***

Whaddya hear form the Sacred Heart?

***MIMI***

*(pours the tea and sits with NORA)*

I had a phone message from the Monsignor. The Sacred Heart is closed, but he’s havin’ a Mass on the computer. Simu, simu….

***NORA***

Simulcast. I’ve heard of that

***MIMI***

Well, I have no computer, so I’m fecked.

***NORA***

I have a little computer at me flat the granddaughter uses when she stays with me, and didn’t I just order some hand sanitizer from those Amazon fellers.

***MIMI***

Amazon? What in God’s name is Amazon? Christ on a bike, the Brazilian’s store?

***NORA***

No, the Brazilians have nothing to do with this. And don’t be talkin’ about the Brazilian store. They have lovely bread there.

***MIMI***

I meant nothin’ by it. They are givin’ the Asians a run for their money, now aren’t they, the Brazilians?

***NORA***

Well, Mimi, ya never see any flu’s comin’ from the rain forest now do ya?

***MIMI***

I s’pose not. Is that where ya think this virus came from, the Asians?

***NORA***

I do. Those fellers in the Chinese government fecked this up to a fair thee well. They couldn’t park a bicycle straight, them.

***MIMI***

Shite! All those bikes they roar around on ya’d think they’d have plenty of practice***.***

***NORA***

No, they haven’t a fiddler’s feck of how to contain this thing. They’ll tell ya they’re grand, but the whole lot of them are droppin’ dead from it.

***MIMI***

Aye, and not a cure or a hint of a vaccine in sight.

***NORA***

So, ya think those fellers invented this virus on purpose?

***MIMI***

Nora, that’s not very politically correct, now. I thought we were bein’ careful about what we’re sayin’.

***NORA***

Ah, feck careful. Their politicians are a treacherous lot. Did ya hear the Asian restaurants are all closin’?

***MIMI***

I did hear no one was goin’ to that new place, the Bamboo Lounge anymore because it was too crowded. I did hear that much.

*(pause)*

All of them, ya sayin’?

***NORA***

Aye, pretty much, so.

***MIMI***

Tragic! God help me, but I do love me egg rolls, though.

***NORA***

It will be donkey’s years till you have an egg roll again.

*(pause)*

Jayzus, Mimi, if the thought police heard us talkin’ so, we’d be locked up for sure.

***MIMI***

Are the thought police blaming the Republicans for the Virus?

***NORA***

Oh, feck no. They’re sayin’ carbon emissions and red meat is causin’ it.

*(pause)*

Oh, and cow flatulence, as well.

***MIMI***

What! Cow Flatulence, I’ve never heard of such a thing.

***NORA***

Neither had the cows. It came as a complete surprise to them.

***MIMI***

Crackpots, the lot of them. They’re off their nut.

***NORA***

Well, if they get their way, ya’ll be eatin’ your egg rolls without the pork. All the grassy shite they put in them but no pork. It’s the tofu they’ll be pushin’ on ya.

***MIMI***

Ach, I don’t care for that shite at all, now. Jayzus, I hope I’m long gone by then.

***NORA***

So, ya missed the Mass this week havin’ no computer.

***MIMI***

I did, but I’ve been sayin me Rosary.

***NORA***

Good for you. If ya watch the Mass on simulcast, ya get gypped out of communion. Did ya know that?

***MIMI***

No, the message from the Monsignor said he’d be sendin’ the altar boys out with communion to those who call in an order.

***NORA***

How’s that goin’ to work? Isn’t he afraid the little fellers will get the bug?

***MIMI***

No, they’ll be covered head to toe with the personal protection equipment, and the communion will be in a little sandwich bag. They’ll pitch it into ya window from the sidewalk.

***NORA***

Just like that, is it?

***MIMI***

No, first ya have to peg ya offertory envelope out the window, then ya get ya sandwich bag with the communion. Little Timmy Riley is bringin’ me communion soon as he gets around to it.

***NORA***

That Monsignor, he’ll get his end come hell or high water.

***MIMI***

He should be runnin’ the country that one. He knows how to turn a buck. There’s no flies on the Monsignor, for sure.

***NORA***

Ha, if there were, they’d be payin’ rent. So, did ya put your communion order in?

***MIMI***

I did. There’s the envelope with me dollar in it.

*(points to an envelope on the table)*

***NORA***

A bargain!

***MIMI***

Tis’.

***NORA***

Next Sunday, I’ll bring me granddaughters’ computer over when the Mass is comin’ on. We’ll watch it from the sofa six feet from each other with the social distancing. And Mimi, the beautiful thing of it is get this, now; no kneelin’.

***MIMI***

Ya better not chance comin’ out again. One time out for a mercy delivery of Metamucil is one thing but for a simulcast Mass; I don’t know. I might be able to find a Mass on the TV.

***NORA***

There used to be a Mass on TV every Sunday from the Cathedral, but the thought police got wind of it and put a stop to it.

***MIMI***

They’d queer a free lunch that crowd.

***NORA***

They would now, the feckers. They’d be askin’ for change.

***MIMI***

What harm is there in puttin’ the Mass on TV? There’s nothin much else on anyway besides those cacklin’ hens in the mornin’, and some feller tryin’ to sell me beauty cream.

***NORA***

Beauty cream is it?

***MIMI***

Aye, this feller with perfect teeth and not a hair out of place sellin’ the beauty cream. Ha, as if it would help.

***NORA***

Too late for that shite, for the two of us.

***MIMI***

Feck, Nora, did ya ever think we’d be this old?

***NORA***

I didn’t. It sort of roared up on us, old age.

***MIMI***

Seems like yesterday the bans were posted for old Ray and me. Well, he was young, Ray, then.

***NORA***

A lifetime spent in a heartbeat. That’s why I stay current, like with the computer. It keeps me young; I try to stay up on things like that. The granddaughter signed me up on that Face Look. I have me own page.

***MIMI***

What in God’s name is Face Look?

***NORA***

It’s a gang of people ya’ve never met sendin’ ya pics of their dinners, dogs, and wee ones. It’s the rage, it is. If ya pic is liked by these fools, they say it’s gone viral.

***MIMI***

Gone viral, ya sayin’? Why would I want anythin’ of mine gone viral? Sounds a wee unhealthy to me.

***NORA***

No, now it just means those Face Look gobshites fancy ya stuff.

***MIMI***

Is old lady Mcnulty, Mumbles Finn, or any of the bingo crowd on it?

***NORA***

Not that I’m aware of, no.

***MIMI***

I have no interest in that rubbish. When the powers that be allow us out again, I’ll get the skinny when I visit the pastry shop. What those walls have heard over a lifetime, my, my.

***NORA***

I do miss goin’ there, meself, but the world has changed, and we have to learn to live remotely till this all blows over.

***MIMI***

Huh?

***NORA***

Ya know, the shelter-in-place thing, livin’ ya life within the confines of ya home.

***MIMI***

Makes me want to go down to the ocean and walk till me hat floats.

***NORA***

There’s no need of such talk, now. We’ll all be grand.

***MIMI***

What have ya heard from around town besides old lady Decourcy’s dysentery?

***NORA***

Not a lot of good news to report. Winnie Davis, the night watchman at the rubber factory, fell forty feet down the elevator shaft and broke both legs.

***MIMI***

The poor thing.

***NORA***

Old Winnie is well over seventy, so his chances of recovery are perilous.

***MIMI***

I hope he’s prayed for in the next simulcast.

***NORA***

I heard a young feller was found unconscious behind the bank as well. He had come down from Maine lookin’ for work just before the virus hit. He was brought unconscious to the hospital where he is recovering. He told the police he was vainly looking for work when he was stricken with heart failure from the exertion of it all.

***MIMI***

Ha! Stricken with delirium tremens is more like it. Any good news?

***NORA***

Well, little Nelson Ash who at first was thought kidnapped has been found after a night tramping through the woods. He wandered away from his home yesterday and spent a night outdoors for himself. He’s been reunited with his Mum, and Pap, so happy days.

***MIMI***

Glory be to God!

***NORA***

Yes, a happy ending for a change.

***MIMI***

Nora, ya should be thinkin’ about headin’ home now before the streetlights come on. There’s a curfew ya know.

***NORA***

I know, that feckin’ Governor and his heavy hand; petrified he is. A curfew, all Saint Paddy day festivities cancelled. He must have been tickled feckin’ with Saint Paddy’s, the madman.

***MIMI***

I’m sure he did, the feckin’ Protestant. No parade, no Saint Paddy’s day breakfast, bars closed. That feller would wear the spirits from the saints.

***NORA***

Indeed. Well, I’m headin’ on, now. I’ll ring ya tomorrow by noon of day. Stay put. No reason both of us should be out and about. Reduce our exposure, now. A good rest to ya now, Mimi O’Malley until we meet again. Slan’.

*(NORA leaves SR MIMI watches out the window MIMI yells to NORA)*

***MIMI***

Nora, if ya see little Timmy Riley with me communion, ask him to get me a paper and a True Detective magazine and I’ll duke him fifty cents. Mind that virus, now. Don’t be goin’ viral!

*Stage goes black*