

DOCTOR. All right, Agnes, I'm going to ask you to open your eyes in a moment. When you do, you will see your room at the convent. It is the night about four months ago when you were very sick. Around six o'clock in the evening.

AGNES. I'm afraid.

DOCTOR. Don't be. I'm here. All right?

AGNES. Yes.

DOCTOR. Now tell me what you did this evening before you went to bed.

AGNES. I ate.

DOCTOR. What did you have for dinner?

AGNES. Fish. Brussels sprouts.

DOCTOR. You don't like Brussels sprouts?

AGNES. I hate them.

DOCTOR. What else?

AGNES. A little coffee. Some sherbet for dessert. That was special.

DOCTOR. And then what?

AGNES. We got up, cleared the table, and went to chapel for Vespers.

(AGNES winces in slight pain.)

DOCTOR. Yes?

AGNES. I left early because I wasn't feeling very well.

DOCTOR. What was wrong?

AGNES. Just tired. I had my milk... (and went to bed.)

DOCTOR. Who gave you your milk?

AGNES. Sister Margaret.

DOCTOR. Was it Sister Margaret who knew about the baby?

(Silence. AGNES shows some distress.)

All right, Agnes, let's go to your room. Ready?

AGNES. Yes.

DOCTOR. I want you to open your eyes and to see your room as you saw it on that night.

(AGNES opens her eyes.)

What do you see?

AGNES. My bed.

DOCTOR. What else is in the room?

AGNES. A chair.

DOCTOR. Where is that?

AGNES. Here.

DOCTOR. Anything else?

AGNES. A crucifix.

DOCTOR. Above the bed?

AGNES. Yes?

DOCTOR. Anything else?

(Silence.)

Agnes? What do you see? Something different?

AGNES. Yes.

DOCTOR. Something that's not normally in the room?

AGNES. Yes.

DOCTOR. What is that?

AGNES. A wastepaper basket.

(Silence.)

DOCTOR. Do you know who put it there?

AGNES. No.

DOCTOR. Why do you think it's there?

AGNES. For me to get sick in.

DOCTOR. Are you ill?

AGNES. Yes.

DOCTOR. What do you feel?

AGNES. A pain in my stomach. I feel as if I've eaten glass.

(AGNES holds her stomach in a contraction.)

DOCTOR. What do you do?

AGNES. I have to throw up.

(She tries.)

I can't.

(Another contraction.)

It's glass! One of the sisters has fed me glass!

DOCTOR. Which one?

AGNES. I don't know which one. They're all jealous, that's why.

DOCTOR. Of what?

AGNES. Of me!

(Another contraction.)

Oh God. Oh my God. Water. It's all water!

DOCTOR. Why doesn't anyone come?

AGNES. They can't hear me.

DOCTOR. Why not?

AGNES. They're all in Vespers.

DOCTOR. Can you get them?

AGNES. *(In pain.)* I can't! It's clear on the other side of the building!

(Another contraction.)

Oh no, please. Please. I don't want this to happen.

I don't want it!

DOCTOR. Where are you?

AGNES. On the bed.

(A terrible contraction.)

Oh God. Oh my God.

(Seeing someone we don't see, AGNES inhales sharply.)

DOCTOR. What is it?

AGNES. Get away from me.

DOCTOR. Who?

AGNES. Go away! I don't want you here!

DOCTOR. Is someone in the room with you? Agnes?

AGNES. Don't touch me! Don't touch me! Please! Please don't touch me!

(A fierce contraction.)

No, I don't want to have the baby now! I don't want it! Why are you making me do this?!

(Another contraction. AGNES begins to scream.)

DOCTOR. It's all right, Agnes. No one's going to hurt you.

AGNES. You want to hurt my baby! You want to take my baby!

(Another terrible contraction.)

End

MOTHER. Stop her, she'll hurt herself!

DOCTOR. No, let her go... *(for a moment.)*

MOTHER. *(Rushing to AGNES.)* I'm not going on with this... *(any longer!)*

DOCTOR. No!!!

(As MOTHER touches her, AGNES screams, striking MOTHER and pushing her away.)

AGNES. You're trying to take my baby! You're trying to take my baby!

(A scream, a contraction.)

Stay in! Please stay in!

(Several violent and final contractions.)

MOTHER. Stop her! Help her!

AGNES. BITCH! It's not my fault, Mummy. WHORE! It's a mistake, Mummy. LIAR!!!

DOCTOR. Agnes, it's all right. One, two, three. It's all right.

(AGNES relaxes, coming out of the trance.)

It's me, Doctor Livingstone. It's all right. Thank you.

Thank you. How do you feel?

AGNES. Frightened.

DOCTOR. It's hard enough to go through it once, isn't it?

AGNES. Yes.

DOCTOR. Do you remember what just happened?

AGNES. Yes.