

# **The Sniper**

A 10-Minute Play

## **CHARACTERS**

**McGuire** Man, in 30s, assigned to train Gallachoir in the use of a 50-calibre sniper rifle.

**Gallachoir** Man, in 20s, sniper trainee, somewhat slow intellectually, nice young man, easy-going.

## **SETTING**

The play is set in rural Northern Ireland on a lush green hill top overlooking a narrow country lane. There only man-made structures to be seen are the dry, stacked-stone grey fences which criss-cross the fields.

(Lights up on McGuire and Gallachoir who have set up a 50-calibre sniper rifle on a tripod mount concealed in a clump of trees behind a dry stacked-stone fence at the top of long, gentle rise. At the bottom of the rise, a British Army paratrooper, on foot patrol, has stopped to smoke and rest on the side of the narrow lane in direct line-of-sight of McGuire and Gallachoir.)

**MCGUIRE**

You see him ... over there?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea.

**MCGUIRE**

Ok. Get him in your sights ... square it up ... in the cross-hairs ... got him ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea. But he keeps moving ...

**MCGUIRE**

Then follow him. You want to keep the crosshairs on his chest or head ... move the gun slowly ...easy ... smooth and steady ... and breathe ... remember to breathe ...

**GALLACHOIR**

Ok.

**MCGUIRE**

You got him?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea.

**MCGUIRE**

Okay, then. Ready ... ? Shoot ...!

(nothing)

**MCGUIRE (cont.)**

Shoot ...!

(still nothing)

**MCGUIRE (cont.)**

What you are waiting for? Is he still in the crosshairs?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea.

**MCGUIRE**

Well, then, shoot ...!

**GALLACHOIR**

I can't ...

**MCGUIRE**

Why not ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

I forgot the bullets ...

**MCGUIRE**

What? You don't have bullets in the gun?

**GALLACHOIR**

No.

**MCGUIRE**

Jesus ...!

**GALLACHOIR**

I'm sorry ...

**MCGUIRE**

Where the hell did you leave the bullets?

**GALLACHOIR**

At home ...

**MCGUIRE**

Ah great, this is just great ...

**GALLACHOIR**

I'm really sorry ... I can go home and get them ...

**MCGUIRE**

And I'm supposed to lay here waiting on you ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

You could come with me ... ?

**MCGUIRE**

Oh, geez, thanks ...

**GALLACHOIR**

My wife's baking some bread ... we could have fresh hot bread with butter ...

**MCGUIRE**

Oh ... and a nice cup of tea, too, I suppose ... ?

**GALLACHOIR**

Sure, if you'd like ... you'd like her ...

**MCGUIRE**

Your wife ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea.

**MCGUIRE**

And what about him ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Maybe he'll still be here when we get back ...

**MCGUIRE**

(said in a sarcastic manner ...)

Yea, maybe he'll take a picnic down there, hang around a few hours ... nothing better to do with his time ...

**GALLACHOIR**

You're teasing ...

**MCGUIRE**

(shaking his head ... disgusted tone of voice ...)

Oh, do you think. (beat) Of all the people to train, I get the village idiot ...

**GALLACHOIR**

Why did you call me an idiot?

**MCGUIRE**

Because you're fucking nuts is why ...

**GALLACHOIR**

I'm not nuts ... I forgot the bullets is all ... because my wife was baking bread in the oven ... and that's where I hid them ...

**MCGUIRE**

What! You hid the bullets in your oven?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea.

**MCGUIRE**

Christ, now I know you're a fucking idiot ...

**GALLACHOIR**

( with hurt feelings ...)

I am not ... I did good in school ...

**MCGUIRE**

I don't care how you did in school ...

**GALLACHOIR**

(with pride in his voice ...)

I was an alter boy, too ...

**MCGUIRE**

(said with sarcasm ...)

Good for you ...

(pauses a bit ... )

Has it occurred to you that you're wife's likely been blown to bits by now?

**GALLACHOIR**

Oh, no, oh, god ... I didn't think about that ... oh, christ ... wha ...

**MCGUIRE**

... I suspected as much

**GALLACHOIR**

I have to go check on her. Would you mind watching my gun for a few minutes?

**MCGUIRE**

(said disgustedly ...)

Oh, Christ ...

**GALLACHOIR**

I won't be long ...

(jumps up, turns circles looking at ground like he's forgotten something)

**MCGUIRE**

Geez, man ... get down

**GALLACHOIR**

I dropped my St. Christopher medal ...

**MCGUIRE**

He's not a saint anymore ... GET DOWN NOW! He'll see you ...

**GALLACHOIR**

(he lays back on ground, coming through the grass looking for the medal)

I gotta find my medal ....

**MCGUIRE**

Did you forget about your wife already ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Oh, geez ... (he jumps up again ...)

**MCGUIRE**

GET DOWN!

(he pulls Gallachoir down to the ground ... both lay on ground ...)

You wanna get us killed? You might as well blow horns and wave at 'em ...

**GALLACHOIR**

Who ...?

**MCGUIRE**

Who...? You forgotten that, too ...? That nice British Paratrooper man down there, that's who!

**GALLACHOIR**

(calmly, thoughtfully ...)

He might be ....

**MCGUIRE**

What ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Nice ...

**MCGUIRE**

I don't give a shit if he is or not ...!

**GALLACHOIR**

It matters, though ...

**MCGUIRE**

NO! No, it doesn't. How could it matter? He's a soldier ... We're soldiers ... On different sides ...? Any of this .. like ... like, forming a picture for you ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea. But my wife ... I gotta get home ...

(jumps up again, then his face lights up with big smile)

you would like my wife ...

**MCGUIRE**

( pulls Gallachoir back down to the ground again ...)

Yea, you told me that already ... And you're not going anywhere ... not with him down there and us up here – UNARMED!

**GALLACHOIR**

But ...

**MCGUIRE**

No. Absolutely not ... keep your arse on the ground and your gob shut ...

(both lay on backs on ground, heads propped against wall ... couple of sighs ... they glance a couple of times at each other out of the corners of their eyes, letting the adrenalin rush fade)

Why do you say I would like your wife, anyway?

**GALLACHOIR**

'cause she's beautiful ... and funny ... and ...

**MCGUIRE**

... Is she ah ... you know ... kind-of ah ... well, sort-of simple, like you ...?

**GALLACHOIR**

Oh, she's a lot smarter than me ...

**MCGUIRE**

(under his breath ...)

Let's hope ...

**GALLACHOIR**

She finished a trade course last year - sewing ... but there aren't any jobs around ... and she doesn't want to move to the city ...

**MCGUIRE**

Hey, peek over the wall ... see if he's still there

**GALLACHOIR**

(He peeks over the stone wall for a moment ...)

Looks like he's moving on ...

**MCGUIRE**

(Peeks over stone wall, too, to see for himself ...sighs ...)

We were lucky today, Gallachoir ...

**GALLACHOIR**

Why do you say that ...?

**MCGUIRE**

If he had seen us or heard us, we'd be goners for sure ... and you forgetting the damn bullets ... what an idiot ...

**GALLACHOIR**

I told you I was sorry ...

(peeks again over wall again)

He's gone ... can I go check on Annie now?

**MCGUIRE**

So, that's her name ... Annie?

**GALLACHOIR**

Yea, Annie McDevitt she is ...

**MCGUIRE**

(pulls Gallachoir down to ground behind wall again ... he gets down, too)

Give it a few more minutes ... just to be sure he's long gone ...

(pauses ...)

So, tell me about her? What does she look like, your Annie McDevitt?

**GALLACHOIR**

Umm ... she's about 5 feet six, kind-of slim ... long, black, shiny hair, beautiful dark eyes ... and the whitest skin you've ever seen ...

(pause ... big smile on his face ... he's in a trance-like state ...)

... when the wind blows, her checks and lips are as red as the reddest roses ...

... and her smile, oh geez, it just melts your heart ... it's like her eyes are always laughing, dancing ... and CAN SHE DANCE! ... you should see her ...

**MCGUIRE**

Gallachoir, I gotta say, you may not be the smartest recruit we've ever had but ...

[Loud burst of machine gun fire. McGuire and Gallachoir are killed instantly, mid-sentence, their bodies still twitching on the ground ... lights dim, then out]

**THE END**