

CONSTANCE. You knew about this

PHILIPPA. And it comes with a sizeable bursary. What were you just saying about a charity appeal? That money will help pay for Ecuador

CONSTANCE. What are we gonna do when it comes in here, dressed as a nun?

PHILIPPA. It won't partake in any of the, vocational duties, obviously, just assist with the housework

CONSTANCE. The housework, is part of, the vocational duties. I'm not against a, a new recruit, as it were, these past, what, eighteen months with Theresa have been a, well, aye, it's been a long eighteen months

THERESA. And I have loved every minute of it

PHILIPPA. You can speak to Elizabeth about recruitment, but if we're being pragmatic –

CONSTANCE. We should vote on it. Without a unanimous decision –

PHILIPPA. And it wouldn't be unanimous –

CONSTANCE. So we shouldn't have a vote on it? There goes democracy! No wonder there are so many rumblings outside if this is the example we set. The Old Mother will be turning in her grave

PHILIPPA (*beat*). Theresa, Sister Patricia is banging on the floor again

THERESA. I don't think she is –

PHILIPPA. Theresa

THERESA. Yes Sister Philippa

THERESA *exits*.

PHILIPPA. Is this an argument to have in front of the novice? CONSTANCE. I'll have it in front of everyone! These robots. Recording. Tracking. Never mind all that, they're just plain wrong

PHILIPPA. Next you'll be saying some of them have six toes

CONSTANCE. Aye, well, maybe they do. I listen to the streams

PHILIPPA. If you hear that on the news, you hear the wrong kind of news

CONSTANCE. S'no wrong kind of news

PHILIPPA. Luddite propaganda

CONSTANCE. Don't call it that

PHILIPPA. Call it what it is

CONSTANCE. Call it common sense if anything

PHILIPPA. Well they have the same number of toes as we do

CONSTANCE (*beat*). How about their x-ray eyes?

PHILIPPA. You believe all this nonsense?

CONSTANCE. Do I believe the reports, the research –

PHILIPPA. If you went in the farmlands, saw the Reapers up-close –

CONSTANCE. Out there, do what you like. But in here? No.

S'unnatural

CONSTANCE *roots around in a nearby box. She makes a mess.*

PHILIPPA. What are you doing now?

CONSTANCE. Who is she to be summoning robots? She's not even Mother yet! Something else we've not voted on

PHILIPPA. She didn't push it back on purpose –

CONSTANCE. So you're blaming poor Patricia? Whilst stuffing her full of buns

PHILIPPA. I'm not blaming anyone

CONSTANCE. We should be blaming Elizabeth. She's only Acting Mother, she shouldn't be –

PHILIPPA. Acting as Mother?

CONSTANCE. Aye. Well aye alright but still. Where are the blasted things?

PHILIPPA. If you told me what you're looking for –

CONSTANCE *pulls out a handful of prayer cards.*

CONSTANCE. Ah! We used to give these to the girls. We'll read this litany tonight

PHILIPPA. I think Elizabeth's already chosen one –

CONSTANCE. Litany of St Anthony. We pray for lost things, like decency, common sense. I wonder what the Church will make of this. Father O'Gorman will come along, douse the thing with holy water, hopefully rust the circuits

PHILIPPA. Look outside. Water doesn't stop them

CONSTANCE. Aye. There should be real workers out there.

This rain. The end of days. When I was coming back just now, I felt the wet earth shift beneath me. It wasn't the mud, it was. No I don't know. I'm being daft. She's being dafter. I have such a bad feeling about this

PHILIPPA. Then we pray

CONSTANCE. Aye. Pray. I'm starting vespers. At the correct time

PHILIPPA. We're children of God, sister. No hunk of metal could replace any one of us

*Songs of vespers.*

*The chairs are cleared away.*

PHILIPPA *brings flowers to the Old Mother's 'shrine'.*

9 March – *Feast Day of St Mid-morning. Still raining*

*In the centre, MARY is slumped in packaging.*

ELIZABETH *stands beside*

ELIZABETH. On. On. (B *inaudible*.) 'When activation... 'Need to n (Pinches screen.) That's too small

ELIZABETH *picks up the room. She notices the catches herself admiring*

(To MARY.) I tell her I'm in here. I should ask her Lenten requirements. (Shouldn't have arrived had no choice with the matter. It's all God's will the sisters at lunch to s

MARY. Hello

ELIZABETH (beat). You

MARY. I am awake

ELIZABETH. How long information, to switch

MARY. Do you require 'ELIZABETH. Well, not

MARY. I speak to comm

ELIZABETH. No. I – w

MARY. I responded to n