

THIRST By Ronán Noone

Scene-by-scene Breakdown Summary:

The Tyrone's summer home, on a day in August 1912.

Scene 1, late Night - 12:25 a.m.

Bridget, the cook, comes crashing into the kitchen drunk, followed by Jack, the chauffeur. He helps keep her standing; there is a closeness between them. She knocks over a pan, creating a loud noise. After carrying Bridget to bed, Jack returns to the kitchen just in time for daybreak.

Scene 2, before breakfast—7:11 a.m.

Now hungover, Bridget enters the kitchen and attempts to prepare breakfast. Jack enters, following Bridget around the kitchen. He helps shed some light on her fuzzy evening, telling her he had to carry her after too many drinks. Jack shares that he is meeting with a Mr. Prendergast in the afternoon. Cathleen, Bridget's niece and the house's second girl, can be heard reciting lines from William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. She barely misses Bridget with the script as she throws it on her way in. As the women prepare breakfast for the Tyrone family, Bridget requests more professionalism from Cathleen, reminding her she is responsible for the younger woman's well-being. Bridget shows Cathleen a small sewing box, the only thing her mother gave her before her trip from Ireland to America. Cathleen accuses Bridget of drinking, and Bridget accuses Cathleen of being taken advantage of by Mr. Tyrone in acting lessons he's offered. Cathleen reminds Bridget that she's not staying long, and plans to return home to Ireland and her fiancé. Bridget gets sick and then returns to prepare food. Cathleen tells Bridget she loves her, but Bridget seems unable to accept any sign of affection.

Scene 3, after breakfast—8.50 a.m.

Bridget writes a letter to Cathleen's mother, stopping each time Cathleen enters the kitchen. Bridget feels the burden of being the only one to send money home. Jack proselytizes about the value of a minute to keep the women from fighting. As Cathleen enters the dining room, one of the Tyrone boys, Edmund, can be heard coughing. A cough similar to that which took the life of Jack's wife. When Cathleen returns, she's discussing how little her wage is compared to other Second Girls. She jokes about having sex with one of the Tyrone boys - which scandalizes Bridget. Still hung over, Bridget's sharp tongue gets the best of her and she tells Cathleen it's a pity she didn't drown when the boat she traveled on sank. By way of apologizing, Bridget watches Cathleen perform a short passage from *Othello*, taught to her by Mr. Tyrone. Cathleen reiterates her desire to become an actress. Bridget offers Jack breakfast; he pulls flowers for her from his jacket and leaves to wash up. Cathleen suggests the women go to town for a fun evening. Bridget turns down the idea, sending Cathleen off to her next set of chores.

Scene 4, later in the morning—10.42 a.m.

Jack sits enjoying his breakfast while Bridget still tries to recover from the previous evening. She sews a button onto his shirt while he practices his pitch for a car rental service. He asks Bridget to travel with him. She shares that she made a promise of purity to god in exchange for her safety in America. He's shocked that he can admit his feelings for her, and she gives him back animosity instead. Bridget tells him she hopes he gets the investment money for his car service so he can leave town and leave her.

Scene 5, before lunch—12.24 p.m.

Cathleen received a letter from her fiancé, Michael. Bridget, frustrated that she hasn't received any mail from their family, asks Cathleen about the son she gave birth to, Daniel. Cathleen offers her the comfort that he was thriving when she left Ireland, now a young man. Bridget shares that she was sent away after giving birth, ordered by the priest and her mother, to avoid the shame. She orders Cathleen not to tell Jack. To soothe any harsh feelings, Cathleen offers to let Bridget read her letter from Michael. The letter announces that he has broken off their engagement. Cathleen, heartbroken, asks if this was what it felt like when Daniel's father left Bridget. The accusation stings, Cathleen leaves in anger, and Bridget succumbs to the whiskey she's been trying to avoid all morning.

Scene 6, lunch—1.12 p.m.

Jack enters the kitchen holding two pans that Bridget threw outside in anger. She's visibly drunk now. Mr. Prendergast didn't give Jack an investment, and he's decided he's going to the Tyrone's to give his notice. Cathleen enters, frustrated and ready to serve lunch; Bridget announces Michael's left her. Still upset, Cathleen tells Jack that the Tyrones think he's stealing from them. Jack's frustration boils over at the realization of his reputation being besmirched by an outsider in the town he grew up in. Bridget makes Jack take a walk before he speaks to the Tyrones in anger. Cathleen burns Michael's letter, and realizes her life would have been much better if she had stayed in Ireland. Bridget composes herself and heads into town.

Scene 7, after lunch—2.28 p.m.

Jack tries to comfort Cathleen in her heartbreak, but she's ready to take up Bridget's belief that men aren't trustworthy. Jack tells her how Bridget trusted him and got him back on his feet after his wife's passing, when he was a drunk in the streets. He wants Bridget to come with him because he doesn't believe he can go on without her. Cathleen and Jack lighten the mood by imitating the Tyrone family. Jack is impressed by Cathleen's acting chops, and she shares her plan to go to New York and pursue her passion. Cathleen calls Bridget's recent behavior into question when Bridget dismissed the possibility of her moving to New York. In a moment of vulnerability, Bridget tells Jack about Daniel to explain her inability to be with him.

Scene 8, after the drive to town—6.43 p.m.

In the evening, Cathleen enters the kitchen drunk and singing - she wakes Bridget from a kitchen chair. Mrs. Tyrone has given Cathleen a tumbler of whiskey to gift to Bridget, but she's been drinking from it. Cathleen wants Bridget to sing and dance with her, but she refuses. Bridget returns to preparing dinner. Emboldened by the whiskey, Cathleen asks why Bridget paid to have her come to America if she hates having her there. She encourages Bridget to let Jack love her, even though she herself is heartbroken about Michael. Bridget begins to sing and dance to soothe Cathleen. She goads Bridget into going into town with her for the evening. Cathleen reciting a speech from *The Tempest*, and earning \$2 from Mr. Tyrone. She invites Jack to join her and Bridget in town, but he declines the invitation.

Scene 9. late night—12.37 a.m.

Jack sits writing in the kitchen when Bridget returns from town; Cathleen hasn't returned with her. Jack has given the Tyrone's his notice - he plans to leave on the morning train. Mrs. Tyrone begins to play the piano in the other room; Bridget and Jack dance. They kiss, and he asks if Bridget will come with him to Ohio. As Bridget offers one excuse after another, Jack places a bottle of whiskey on the table, telling her that if she stays in this household, she will continue to become like the Tyrone's. Bridget sits down, staring at the bottle—and life—before her.

Scene 10. before breakfast—7.16 a.m

Cathleen stumbles into the kitchen late in the morning. Bridget, still sitting at the table—has been waiting for her to return. Knowing Cathleen is safe and able to look after herself, Bridget makes her choice and announces she is going to meet Jack at the train station and move to Ohio. Bridget pulls her savings from a jar, giving some to Cathleen for her to come to her in an emergency. Cathleen tells Bridget she'll miss her but encourages her to go. Bridget leaves, and Cathleen prepares breakfast - alone.