



An Untimely Death on Passchendaele Ward

Scene 9: The Cupboard

Advocate

Bloody wild goose chase. I've just been right over to the Culloden Unit at the other side of town.

O' Render

To see a patient who needed to see you urgently? And when you got there he'd changed his mind?

Advocate

How did you know all that?

O' Render

News travels fast in this place. Sometimes even before it's happened. Look I've got a bit of a problem.

Advocate

You've got a lot of problems! You work here. That's a big problem.

O' Render

The Mental Health Act Commissioner who's investigating that incident the other night is on his way down to see you.

Advocate

No-one ever comes to see me!

O' Render

But there's a problem, and it concerns your cupboard.

Advocate

My cupboard?

O' Render

Nurse Moking is taking a bit of time out.

Advocate

A bit of time out?

O' Render

Yes

Advocate

In my cupboard?

O' Render

Yes.

Advocate

I see.

O' Render

But the problem is that the Commissioner is coming down here to interview you. We can't take the chance he'll look into the cupboard, so we've got to think of something else.

Advocate

But I didn't put her in the cupboard!

O'Render

I know that, and you know that, but frankly, it does look a bit suspicious. I've got an idea. The Commissioner's already interviewed Tarpow, and there's that big cupboard in Tarpow's room.

Advocate

We can't put Moking in Tarpow's room.

O'Render

Well, she can't stay here. Come on.

Comm

She's obviously out looking after the rights of some poor medicated soul. This place is rather cramped.

Gus

Well, we've offered her a bigger office, but she seems to like it in here. I put it down to the fact that, well I don't want to break confidentiality or anything, but she's had a kangaroo loose in the paddock herself.

Comm

A kangaroo?

Gus

I mean, er, she was a service user. I think she's happier in a little place.

Comm

Agoraphobia!

Gus

No, she doesn't like big spaces.

Comm

So you're the guardian of the rights of the oppressed?

Advocate

Well, sort of....

Gus

She's more of a ventriloquist.

Comm

Your job is to represent patients?

Advocate

If that's what they want. I support them to represent themselves.

Gus

Gottle o' gear. Gottle o' gear.

Comm

Very important work. The voice of the patients must be heard in the modern mental health system.

Maria

If I could just say a word....

Comm

All too often having a mental health problem has meant that people become invisible....

Maria

I just wanted to say that....

Comm

For far too long they've been neglected. It's very important that they have adequate representation. So power to your elbow.

Maria

Well, in my opinion...

Comm

Anyway, to move on. as you may know I'm conducting an investigation into the events of Monday the 6th of March. Did you know the patient?

Advocate

Yes, I did. I had in fact been engaged as his advocate on a previous occasion. A few days prior to his death I had gone to see his consultant, Dr. Pain. The patient felt he was being given too much medication. Major tranquillisers, anti-depressants, sedatives, amphetamines, and oh, a laxative.

Comm

Why, was he constipated?

Advocate

No. That's what puzzled us.

Comm

So what did Dr. Pain say?

Advocate

He laughed.

Comm

He laughed?

Advocate

Laughed and stubbed his cigar out in a potted plant.

Comm

He was smoking? Did he do anything else?

Advocate

He threw a gerbil to the snake.

Comm

He had a snake in his office?

Gus

Not any longer. Dr. Pain has left our employment.

Comm

I'm pleased to hear that. There's no room in the modern mental health system for people like that.

Gus

He's become a senior advisor in the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

Comm

My God! So I take it he was unsympathetic to your client's wishes?

Advocate

You could say that.

Comm

It strikes me there's been some very bad business going on here.

Maria

Well, if I could just say one thing.....

Comm

And I intend to find out what it was. Come on.