

BALLYMORRIVE

TV Pilot  
50'

by Louise Geraghty

FIRST FIFTEEN PAGES

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EXT. EAGLE LODGE HOTEL - DAY

The hotel is a large, picturesque Georgian house surrounded by a thoughtfully planted garden, marred by the detritus of renovation work in progress. A van in the driveway reads "SULLIVAN CONSTRUCTION".

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

KATE SULLIVAN (36), dressed in jeans, jumper and jacket, comes in the door and stops. From upstairs comes the sound of raised voices. She sighs.

BEN

(off)

For God's sake Austin, stop treating me like a child!

AUSTIN

(off)

Stop acting like a child! I know what I'm doing.

Kate looks at her bare ring finger and rubs it.

INT. AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The office is furnished in the Georgian style of the hotel, with an ornate desk, a leather visitor's chair and an antique safe. A painting on the wall shows the hotel in earlier times, a horse and carriage in the driveway. On the floor are sample books of fabric, carpet and wallpaper, with several curtain rods, in different styles.

BEN SULLIVAN (35), dressed in builders clothes, faces off across from AUSTIN SULLIVAN (45), dressed in a suit with an open-neck shirt.

BEN

But it's money on the table!

AUSTIN

Once the refurb is done we can charge more and we'll both make more. You know that.

BEN

I'm sick of being left out of these decisions.

AUSTIN

I know what I'm doing. When have I ever not looked after you and your interests? After the reopening, you'll see. Trust me.

BEN

You mean I'll never get a say.

AUSTIN

You'll get thirty percent of the profits and you won't have to lift a finger. What do you have to say about that?

BEN

You'll never change, will you.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

Kate looks up and hides her hand in her pocket as Ben stomps down the stairs. He pauses when he sees her, embarrassed.

AUSTIN

(off)

Ben!

BEN

I just want to be treated like an adult!

He goes out the door and we hear his car start. Austin comes down the stairs. He and Kate exchange a look.

KATE

I've got some interviews set up for next week, but you don't want them seeing this kind of carry on.

AUSTIN

That's not your problem anymore.

He turns and goes back upstairs.

EXT. EAGLE LODGE HOTEL - DAY

TIMELAPSE as day turns to night. Lights go out until only one window, on the first floor, remains lit.

INT. AUSTIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Austin sits at his desk, writing in the ledger. He closes it and goes to the door, sliding the bolt shut. Then he opens the antique safe. He hears a noise behind him and turns. He stands, his eyes wide.

AUSTIN

What are you doing? What have you got--

His eyes widen he gasps. He hits the floor, eyes open. Dead. A pool of blood spreads up and surrounds his head like a halo.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING

The sun comes up over a green-on-green landscape.

EXT. EAGLE LODGE HOTEL - DAY

Kate is behind Reception, sorting dusty papers into two piles. Ben comes in.

KATE

Morning. Listen, when is the kitchen going to be ready? I need to start interviewing new chefs.

BEN

Soon, I promise. Is he in?

KATE

Must be in his office, the alarm was off when I got here. Listen, did Austin tell you...?

BEN

What?

KATE

Ah it's okay, he'll tell you.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The corridor is recently painted, and the paintings that usually hang there are leaning against the wallpapered bottom half. Various boxes and painting paraphernalia are also haphazardly stacked. Ben comes up and tries to open the door but it's locked. He knocks.

BEN

Austin it's me. Open the door.

A beat.

BEN (CONT'D)

C'mon. Look I'm sorry. Open the door, c'mon.

He knocks again. Nothing. He frowns.

EXT. AUSTIN'S OFFICE WINDOW - DAY

A ladder bangs against the wall beside the window. Ben climbs up and leans to look in. He gasps.

BEN

Kate! Kate call the Guards!

EXT. EAGLE LODGE HOTEL - DAY

MICHELLE (22), dressed all in stylish black, is parked by the hotel entrance. She is unloading books of fabric samples from the boot when Ben runs around the corner and into the main door.

INT. HOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

Ben runs into Reception, past Kate and up the stairs. Michelle comes in, she and Kate look at each other then follow him up the stairs.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Ben runs up the stairs, Kate and Michelle at his heels. He throws himself at the office door. And again. It breaks open. They all step forward and look inside. Kate and Michelle gasp in horror.

EXT. DUBLIN CITY - DAY

The city bustles with people, noise, traffic.

EXT. GARDA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The building is large and modern. Uniformed Guards move in and out purposefully.

INT. SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

DETECTIVE THOMASINA DOYLE (53) wearing a red trouser suit, delicate silver jewellery and red lipstick, sits across the desk from the SUPERINTENDENT (58), in full Garda uniform.

THOMASINA

Where?

SUPERINTENDENT

Ballymorrive.

THOMASINA

Never heard of it.

He hands her a tablet.

SUPERINTENDENT

Here it is on the map. Just zoom in. Biiit more.

THOMASINA

Oh my god.

SUPERINTENDENT

Don't think of it as a demotion. You'll be heading your own murder squad.

THOMASINA

How many murders can there be in a place that size?

SUPERINTENDENT

Well it has a big catchment area.  
(MORE)

SUPERINTENDENT (CONT'D)

There was one this morning! Hence the urgency.

THOMASINA

I should go to the union about this. Nobody has a track record like mine. I was the youngest female detective ever promoted. I broke the McManus case. I was on a recruitment poster in Templemore!

SUPERINTENDENT

Thomasina, the people who get the jobs they want, they have friends.

THOMASINA

I have friends!

SUPERINTENDENT

Here? You don't go to the Garda club, you don't go to the matches, you don't go down the pub after a shift.

THOMASINA

I go to the Christmas party.

SUPERINTENDENT

Once a year.

THOMASINA

It's only on once a year!

A beat.

THOMASINA (CONT'D)

Do they even have restaurants down there? And I have a personal trainer session on Wednesday. I have tickets for an Improv show on Thursday.

SUPERINTENDENT

Tickets plural? At least you do have a life outside of work. Is it, a boyfriend? Or girlfriend...

THOMASINA

My sister.

The Superintendent sighs.

SUPERINTENDENT

I've known you for fourteen years and I didn't even know had a sister.

THOMASINA

Josephine...

A beat.

SUPERINTENDENT

It won't be so bad. Small towns like that are lovely. Beautiful countryside on your doorstep, a real community spirit, everybody knows each other. You'll love it in no time. Well, you'll get used to it in no time.

Thomasina stares at him.

SUPERINTENDENT (CONT'D)

It's a chance to shine Thomasina. And if you really shine, well, people will have to want you in Dublin.

EXT. THOMASINA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The apartment building is on a noisy city street with shops, cafes, gyms, traffic and people of all varieties .

INT. THOMASINA'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

The comforting cacophony wafts through the open window. The bedroom is tastefully decorated in modern-industrial style of wood and metal. Thomasina fills three suitcases laid open on the bed.

Her phone, propped up on the bedside table, shows a video call with JOSEPHINE (51), a less glamorous version of Thomasina.

JOSEPHINE

Don't worry, I'll give the ticket to someone I'm either married to or gave birth to.

THOMASINA

Yes, thank-you, very convenient.

JOSEPHINE

Not just lead weights around my neck.

THOMASINA

Those were not my exact words, you know I love them all. Especially whatsisname.

JOSEPHINE

You know this move could be a good thing for you. Look on the bright side.

THOMASINA

I'll be stuck in the arse end of nowhere with nothing to do, where everybody knows my business and where the nearest stranger is a hundred and fifty miles away. The only people who won't be interested in every aspect of my life will be murder victims. What exactly is the bright side?

A beat.

JOSEPHINE

Well there's bound to be a farmer's market.

Thomasina picks up the phone and takes into the kitchen/living room with her.

INT. THOMASINA'S APARTMENT KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

This room is also modern-industrial style, with framed gallery and theatre posters on the walls.

THOMASINA

Should I bring a coffee machine?

THOMASINA (CONT'D)

Do you have a coffee machine?

THOMASINA (CONT'D)

'Course not, I live in a city, I have a thousand coffee shops right outside my door, I never have to go to the same one twice. I'll buy a machine on the way down.

JOSEPHINE

You're going to a small town, not the middle ages.

THOMASINA

But I want to stay here. I want to have cinemas and galleries and theatres on my doorstep. I want to be able to meet up with my friends occasionally. And to have a fling with some man I know I'll never see again. I want to walk out my door and be a stranger surrounded by strangers!

JOSEPHINE

Look at it this way. This is your chance to reinvent yourself.

THOMASINA

As what?



JOSEPHINE

As someone who socialises with their colleagues and who has friends they see more than once a fortnight.

THOMASINA

What are you saying?

JOSEPHINE

I'm saying there probably won't be anything else to do.

Thomasina's eyes widen as she realises this is probably true.

EXT. THOMASINA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Thomasina's car pulls out of the basement car-park onto a busy city-centre street.

EXT. MONTAGE OF ROADS - DAY

Thomasina drives along a city motorway.

Along a motorway flanked by stunning scenery.

Along a two-lane road flanked by fields and the occasional cottage.

Along a meandering single-lane road, lined with hedgerows.

EXT. NARROW COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A lone OLD MAN (75), in working clothes, hitches an empty trailer to his tractor. Thomasina's car pulls up beside him. She rolls down the window.

THOMASINA

'Scuse me, I think my SatNav missed a turning. Can you tell me how to get to Ballymorrive?

OLD MAN

Who is it you're lookin' for?

THOMASINA

I'm looking for the village, town.

OLD MAN

What name?

Thomasina grits her teeth inside her smile.

THOMASINA

Ballymorrive.

OLD MAN

Who exactly now?

THOMASINA

The place. Just the place.

OLD MAN

But who are you lookin' for in the place?

THOMASINA

Who cares? It's none of your business! Leave me alone!

She reverses back the way she came, clearly in a state of some distress. The Old Man watches her go. He shakes his head to himself and goes back to hitching the trailer.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Thomasina's car reverses fast and erratically along the road, before backing into a farm gateway and stopping.

A long beat.

THOMASINA

(over)

Aarrrrggggghhhh!

The car starts again and drives off, calmer.

EXT. EDDIE'S GARDEN - DAY

A bungalow sits on a small parcel of land. EDDIE (35), unshaven and rumpled, digs a hole in a large, sparsely planted flowerbed. He heaves something heavy into the hole. With a furtive look around, he starts filling in the hole.

EXT. AERIAL SHOT OF BALLYMORRIVE - DAY

The picturesque village is nestled in verdant countryside. We see a pub, a small string of shops, a school and a church along with a scattering of houses spreading out from the centre. And Thomasina's car driving in to it.

EXT. BALLYMORRIVE MAIN STREET - DAY

Thomasina drives along, looking at her new home. It's Tidy Towns pretty, clean and loved.

Thomasina pulls up outside the Garda Station and gets out. The building is quaint, with blooming flowerbeds outside. She finds an envelope taped to the door addressed to "Detective Garda Thomasina Doyle". She opens it.

THOMASINA

(reads)

Gone to crime scene. Eagle Lodge Hotel, Strand Road. Regards, Garda Farrelly and Garda Ojegbenro.

Not exactly standard procedure, but...

EXT. EAGLE LODGE HOTEL - DAY

The Sullivan Construction van is again parked out front. Thomasina's car pulls up.

INT. EAGLE LODGE HOTEL - DAY

BIMPE OJEBENRO (23), Irish-Nigerian, in pristine Garda uniform, is leaning on the Reception desk writing in her notebook, a professional looking camera on the counter beside her. She looks up as Thomasina enters.

BIMPE

Sorry, the hotel isn't open.

THOMASINA

I'm Detective Garda Doyle.

BIMPE

Oh Detective Doyle! You got the note, so. Garda Bimpe Ojegbenro.

THOMASINA

Nice to meet you Bimpe. What can you tell me?

Bimpe stands up straight and reads from her notes.

BIMPE

The victim is Austin Sullivan. Himself and his brother, Ben, inherited the hotel from their father who died last year. He left the larger share to Austin, because he also owned a small construction business, and he left that to Ben.

Thomasina looks at the "Sullivan Construction" van in front.

BIMPE (CONT'D)

Austin's had success as a businessman but Ben's, let's say, not the brains of the family and apparently he's running the construction business into the ground. But Austin hired him to do the renovation of the hotel, because he was planning a grand reopening next month, with the whole place upgraded to attract a higher-end kind of guest.

THOMASINA

Hmm, good research.

BIMPE

Actually I got most of that from the customers in the coffee shop  
(MORE)

BIMPE (CONT'D)

on the way here. We stopped off to get Johnny, Garda Farrelly, a double espresso. Four kids under three. You know...

THOMASINA

Okay, well, verify all that, will you?

CHARACTER

Yes Detective.

THOMASINA

Wait. There's a coffee shop?

BIMPE

On Bridge Street.

JOHNNY FARRELLY (35), massive bags under his eyes, a slightly rumpled uniform, comes in from the lounge.

BIMPE (CONT'D)

Johnny, this is Detective Doyle. She got the note.

Bimpe pulls out her phone and taps out a text.

JOHNNY

Detective. Johnny Farrelly.

THOMASINA

Nice to meet you Johnny.

JOHNNY

So, the body was found at 8.45 this morning by Ben, the brother. Kate, the wife, she's also the Receptionist, she was here too. And the decorator, sorry *designer*, Michelle. She arrived just when they found him. They're all inside.

THOMASINA

And where's the body?

JOHNNY

In his office upstairs. But wait for it - when they found him, the door was bolted. From the inside.

Thomasina's eyes widen with interest. Bimpe's phone pings.

BIMPE

Dr McAteer's coming back now. He didn't want to move the body before you saw it.

THOMASINA

Did he say what the cause of death was?

JOHNNY

No need. See for yourself.

INT. AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Austin lies on the carpeted floor in a pool of blood. Protruding from his chest is a metre-long metal curtain rod, with a pointed arrow fixture at the visible end.

Thomasina pulls on latex gloves and tiptoes around the body, peering at it but not touching. She looks around the office. Several plastic number signs indicate areas of interest.

The door has a sliding dead-bolt on it, well oiled and perfectly intact except for the fact that it was ripped out of the jamb when the door was broken down.

The window is closed and locked.

She briefly looks through the contents of the open safe - a bundle of cash, accounts ledgers, legal documents and a ring box. She opens it - it contains a diamond ring.

Thomasina taps the walls, but all sound solid. On the wall opposite the window is the painting of the hotel in earlier times. She checks it - it's screwed to the wall, not hung.

There is a knock on the open door and she looks up to see DR FRANK McATEER (48), handsome in country casual.

FRANK

Hi. Frank McAteer, the Doctor. Is it Tommy?

THOMASINA

It's Thomasina.

A beat.

FRANK

Right. Thomasina.

THOMASINA

Nice to meet you Frank. I'm surprised they have a pathologist in a place as out of the way as this.

FRANK

They don't. I'm the local GP, I fill in any time the state pathologist can't make it all the way down here.

THOMASINA

Is that often?

FRANK

That's every time.

THOMASINA

For god's sake. I mean, I know it's the middle of nowhere, but still. Are you even qualified?

An unimpressed beat.

FRANK

Well I've watched a few TikTok videos. Were you sent down here to the back of beyonds because of your sparkling personality?

THOMASINA

Actually yes.

A beat while they both dislike each other. Finally Frank moves into the room, pulling on latex gloves.

FRANK

I'd put time of death between eight and ten last night. Cause of death, as you can see, is a curtain rod through the heart. Now you're here I can do this--

He pulls the curtain rod out of Austin's chest.

FRANK (CONT'D)

It's the same arrow on this end, but it looks like it's been sharpened.

THOMASINA

If the end was sharpened, then he didn't just fall on it by accident while he was looking through samples.

FRANK

Very unlikely. Would have taken a bit of force to get it through the chest wall, but not that much. An adult male or female would have been able to do it.

THOMASINA

Hmm.

FRANK

A trade-off for the state pathologist never coming down here  
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

is they fast-track the post-mortem and the lab results. We should have the report tomorrow. Assuming, of course, the carrier pigeon flies direct.

Thomasina smiles tightly.

THOMASINA

Great.

She goes out.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Thomasina stands outside the office and looks up at the ceiling, but sees nothing of interest.

She looks in the boxes of tools and painting equipment. She tilts the paintings that are against the wall to see if there is anything behind them. A large one over-balances and falls towards her. Instinctively, she steps back against the wall and catches it, but the one in front of it crashes onto the ground. She winces.

Frank sticks his head out of the office door.

FRANK

That the way they do it in the Big Smoke, is it?

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - DAY

The room is partly decorated and the furniture is piled up and covered with dust-sheets. Enough chairs are uncovered for Thomasina to sit with Ben, Kate and Michelle. Bimpe and Johnny stand nearby, Bimpe taking conscientious notes.

BEN

When he didn't open the door I thought something must be wrong, so I got a ladder to look in the window. When I saw him, I shouted to Kate to call the Guards.

THOMASINA

You were here too Mrs Sullivan? There's hardly a need for a Receptionist if the hotel isn't open.

KATE

I'd come in to collect some paperwork for interviews I'd set up. We were hiring new staff for the reopening.

THOMASINA

And Ms Doutreligne. Unusual name.

MICHELLE

It's French. My grandfather was from Toulouse.

Kate rolls her eyes.

THOMASINA

You're designing this refurbishment?

MICHELLE

Yeah. I'm here every day. This morning I got here just in time to see Ben break down the office door.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE AUSTIN'S OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Ben throws himself at the office door. It breaks open. They all step forward and look inside in horror.

BEN

Michelle, get her out of here.

Michelle puts her arm around Kate's shoulders and guides her away as Ben stares at the body.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - DAY

The three suspects all look at Thomasina.

BEN

We didn't touch anything though.

MICHELLE

Did Austin usually have his office bolted from the inside?

KATE

He always bolted the door when he had the safe open, he's - was, old-school like that.

Thomasina turns to Bimpe.

THOMASINA

Garda Ojegbenro?

Bimpe hands her a hand-written page.

THOMASINA (CONT'D)

This is a list of what we found in the safe. Does it look like anything's missing?

Ben and Kate look at the page.