Opening Monologue

*Context: This is the opening section of the play. Addy is Bailey’s oldest friend and he has gotten married this afternoon. Bailey was his Best Man and is about to give a toast at his reception. Addy was always going places and promised he would help Bailey rise up with him. Over the years that promise has turned sour and this speech is Bailey’s moment to get revenge and have his side of the story, with its pain and bitter hatred, be heard. It should be unclear to the audience how serious any of this is and how dark Bailey’s story is going to get but they should get a feeling that he is teetering on the edge of something big.*

*Bailey is about to give his speech. He has a large, wrapped present in front of him.*

Well. This is the present. Get it? Present.

I expect you’ve all had presents

you’d rather not have had. This is the present

I’ve sort of dreaded. This is the present moment.

And me, well I’m the best man they could find.

Miranda and Addy. Addy, friend of my youth,

and I wish you’d leave my youth alone, he’s shy,

and Miranda, blushing bride, only not blushing,

congratulations, may you - blush forever.

Blushing best man, it ought to say. It’s me

alone in the present moment, I’m the one

the light’s caught. You can’t stop me,

can you, it’s my moment.

Look at the lovely bridesmaids. Don’t they look

lovely. They’re not blushing either. Sammie,

Jade, and Tabitha. On their behalf

I answer the toast, I answer the toast. Hey, toast,

the answer’s no. You’re going in the toaster.

That was my first joke.

(It says here: ‘Wait for laughter to die down.’)

Splendid. On we go.

Now. You’re probably wondering about my present,

my humble offering to the happy couple.

There’s a prize for guessing what’s inside. Clue:

it’s a high-tech device for *easy listening.*

State of the art. I tell you, cutting-edge,

it’ll blow you away, trust me. Now, who am I…

I should have started there, my mother did.

My name is Bailey. I do have a first name,

but they took it at the door. I’ve got this ticket

to get it back, but till that time, I’m Bailey.

It’s simpler for Addy, that, just the one name.

Some of you regulars at this élite

venue, the Maple Vale Country Club,

might know me by my other name of ‘Barman,

where’s my bloody lager?’ or perhaps

‘Oi, caddie, that’s a friggin’ five-iron!’ Well,

caddie, barman, waiter,

those are my slave names. But for once I’m here,

in with the cream. I ought

by rights to raise a glass to the supremo

who made the Maple Vale Country Club

what it is today, but as you know,

he happens to be the groom, and he’s had enough

compliments for one day, though, having said that,

mostly in his own speech. So I’ll merely

Thank the staff on duty here today,

(suckers, having to clear up after this lot,

whoops, there goes some more)

*He throws his drink over his shoulder.*

and say how very pleased I am to be

among what we always call ‘the bastard public’.

(Shouldn’t have said that, Addy, should I, no,

Looked good on paper.) Anyway, I’m speaking,

*I have the floor*. Yes, I hear him going,

you’ll be mopping it this time tomorrow, Bailey.