

POLLED

By

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FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A sea of worn black metal boxes, all cheaply numbered.

People move in the background, between boxes, check items off clipboards.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The boxes are shoved onto the flatbed of a WHITE VAN, slid roughly inside.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
We got a count there? How many?
All thirty?

A throat clears, a man mumbles --

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
--28... 29... 30. Yeah, that's
them.

EXT. POLLING STATION - NIGHT

Dawn threatens the horizon. The side door of the van slides open. A box is lifted out. Followed by another.

INT. POLLING STATION

Two boxes are dropped in the middle of the floor. Behind, two tables are set up with a couple of chairs behind them, facing the entrance.

A wooden poll is attached to each table with a "TABLE NUMBER" card stapled to the top, like a home-made placard. Hi-tech this is not.

INT. POLLING STATION - EARLY MORNING

Four POLL CLERKS arrive -- KEVIN, a young lad, itchy.

ANTHONY, older, authoritative.

MARY, motherly, timid.

And ANGIE, a little ride.

They shake hands, introduce themselves, all that awkward social bullshit. The station CARETAKER shows them around.

(CONTINUED)

ANTHONY
Cold out there.

CARETAKER
Colder than last time.

ANGIE
Oh God, yeah. Freezing.

The Clerks drop their bags and coats at their respective tables, seemingly already decided.

CARETAKER
Heat's on anyway.

KEVIN
Think we'll be here in a few months again?

CARETAKER
Who knows?

MARY
Ah sure they'll probably get the result they want anyway.

Boxes are opened, and a large bag, filled with paper, envelopes and stationary, is removed from each.

Everything is neatly laid out on the tables, ready to go.

The Caretaker stands at the front door, looks back at the Clerks.

CARETAKER
Ready?

Fours affirmative nods.

ANTHONY
Here we go.

The door swings open -- daylight is first to enter. And a minute later --

A NUN strides in, poll card held out in front. Friendly nods, grins, and ballot papers are exchanged.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - DAY

PETER (60's) the area supervisor, hurries into the station, plops his tan leather briefcase on the table.

PETER
How are ye this morning? Good?

(CONTINUED)

MARY

Fine, yes.

ANGIE

Grand, thanks.

Peter nods, barely listening.

PETER

Now, there's a change with the
returning envelopes, small, but an
important change, nonetheless.
I'll go through it with you.

Peter unfolds some papers, indicates a blank field with his
pen.

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE

Anthony and Kevin watch, listen to Peter.

ANTHONY

Change? Did he say change?

KEVIN

Small change. Envelopes.
Worthless, maybe?

ANTHONY

Worthless? Is he buying votes?

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE

Peter snaps his case closed, nods a goodbye and strides over
to --

POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE

-- And drops his briefcase on their table.

PETER

How are ye this morning? Good?

ANTHONY

Yes, good. Thanks.

Kevin nods his head.

PETER

Now, there's a change with the
returning envelopes, small, but an
important change, nonetheless.
I'll go through it with you.

Anthony supresses a smile.

(CONTINUED)

ANTHONY
Do you rehearse the speech?

INT. POLLING STATION - SERIES OF SHOTS

Ballot papers are torn.

Names are crossed off a list with a blunt pencil.

Ballot papers are stamped.

Ballot papers are marked.

A bag of sweets is opened, violated.

A book is flicked through, a page found.

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE - DAY

A well dressed, middle aged WOMAN storms straight at Anthony and Kevin's table -- the girls table has a queue. The woman waves two ballot papers at Kevin.

WOMAN
I got two poll cards. Two!

Anthony takes them both, reads --

ANTHONY
You're at the other table.

A blank stare is returned.

WOMAN
Who do I complain to? I want to
make a complaint. It's a disgrace.

ANTHONY
For getting two cards? If that's
your only problem -- you don't have
a problem.

The woman scoffs.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
Other table.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - DAY

A MAN (30's) holds out his passport, points at it,
determined.

(CONTINUED)

ANGIE

Yeah, I can see it's you, love, but you're not on the list here. You can't vote, you know?

MAN

I'm an Irish citizen!

MARY

Could you be at another polling station?

MAN

I'm an Irish citizen, this is where I'll vote!

MARY

Yeah, okay. I sympathise, you should have a vote. But it won't be here, do you understand?

ANGIE

And you've voted here before?

MAN

No, never.

ANGIE

Okay. Where'd you vote last time?

MAN

England.

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE - DAY

A young, attractive twenty something hands Kevin her polling card, an optimistic grin planted firmly on his face.

KEVIN

Have you any ID?

She fumbles in her bag. Finds a drivers licence.

TWENTY SOMETHING

Sure.

Kevin strikes her name off the list. Anthony stamps a ballot paper.

TWENTY SOMETHING (CONT'D)

Many coming in?

ANTHONY

You're the first.

The girl glances around, sees a queue at the other table.

(CONTINUED)

TWENTY SOMETHING
 (giggling)
 Really?

KEVIN
 He's messing with you. Sweet?

Kevin points at the open bag. She giggles again.

TWENTY SOMETHING
 Thanks.

The girl takes her ballot, a sweet, and hides herself in one of the booths.

ANTHONY
 Flirt.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - DAY

Angie examines a drivers licence, passes it back to the owner.

ANGIE
 You don't even look sixty.

The owner is a crotchety OLD BITCH.

OLD BITCH
 I've been married nearly sixty years. I don't look sixty? How dare you. You be careful what you say for the rest of the day, now.

Angie is stunned.

MARY
 Is it still cold out?

The Old Bitch takes the ballot from Mary, snaps a glance at Angie --

OLD BITCH
 It is.

-- and walks away.

ANGIE
 Jesus.

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE - DAY

A HIPSTER idiot, ballot paper clutched between his fingers, steps away from the table and two smiles. He spies something beside Anthony's elbow --

(CONTINUED)

GUY
Is that a bible?

Anthony checks.

ANTHONY
Yes, it is.

GUY
Oh my God, that is the most
disgraceful thing I've ever seen.
This is a civil event. A bible?
I'm in shock.

ANTHONY
Do you want to lie down? The floor
is level.

GUY
What? That's a disgrace. After
everything the church has done to
this country.

The guy steps into a voting booth.

GUY (CONT'D)
It's a disgrace.

He comes back, shoves the ballot into the black box.

GUY (CONT'D)
Who do I complain to? Is it you?
Do I complain to you?

ANTHONY
You can try.

GUY
Name? What's your name? I'm
taking names. A disgrace.

He walks out, backwards. Fails to get one single name.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - DAY

Angie tries to put half a sandwich in her mouth, is
interrupted as a voter appears in front of her.

VOTER
Well you're busy!

ANGIE
Sorry! Lunch.

Mary stamps a ballot.

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE - DAY

A GARDA steps up to the table.

KEVIN

Poll card?

GARDA

Not here to vote. Everything been okay?

ANTHONY

Been fine. No lunatics yet.

GARDA

Good. Good. Haven't tried to rig the vote yet, no?

Two nervous laughs answer his grin.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - DAY

Mary takes a sip of coffee, unfolds a book. An OLD WOMAN with a shopping cart bangs the table.

OLD WOMAN

Are ye working or what? Ye don't look busy!

MARY

Sorry! Sorry!

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE - DAY

The Garda sits on the table, gesticulates confidently.

GARDA

So you just wait til five minutes before close, stamp a load of pages, strike off that same number of names in a random selection, now that's important, a random selection, not just the first fifty you find on the list, and throw them all in the box. You've rigged her!

ANTHONY

But you'd vote on them? It'd take a while in a general election.

GARDA

Well--

(CONTINUED)

KEVIN

And you'd have to pay off an entire table at least in each county to have an effect...

GARDA

--lookit, I'm just putting it out there. I haven't planned it, you know.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - EVENING

A worried YOUNG MAN scratches his head.

YOUNG MAN

No, I've nothing. Not a thing.

MARY

No credit card, bank card?

YOUNG MAN

No, it's all at home.

MARY

With your polling card?

YOUNG MAN

Yeah. Shite.

Angie scans the list, covers the names and addresses after one name, looks up.

ANGIE

Can you name a few of your neighbours?

INT. POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE - EVENING

Kevin stretches back in his chair, a yawn escapes his gaping mouth.

KEVIN

I'd love a pint.

ANTHONY

I'd love a few.

INT. POLLING STATION - SERIES OF SHOTS

Another ballot is stamped.

Polling cards are torn, binned.

Feet carry weary voters across the room.

INT. POLLING STATION - MARY & ANGIE'S TABLE - EVENING

Mary checks her watch.

MARY
Ten minutes!

POLLING STATION - ANTHONY & KEVIN'S TABLE

ANTHONY
We know, thanks!
(to Kevin)
We can all see the clock.

INT. POLLING STATION - LATE EVENING

The caretaker returns. Information posters are plucked off the walls. Rubbish is dumped into bins. Chairs are stacked.

CARETAKER
That's ten o'clock!

The front door is locked. The caretaker walks back into the room as -- THUMP THUMP THUMP.

Somebody knocks outside.

CARETAKER (CONT'D)
Closed. After ten.

VOICE (O.S.)
I want to vote!

CARETAKER
Sorry, closed. Should have come earlier.

VOICE (O.S.)
But I have me card!

CARETAKER
Polling is closed.

VOICE (O.S.)
For the love of Jaysus, let me in!
I've a right, so I do!

CARETAKER
You did. Before ten. Closed.

VOICE (O.S.)
Ya auld bollix. You're an aul
crusty bollix, with you're little
bit of power. The man. Crusty man
bollix!

(CONTINUED)

A loud thump -- the door is viciously kicked.

CARETAKER
We've a garda in here!

VOICE (O.S.)
Shite!

The sound of footsteps beating a hasty retreat.

CARETAKER
(to the room)
Shows over. Til next time.

INT. POLLING STATION - NIGHT

Anthony, Kevin, Mary and Angie gather their things, put coats on, shake hands, and say their good-byes.

EXT. POLLING STATION - NIGHT

The four clerks walk off in different directions, as the night life nearby winds down.

The white van pulls up to the kerb. The side door slides open again. The black boxes, now locked and sealed tight, are loaded inside.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
We've got thirty now, yeah?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
Yeah, thirty.

INT. POLLING STATION - NIGHT

Lights are switched off by an unseen hand. Darkness settles in.

INT. WHITE VAN - NIGHT

Empty roads whip by, reflections of street lights flow over the windscreen.

EXT. LANDFILL - NIGHT

The white van reverses to the edge of the land fill. Below, a twenty foot drop to the top of the rubbish pile.

The rear doors are opened, boxes are hauled out, dropped near the edge.

(CONTINUED)

The locks are smashed, discarded. Dark FIGURES tip the boxes upside down, the ballot papers flutter out like confetti caught in the flash of a camera.

Brakes SQUEAK. Beside the van, a large truck is parked, it's engine idling. New sealed boxes are unloaded from the back, stacked inside the white van.

Behind, a JCB plows dirt over the lip of the landfill, burying the discarded ballot papers.

VOICE #3 (O.S.)

You're the last one.

(beat)

They'll have a result by tomorrow evening. The one they want.

INT. WHITE VAN - NIGHT

The van passes through a set of traffic lights, turns into a gated lot. On the gate pillar, a sign -- "COUNTING STATION".

A large illuminated warehouse sits in the distance.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The black boxes are stacked on the floor, beside hundreds of others.

Tables wait to be filled with counted ballot papers.

FADE TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

A box is lifted up, the lock sprung, it's contents tipped out onto the table. Eager hands rummage through the ballots.

Nearly all the papers are marked "YES".

FADE OUT.