

SCENE 9 Head master Ayres - monologue

The music is cut off by the sound of the electric school bell which signals the start of assembly. Mr Ayres stands at the front of the now empty stage and addresses the audience as if they were the assembled boys. Behind him Dave, Kev, Steve, John and other boys stand in a semi- circle, frozen in half light. Main light on Ayres only. Bell stops.

AYRES

Once again we have high hopes that this year's exam results will be something to be proud of. Three boys have been offered places at Oxford or Cambridge. These fine establishments will continue the work we have begun here, which as you know is not just making men of you, but making gentlemen. Those of you going to the lesser universities will find that if you use your time wisely you will find a university life still the best preparation for life in the big, wide world. Always remember what you have been taught here. Make the most of any opportunity.

John looks across at Steve who continues to look out front.

AYRES

When a golden opportunity presents itself and you miss it, you will regret it for the rest of your life.

Steve looks at John, who looks away.

AYRES

Remember the school motto.

Now John and Steve look at each other.

AYRES

"Carpe Diem". Seize the day! Gentlemen of the Sixth Form, and indeed, you little gentlemen of the rest of the school, the values which we try to instill in you here are becoming more and more eroded by so-called liberals and do-gooders. You may be tempted to question these values yourself. As Catholics most of you all know the security and help that only a family can offer. You all know the wonderful feeling of being able to turn to your father or mother and tell them your problems, any problems, and they will listen and help and advise you. Pity, then, those victims of a "liberal" society, whose parents are separated or divorced. Feel more than pity. Be angry about a world which condones single- parent families and suggests they can be as supportive as the real thing. Be angry too about those misguided people who insist that unnatural relationships are not only to be tolerated but encouraged.

John looks away from Steve.

AYRES

Well, I am proud that we have imparted into your young minds those values inspired by the great Holy Family of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the sanctity of womanhood as epitomised by Our Blessed Virgin Mary. On the subject of the opposite sex, I have been prevailed upon by John Westhead to allow the first school “discotheque”

(He pronounces “discotheque” in French accent.)

AYRES

I make this break from school policy to show my faith in the teaching you have had here. That you will not abuse yourselves in your school hall. I must insist that no alcohol is to be consumed and that the hall is clear by 11.00 p.m.