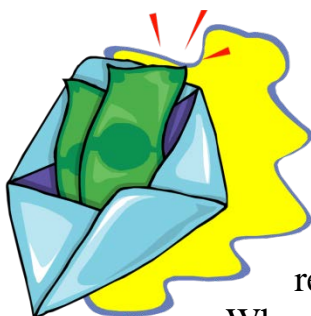


## Mrs Johnstone is Fired



Now that Mr Lyons is home and the baby is settled in, Mrs Lyons is nervous that the secret will be revealed by Mrs Johnstone who is always fussing around baby Edward. When she is alone with her husband, Mrs Lyons says she thinks Mrs Johnstone should be sacked and as he's a busy man and the house is her responsibility, he tells her to do what she thinks best.

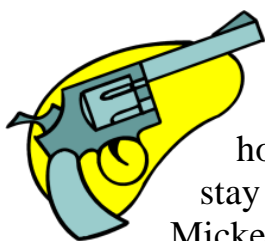
When the women are alone, Mrs Lyons says she is dissatisfied with Mrs Johnstone's work and gives her fifty pounds as a leaving settlement. But Mrs Johnstone is not so easily bought off; if she has to go, she says, she will take her son with her, but Mrs Lyons says if she tells the police what has happened, she will be prosecuted. In desperation she makes up a superstition that if twins are secretly parted and one learns the truth, both twins will die. The superstitious Mrs Johnstone is speechless at this and Mrs Lyons seizes her advantage and pushes the money at her as if to complete the bargain.



At this point the Narrator sings *Shoes upon the Table* which mentions several superstitions, linking them with the devil and symbols of religion like a rosary. The words of the song are menacing as they speak of the devil '*staring*', '*creeping*' and echo Mrs Johnstone's fears about what she has done and that this will have serious consequences in the future.



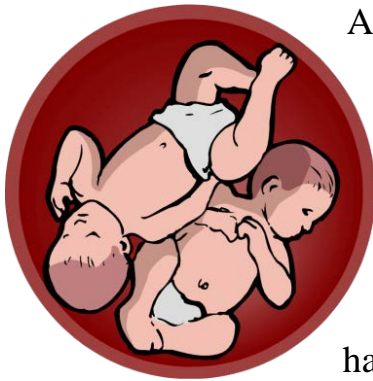
## **Blood Brothers**



The play now moves on seven years. We meet Mickey who is playing with a toy gun, **foreshadowing** the way both twins will die. He has been playing near the big houses near the park though his mother has warned him to stay away from them (this is where the Lyons family live). Mickey doesn't want to do as he is told and recites a poem in which he imagines what fun it would be to be his brother Sammy who's nearly ten and can do all kind of daring things and get away with them - swimming, drawing nude women, weeing through letter boxes, spitting, and going to bed late. As he sits and thinks about all these things he envies, Edward appears and the boys start talking to each other. Immediately it is obvious that, although they are twins, their upbringing has been totally different.

Read the conversation between the boys, up to the point where Sammy appears. Now put short quotations in each of the columns in the following table to show the different things each of them says:

MICKEY	EDWARD
'Gis a sweet	Oh that sounds like super fun



Already we see the importance of upbringing or nurture in the play.

Many studies have been carried out about whether our genetic make up determines how we develop or whether the way we are brought up - where we live, where we are educated, the values our parents give us, how much money our family has - makes us into what we become.

If twins are brought up in a totally different way, will their genetic similarities be enough to establish a bond?

## Twins

Much research has been done into the behaviour of twins. The Internet article that follows tells us of some of the research findings.

Gemellology is the term for the scientific study of twins. These multiples possess a very special and unique bond. Most twins hold more than simply good friendship, rather, they begin to bond as life - long companions beginning before they are even introduced to the world. In most cases, identical twins share a stronger bond than that of fraternal twins, primarily due to the fact that they share the same genes. Obviously, twins are very similar simply by sight, but it is unimaginable the extent to which twins are identical in their thought patterns, pathological, psychological, and physical aspects.

