

Riders to the Sea Key Info

Writer: John Millington Synge | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Writer: John Millington Synge (1871-1909)

Full Title: *Riders to the Sea*

Source: Inspired by Synge's observations of life on the Aran Islands.

Written Time: 1902-1903

Published Date: 1904

Genre: Tragedy

Tone: Melancholic

Point of View: Third-person (objective through dialogue)

Total Acts: One (I)

Time Setting: Late 19th to early 20th century

Place Setting: A Small thatched cottage on Aran Island, Ireland, and the sea.

Key Notes

Galway Fair:

The "Galway Fair" represents survival and danger in *Riders to the Sea*

. In play, Bartley really wants to go to the Galway Fair to sell his horses. He needs the money to help his family. The fair is across the sea. Bartley takes a risk by sailing to sell horses there because his family depends on the income.

The fair symbolizes hope for survival. Actually, Bartley wants to go there to sell his horse at a high price. It is known as a "good fair for horses" (prices are high).

Chorus: In *Riders to the Sea* by J.M. Synge, there is no separate chorus like in old Greek plays. Instead, the women in the play, like Cathleen, Nora, and other village women, act like a chorus.

They talk about the sad events, like the deaths. They show the feelings of the whole village, such as sadness, fear, and pity. They help us see how dangerous the sea is for everyone, not just for Maurya's family. They also show kindness and respect for Maurya's pain.

Aran Islands: The Aran Islands are off the west coast of Ireland. In "Riders to the Sea," the story happens there. The sea is very dangerous on these islands. Many people have died because of the sea. The weather is rough and hard to live with. Life on the islands is very difficult.

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