

DEAR HEART & OTHER POEMS

By Gene Barry

Come down from that loft,
you'll hurt yourself.

Green trains and old radios don't walk away.
They lie beside posted forgottens, in movies
tailor's mannequins and framed paintings.

You'll not find a squeaking pair of gates,
or a heavy-footed roaring engine clutch there
screaming hide quickly, don't be a crybaby.

That pool behind your tank has dried you fool,
and the worn beam that took four of your finger nails
is now evidence-free. I know, I've checked.

Every known surprise you're opening contains
father's deafness that kicked in when you
wore short pants and skin patches that
matched the purple jumper mother knitted.

The very same year his number 12s began
to kick little bodies and murder pets.

There are no replays correcting themselves
into heartbeats and happy mindsets,
just history planning a future.

Come down fool,

DOUSING OUR GENOA

Tumble into my memory Dad
and let us walk that umbilical road,
where we will cast those parental nets,
trawl through our mom and dad's unspoken
and drift through seas of understanding.

Come tune these heartstrings Dad
and sing my favourite childhood songs.
Minuet me with little feet so light that
we can swing into arms we long for,
dress me in the colours of happiness.

Douse our family Genoa Dad
and ease the tiller from mother's hand.
Please become that night watchman
who will track a peaceful childhood course
we drifted from in times of parental fogs.

Do not leave me now Dad,
but bed yourself into my heart,
for I have rooms there for you to
decorate and furnish, so many volumes of
misunderstandings for you to read and write.

FLAKING THE RODE

Sunday morning's while Cork's docks stood still,
four little boys would crane stare.

To the full back seat of our Ford Popular
my father answered questions through
that haze of preoccupation surrounding him.

Processions of Ford tractors in readymade
sheds always lined the concrete part of the quays
and water would somehow pour out from the
belly button of some of the tied up foreign ships.

When I was older, much older, that same haze
would follow me into classrooms and pubs,
into relationships and thought processes.
Each and every time an anchor would clinch
as my father's preoccupation flaked the rode.

He knew not what to do with me, with himself,
and my three brothers stood as witnesses.

ISIS OH ISIS

breastfeed me a future.
Stretch those magical wings
across this religious playground
weep north my darling
send those tears, heal

Heed our hardships

And the hands wash each other
with clean warm water
prostitutes to one and other
doing night hours under that
bitter burnt ground we feed

Dante, pass me the fire extinguisher.

CRYSTAL CLEAR

Let me give you quenched pain
this evening time he whispered,
when the quarry fox is vixen bound,
the water tower has pulled in the
visiting children's sun and put it to bed
and our fountain is kissing fireflies.

I want to unbrush the shards and
cupless stems of your broken goblets
that have teared and severed you,
build for you a rest that will settle
in comfortably beside you.

And she as uncomfortable as
a frigid lying next to an erection

will clutch down gear by gear
beyond to a place where she
will cup inability like a breast,
the horror of generations rocking her.

Only good men leak tears she
pillow whispers night after sad night,
belching the dark with upsetness
from all of the happy girls she has eaten.

Bio

Gene Barry is an Irish Poet, Art Therapist and a practicing Psychotherapist. He has been published widely both at home and internationally and his poems have been translated into Arabic, Irish and Italian.

Barry is founder of the Blackwater Poetry group and administers the world famous Blackwater Poetry Group on Facebook. He is also a publisher and editor with the publishing house Rebel Poetry. Barry is also founder and chairman of the Fermoy International

As an art therapist using the medium of poetry, Gene has worked in hospitals, primary and secondary schools, NA, Youthreach, retired people's groups, AA, asylum seekers and with numerous poetry groups.

Barry has read in Australia, the US, the Caribbean, Holland, England, Scotland, France and Belgium and as the guest poet at numerous Irish poetry venues.

In 2010 Gene was editor of the anthology *Silent Voices*, a collection of poems written by asylum seekers living in Ireland. Barry's chapbook *Stones in their Shoes* was published 2008

and in 2013 his collection *Unfinished Business* was published by Doghouse Books. He is presently editing his third collection.

Gene also edited the anthologies *remembering the Present* in May 2012, *Inclusion* and the 2012, 2013 and 2014 editions *The Blue Max Review* as part of the Fermoy International Poetry Festival. In 2014 Barry edited Irish poet Michael Corrigan's debut collection *Deep Fried Unicorn*, and *fathers and what must be said* and *The Day the Mirror Called* and MH Clay's new collection *sonoffred* to be launched on St Patrick's Day.