

CALL ME GRANNY

By Gene Barry

She was a holed ark
lying in that grave not yet dug for her.
A readable Ulysses.
Her own black and white parents
had been childhooded in a courtroom,
sisters ate guilt for supper.

I often cried for her Netanyahu lips
-when I lived in my small frame-
and watched a pedestrian of excuses
daily march from that mouth.
A finger-wagging hand
holding her still and she living in
the moment of a graveside kneel.
In between the misunderstood prayers
she subpoenaed deaf relatives who were
useless as a liar's excuse.

Once, *let us not nanny dance around the particulars*
she screamed at no audience;
another new testament I asked myself.
So when dirty, not tired
she bathed in a bath of punishment.
After all, families are only for photographs.

CANINE DILEMMAS

Fridays she would request sanctuary

At the homes of friends

Pretend friends

And excuses

Return home in the safety net hours

And sleep on the floor

Next to her bed

Creep under his blanket

At the perfect safest moment

The memories of kicks

Black eyes

Broken and fractured bones

Encased in pleads

And screams

And moans

And live in the

Hope

That on waking

He will not

Call her a bitch

And treat her

Like a dog

*I WILL
FOR ANN*

When death un-hoods itself
with the respect only the
ploughman knows as he
un-reins his twin, I will have
danced with her In Utero.

I will have whispered in
her good ear and amputated
her ingrown troubles.

I will have prayed
*O spittle of Christ infuse thyself
into her polished soul, heal.*

I will have held her mirrored
fingers, gently, and tickled
her parent's toes.

I will have learned her laugh
as mother does her baby's first,
I will have held it Pentium-like.

I will have seen her delivery
of cards, tokens, presents
and occasions, of abundant
love from a solvent mother,

no contraband enclosed.

I will have nursed her wounds

back to a smiling toothless

pitch, to a grey-haired fervour.

I will have painted her

landscape the colours of a lifetime.

I will have trekked wisely

disseminating trunk loads of

loneliness, nihilism put to bed.

I will have undressed her jinx

and laid it to rest. I will have

answered a thousand times

and smiled back.

Rest now Christina.

I WILL

FOR KIERAN

When death un-hoods itself

with the respect only the

ploughman knows as he

un-reins his twin, I will

dance with you In Utero.

I will whisper in

your good ear and amputate

your ingrown troubles.

I will pray

‘O spittle Of Christ infuse thyself

into his polished soul, heal’.

I will hold your mirrored

fingers, gently, and tickle

your peeping toes.

I will learn your laugh

as mother does her baby’s first;

I will hold it Pentium-like.

I will see your delivery

of cards, tokens, presents

and occasions, of abundant

love from a solvent father,

no contraband enclosed.

I will nurse your wounds

back to a smiling toothless pitch,

guide you my gorgeous boy

to a grey-haired fervour.

I will paint your landscape

the colours of a lifetime.

I will trek wisely

disseminating trunk loads of

loneliness, nihilism put to bed.

I will undress my jinx
and lay it to rest. I will
answer a thousand times
and smile back,
'I love you Kieran'.

SHE CONSOLED

That love could come in wearing a uniform,
plead through the pity of a child's
undersized hand-me-down,
hand out like this funeral and
life-take as a murderer.

She knows
it could be in the filled pockets
of the woman being discharged,
her family now a coppice.

She hears
love's vestige lurking in doldrums,
buckling in safety,
slipstreaming.

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.