

# **A Nation Once Again: The Irish Chapbook**

**By**  
**Valkyrie Kerry**

Horrotica © 2019

## **Table of Contents**

[Foreword](#)

[A Nation Once Again: The Irish Chapbook](#)

## **Foreword**

‘Valkyrie’ Kerry Kelly is a multi-graduate, wife and mum of five. She lives in Mayo, Ireland and writing is her passion. She is a philanthropist and philosopher and does not shy away from expressing both exceptional beauty and deep controversy. Kerry has had poetry published in Peeking Cat, TigerShark, Plum Tree Tavern, Eskimo Pie, Love Letters, Wicked Words and 19,751 Words. Her short stories have appeared in Paragraph Planet, Entropy Squared and Short Break Fiction. Kerry’s debut as an editor proved highly successful with Stan and Ellen’s Grand Opus reaching Number One in the Chapbook Charts.

A Nation Once Again showcases reflections of Irish life, landscape, history and politics through poetic tales. It delves into political questions, religion and family life, whilst reflecting the scenic beauty of the country.

## **A Nation Once Again: The Irish Chapbook**

### **Hypocrites**

For no particular reason,

Parishioners attend mass on a Sunday.  
Their Bibles lay dusty on the shelves, no voice for prayer.  
They have no opinion or care for suffering near or far  
away.

For no particular reason,  
Parishioners attend mass on a Sunday.  
Full of judgement and poor words, prejudice, selfish, anti-  
gay.  
Tears they cause in others with sharp mouth and jeering  
stare.

For no particular reason,  
Parishioners attend mass on a Sunday.  
Truly not accepting their hidden deeds,  
And cheap spite are subject to God's stare.

### **Lady Mary**

The black bearded Captain Daniels took Mary to sea,  
In the bloody, crested moonshine they floated fairly free.  
The powers of the stars' lighting the diamond, white ice.  
The taste of peachy-grapes, yeast, potatoes and apple slice.  
Old Paddy Morgan, the Helmsman with strange powers,  
Steers the vessel away from the raging April showers.

And into the blue slammers the fortified ship flew,  
My Fair Lady delving into paradise painted in blue.  
As a screwdriver tears at a fizzing rusty nail,  
A hurricane blew up, an Earthquake like gale. Flying  
through the night with no thought at all,  
She spins out of control not considering her imminent fall!  
Moonshiner  
Laced moonshine.  
Sleep forever poor man!

## **Patsy Sands**

Patsy Sands is a dangerous man,  
He fought our decent soldiers hand to hand.  
He claimed this land was not ours to steal,  
But we accumulated it through signing a fair deal.

Bombs he dropped on law abiding men,  
We tried to make peace with him there and then.  
Agreeing with us not to cause trouble,  
Enlisting others his number did double.

And then to the streets with banners so high,  
Calling for one country a unified flag he did fly,  
So, for the peace we made several arrests.  
Doing for our country only what was best.

But in prison more trouble he caused,  
Claiming prisoners' rights with barely a pause.  
Refusing food, he chose to die,  
So, others could name him a martyr on high!

Patsy Sands is an honourable man!  
He fought for our right to a unified land.  
Not forgetting the famine and landlord's crimes,  
For him we will write many a rhyme.

On the streets, he did brawl with intimidating men,  
Abusing those whose creed was unpalatable to them.  
Random shootings over the years,  
Filling our women and children with fear.

Patsy stood tall and refused to back down,  
He only wanted a united, friendly town.  
His kin ostracized for their beliefs,  
Treated in prison like a common thief.

Deserving the right of a prisoner of war,  
Beaten, hated, isolated and more.  
The antagonists forgetting centuries of strife,  
Or the fact that they took the poor peasant's wife.  
So, remember poor Patsy and let that flag fly,  
To celebrate the martyr on high!

### **Paradise Found**

I need to visit my private paradise;  
Hidden in the realms of my mind,  
Accessible only through deep meditation and calm.  
With eyes half closed, relaxing in the dark,  
Light emanating solely from embers,  
A mist engulfs me spiritually and I am there.

Textures of wooden floor replaced by stringy grass,  
Remnants of dew cling, but I'm comfortable.  
I need to sink deeper, open my mind's eye. Combing the  
green with my hands,  
Bathing in the sun's mellow heat.  
Deeper I fall, deeper into Eden.

Opening that secret eye; Utopia comes into view.  
Laying on the banks of a stream fed pond,  
Large, natural, shallow, clear with ripples scraping stones.  
Large trees surround the crystal waters;  
Red maple, plush Pine, drooping,  
Willows shelter the edges,  
Nothing beyond is visible.

On the opposite bank rocks sit; built up, uneven, stunning.  
Water plunges over one side, the sound of the fall fills the  
air, Complementing trickling streams,  
And birds chirruping hidden in shrubbery.

The waterfall barely hides an endless cavern; Leading to  
another place.

For the moment, I rest.

This is where I need to be.

### **The Problem with Education**

Interdisciplinarianism Machiavellianism

Compartmentalisation Establishmentarianism

Indecipherability Contradictoriously

### **Pauperism**

Papal plush palace Poverty plagues Perverse

Penury persists

### **Cuckold**

The sofa housed a cuckold man.

His wife made a cruel secret plan, 'Let him get the gout

So, I can sleep about

And put him on a drinking ban!'

### **Recluse**

Brown, bricks of turf lie, stacked up against the grey wall,

The flourishing, jade moss subtly hidden.

The farming cottage's ivory walls beckon repainting,

Overshadowed by the derelict, crumbling, home house next  
door.

A rusty barely red gate splits, cutting the wall down the  
middle,

Elegantly highlighting a paved garden path.

This leads to the clear, glass porch with sliding, grubby windows.

A few, flaking, bronzing trees litter the grassy overgrowth to the front.

Cars rarely pass through the Parish; remote, peaceful.  
The small cottage provides enough room,  
For one aging man and his faithful, lively sheepdog.  
Occasionally he emerges in his peaked cap to collect fuel.

Once a week he leaves, driving to the Parish Tavern.  
Smiling cheerfully, he opts to sit alone.  
A knowledgeable man, aware of all local news,  
Isolated by his own weakness; his own fear of outsiders.

### **Declan's Dilemma**

You mistook gout for a slipped disc,' the good Doctor  
cried, 'No more rich meats or seafood may be put in your  
fry!'

'I'm in bad form but, my diet is healthy,  
As for rich meat and seafood I'm just not that wealthy!  
'Dehydration could be the underlying cause?'  
To which I had to reply with barely a pause,  
'My thirst is well sated; my tankard is full.  
I can drink to the depths beyond a great waterfall,'  
'And,' continued the Doctor with his eyebrow raised high,  
'Therein does the grass root of this problem lie! '

### **Loans**

'You can have a grand loan no doubt,'  
Said the banker with great, greedy clout. 'Sign your house  
over to me  
In your account money shall be,  
But if you fall behind I will kick you all out!'

## **Stone Wall**

Stuck, encased in the monastery,  
A ghost of years gone by.  
Contemplative life of silence, by choice.

Prayer inside stone walls.  
Arches leading to flourishing vegetable gardens, toiling  
daily.  
Early morning chanting, simple meals.  
Itchy sack cloth.

Riders came for King and country,  
Came stole and destroyed.  
Holy, charitable men impaled on bloodied swords.

Relics stolen, books burnt, Fire stole rooms and roof,  
Greedily licking up wooden remnants.  
In spirit the heat still burns.

He looks through the archway;  
The same deteriorating stones, the garden is now a bull  
field,  
Derelict monasteries attract the occasional tourist.

He sees no other souls,  
Perhaps his lack of faith was his undoing.  
He cannot leave through the archway,  
He is not free.

## **Dear Son!**

Your silence wakes me abruptly at Five AM,  
The warm summer's sun glowing though the curtains.  
You have been with me for a week,

You have been with me forever!

I fearfully wake you, relieved only by your croaking cry,  
You cleave to me for nourishment, mutual love flows.  
You have been with me for a week,  
You have been with me forever!

Under your brightly coloured baby gym you lie, gurgling,  
I gently bathe you in your soothing duck covered, dinky  
bath.  
You have been with me for a week,  
You have been with me forever!

Carried in your blue, polka dot pram, I push you, singing.  
Your lovely shaped head, your peachy skin and lazy eyes  
sparkle.  
You have been with me for a week,  
You have been with me forever!

You seem to listen as we discover your animal  
encyclopedia,  
Sleepily drifting into a deep snooze, adorably snoring.  
You have been with me for a week,  
You have been with me forever!

Today you packed your bag, avidly preparing for college  
life,  
I am thrilled for you, secretly sad, ambivalent,  
Wonderful opportunities sprawl before you.  
You have been with me for years!  
Please don't say goodbye forever.....

### **The Artist**

Brushes dip in and out of red paint, amorously.  
Applied to easel held paper;



Embossed, Stroked delicately, sensually.  
Creatively designing.

The artist imagines a great scene, Dante's Inferno.  
Each detail etched into the inquisitive mind,  
His work a true, accurate, reflection;  
Hell fire, fallen angels.

His studio now so miniscule, enclosed, locked, padded.  
His work overseen for safety, too restricted.  
Genius in mind, thought and ability,  
A brain unacceptable to society.

### **The Irishman**

With evenings watching;  
Dark clouds shadow the red spectrum of the moon,  
The waves rolling to the cool soft shores,  
And rivers flowing romantically.  
Whilst listening to soft genteel words of love and  
compassion,  
I trusted the tall, dark stranger implicitly,  
And took him to my chamber.

There in my bleak prison,  
Did his other evil, passionate nature show?  
Forcing submission,  
Through the glare of hypnotic, ultramarine eyes.  
Menacing me with the psychotic, sweet whispering of his  
voice,  
'I am not a gentleman, I can be cruel!'  
Contrary to earlier divulgence.

The strength of the rural Irish man;  
So much more than it seemed.  
He clasped my tender hands steadfastly with almighty ease.

His eyes flashed with a sadistic desire,  
And beer laced breath engulfed,  
And with swift brutish rage he took me;  
Full of the mightiest passion!

### **An fear na hÉireann**

Le tráthnóna ag breathnú , scamail dorcha scáth an  
speictream dearg na gealaí ,  
Na dtionta rollta do bhruacha bog fuarú agus aibhneacha  
ag sileadh le fonn ,  
Ag an am céanna ag éisteacht le focail boga milis an ghrá  
agus riachtanas ,  
Muinín mé an ard , strainséir dorcha hintuigthe agus thóg  
sé go dtí mo sheomra .

Tá i mo bpríosún gruama rinne a chuid olc eile , seó nádúr  
paiseanta ,  
Aighneacht trí an cuma ar olc , súile gorm , Bagarthach  
dom an buile , fuaim binn a ghuth ,  
' Níl mé fhear uasal , is féidir liom a bheith éadrócaireach '  
contrártha iontráil níos luaithe

An neart an fear tuaithe na hÉireann i bhfad níos mó ná mar  
a bhain sé,  
Sé fáiscthe mo lámha tairisceana gan stró  
uilechumhachtach , A shúile chumhdaithe le fonn  
éadrócaireach , agus beoir laced anáil timpeallaithe,  
Agus le buile fíochmhar tapa thóg sé lán dom an paisean is  
mó i !

### **Bless me**

Bless me father for I have sinned,  
It has been six months since my last confession.

My sin is one of the flesh,  
My body has been the temple of the Bishop.  
The Bible teaches that homosexuality is wrong,  
That partaking in sodomy is a sin to smite.  
Though I had little choice my sin still exists, Forgive me  
father...

God bless you my son.  
Remember the seal of confession is sacred,  
God forgives those who do not break the seal.  
Go my son and take silence as your penance,  
For God is almighty and just!

### **The Hearth**

Energy starts with a glowing spark kindling with balsa  
sticks,  
Spreading steadily into a warming, wavering orange flame.  
A mountain of crisscrossed, muddy turf beckons the glow,  
Responding to the call the fire grows rapidly, reaching  
upward.

Caressing the crumbling, dark blocks with excited vigour,  
Illuminating the shiny marble base with its elegant dance.  
The bright imp cheekily running across the fuel, leaping  
high,  
Contrasted by the arched ebony surround and dense, teak  
mantelpiece.

Two logs sit uneasily on the mound, roasting, spitting in  
protest,  
Eyes cannot help but focus;  
On the stinging, mesmerising exhibition.  
Knowing the home will be warm all night,  
Leaving only sleepy embers in the morning.

## **Gargoyle**

Do you laugh at us Gargoyle?  
Your demonic face etched in the stone wall,  
Grimacing over the ruined manor.  
Centuries of gloating at misfortune.

Do you laugh at us Gargoyle?  
Evil spirit blighting potato crop,  
Sad, starved farmers evicted in the night,  
Envyng the Landlord's glutton and warmth,  
As shoeless children submit to the ice.

Do you laugh at us Gargoyle?  
Haunting our emotions with bitterness.  
Possessing the clergy, turning their backs.  
Slamming doors shut on your helpless victims,  
Metamorphosing, taking true form;  
Influencing mischief in sinful souls,  
Destroying the innocent!  
Cruel whispers.

Do you laugh at us Gargoyle?  
Overlooking green pastures with green eyes.  
Driving high tides to drown scared fisherman,  
Plundering boats as you rain down thunder,  
Trashing worker's small homes with violent floods,  
Smashing lobster pots and reels with true glee.  
Persuading politicians: Act of God.  
No subsidy is given to the poor!

Do you laugh at us Gargoyle?  
When the landlord steals the tenant's new bride?  
When conflict grows across social strata?  
When violent abuses go unpunished?  
When the rich thrive at the poor man's expense?

When the masses despair and take up arms?  
When young men are sacrificed for country?  
When freedom fighters are executed?  
When charities judge the needy worthless?

Do you laugh at us Gargoyle?  
We need no monsters, we are your monsters,  
With your sinful shadow corrupting our souls!

### **Seasonal Affect**

The evenings get darker,  
Darkness sets in.  
The snow gets thicker, Sadness overwhelms me.

The nights grow longer, Long moods plague.  
The sky clouds over, Mind is clouded.

The air is heavy, Body weighs down.  
The rain beats harshly, Tears fall readily.

Mist drifts at dawn, Fog engulfs brain.  
Ice coats cool roads, Heart coolly breaks.

### **Snakes and Pigs**

The snake slithers slyly crawling on the ground,  
Gathering gruesome stories to twist and contort.  
Whispering cruel lies, finding tales to compound,  
With careless spite into the wounds of others rubbing salt.

Pigs relish rolling their fat arses in rotten dirt,  
Lusting and feeding their greed on immoral lies.  
They show no real feeling for their victim's hurt,  
And despise all other creatures, hoping for their demise.

The snake crawls along hissing, emitting shit,  
The whore and the devil yearn to see others fall. Inventing  
imaginary cases, the truth they omit,  
Justifying their niches at the expense of destroying all.

The bunny plays joyfully springing through fields,  
A happy disposition, innocent, vulnerable and sweet.  
Harmless games, kind, but with lowered shields,  
The whore and the devil see nothing but ripe, available  
meat.

The wise, brown owl looks down from its perch,  
Seeing the bunny running free and lacking sense.  
Spying the evil ones wanting justice in her search,  
She protects little bunny by using the best attack of  
defense.

## **Squall**

Squall,  
Belting winds.  
Rocking, thrashing, destroying.  
Beastly, beauty beyond belief Storm.  
Down Patrick Head: A mist laden bulge in the rough sea,  
Beaten by gusts and gales flowing quite free, squall!  
Terrifying typhoon; undulating, unfathomable, Unfettered,  
viciously veering,  
Volatile, valiant Gale!

## **Instructions for Children**

Sugar and water make a great glue!  
Cereal looks better in milky lumps on the floor!  
Wet toilet roll sticks to the ceiling!  
Empty boxes should be put back into the cupboard!  
Hair dye looks well on bathroom tiles!

The trick is to get all the bathwater onto the floor!  
Discard crusts from sandwiches, under the sofa is ideal!  
Wet towels give a certain style to bed sheets!  
The front door is most effective when wide open!  
If the back door is also open a sharp breeze makes a loud melody!  
The tube inside a toilet roll fits nicely into the U-bend!  
So do whole rolls, small toys and cutlery!  
When going to the bathroom make sure you turn every light on!  
Do not turn them off afterwards and don't flush the chain!  
The linen bin happens to be the exact spot on which you stand!  
When you are at school the cleaning-fairies wave a wand and all is tidy!

## **Oak**

Thick trunk squashed in grass.  
Branches separate above.

Leaf fungus riddles bushy emerald cluster;  
Imperial in stature.

Bearing acorn nuts.  
Fruit for nestling red squirrels,  
Sheltering in you.

## **Choice Friends**

Auspicious  
Brilliant  
Compassionate  
Delightful  
Excellent  
Flourishing

Glorious  
Humane  
Important  
Joyous  
Kindly  
Lavish  
Magnanimous  
Noble  
Obliging  
Philanthropic  
Quaint  
Resplendent  
Splendid  
Tolerant  
Understanding  
Valued  
Warm  
Xenial  
Youthful  
Zestful

### **Little Acorn**

Moon beams resonate.  
In the shadows,  
she rocks softly on an ancient pine chair.  
Little acorn bundled in her lap,  
Apricot skin peeks out of bonnet lace.

Cuddled by a white fleece blanket the seedling noisily  
feeds,  
Nurtured by the adoring oak,  
Nestled into her branches.

A maternal stroke caresses ruffles of cheek,  
Inspired, the little one pulls away;



Drops the curve of her chin as creases appear.  
Tiny wrinkles etch into her milky button nose.

Big baby blue eyes widen,  
And then her lips spread like roots.  
As the sapling meets her shrub's cherishing gaze,  
Requiting love with a perfect first smile.

### **Snake**

Fast-slither  
Grass-dweller  
Ground-Glider  
Egg-layer  
Night-viewer  
Venom-spatter  
Jaw-stretcher  
Able-swimmer  
Tree-climber  
Mouse-Eater  
Shape-shifter  
In awe of the imposing, impressive, elegant Snake!  
St Patrick drove them out to the Pagans' lake.

### **Autumn in Mayo**

Days of paddling in the sea cease to be,  
Gold fields call red tractors to plough.  
Birds hop, spring picking worms with glee.

The farms brimming in heat with sow,  
Silage wrapped tightly in plastic wrap.  
Children play conkers among the fowl.

The farmhand slumbers under his cap,  
Crisp autumn air flows through the field.

From the bee hives and trees ooze sap.

Moon shines as they pull in the yield,  
Fishing boats hauled up the stone slip.  
In the cottages, spuds are being peeled.

Sheep relieved and de-fleeced after their dip,  
Homeward bound, the men go for a kip.

### **White Diamonds**

Cool, crisp winds.  
Snow pouring from Heaven,  
White shroud carpeting the fields;  
Icy, sparkling diamonds clustering on leaves,  
Protecting the forest's brown floor, twigs and dark mud.

### **The Rings**

The golden ring of marriage has no beginnings, middles or ends.  
An eternal cycle of bliss where each soul to one another tends.  
Death annihilates the body, but the enjoined spirits stay,  
And what God intertwines let no man try to fray!

### **True Love**

True love: The divine gift of giving one's innermost soul to another,  
Letting it flow like the sea between the shores of your hearts;  
Ebbing, ever changing, ever growing as the atoms' bonds' strengthen,  
The glowing exchange of mutual respect and unconditional acceptance.

True love: A sharing of spirits, compassion, hearth,  
thoughts and dreams,  
Letting the never-ending journey of discovering one  
another begin;  
Ebbing emotions, tidal waves, tsunamis and eddies marking  
the first step,  
The ardent passion for daily exploration whirling lovers  
into tomorrow.

True love: One flame lit from thousands as two minds and  
bodies entwine,  
Letting spouses embrace the joy of growth and splendour  
of action;  
Ebbing memories of the past replaced with the glory of a  
powerful present,  
The future but a vision of hope where today well lived  
makes a better yesterday.

True love: Two spirits, two souls, two bodies and two  
minds become one flame,  
Forcing the burst of a powerful spark, the advent of a new  
universe,  
Igniting a hoard of red-hot stars burning brightly to radiate  
brilliant new worlds,  
Worlds within a universe, universes within atoms, atoms  
within bodies.  
True love: A gift that makes the two halves one whole.

## **Departure**

Trapped!  
Engulfed and encompassed with thick padded walls;  
Her tiny frame lies all-consumed by a giant cage.  
Yearning screams through every minute cell and calls,

A desire for the true white light abode and home of the sage.

But neediness to return is thwarted by destiny,  
Her body curls foetal, fearful, frightened.  
A sweet, spirited soul praying for release to the trinity,  
Silent shivers anticipate a future unenlightened.

Penetrating tones sting her fragile ears;  
Sharp or loud, confused noises, laughter.  
The deafening churning of water confirms her fears,  
Entwined with stony silences that linger thereafter.

Exploration in the darkness drives desire for release.  
Day and night congeal as one dragging entity.  
In her prison the existence of time and space cease,  
Though somewhere in the distance the drums thud gently.

Her eyelids peel to open her azure, round pools.  
Lynched to her soul by an invisible cord strap.  
Occasionally she dreams of a stranger that mauls,  
And seeks comfort in her captor's familiar vocal yap.

Her captors tied with their own concerns ignore her plea,  
And the cell walls constrict as the bleakness looms.  
Fading memories of a life shrouded in delight and glee,  
Replaced with fatal images which her mind consumes.

In a cool breeze one morning no food arrives,  
The door is ajar and in enters a new light.  
She hallucinates of metal and penetrating knives.  
Outside is shaded with the sounds of a fight.  
Stepping ever closer to the door her stomach constricts.  
Encompassing surroundings load pressure driving her on.  
New physical feelings seize and grab, pull, pinch and hit,

But mystical magnets hypnotise and drive to the rays of the sun.

In one simple moment wedged in the door,  
Her freedom lies beyond her,

Not what has been there before?  
A moment of anticipation,  
And a humbled sigh of relief, As the midwife catches,  
And wraps in quilted patches;  
Alleviating fear, trepidation and grief.

### **Publican at sea**

'He had a boat before he bought the pub,'  
The capped, old fashioned, young Irish man explained as I sat at the bar.  
'Out at sea he was, fishing. Must have fallen asleep! What do ye think he did?'  
And before I could answer,  
'Shot a flare in the sky. The emergency one. Well the lifeboat bucks sent a helicopter.  
They found him floating seven miles beyond. You know what he said?'  
I shook my head sipping my Guinness.  
'Your man says, "Now I bought fuel, but I left it in the shed."'

### **Irish Ned**

Farming is messy!

Locals cling to the old ways;  
Tractors and pranks pass the wet summers.  
Old Ned couldn't drive.

Two young bored farmhands picked fun. 'Label the pedals,'  
Ned instructed.

Laughing, the word 'brake' was put on the clutch and  
'clutch' on the brake.

After a struggle, Ned called brusquely, 'I'm going on the  
beer.'

His men kindly laced the ale with castor oil.

Walking like a duck Ned struggled to the gate and wasn't  
seen for two days.

In the field the wife cried,

'What did you do to my Neddy? The sofa and bed are  
ruined!'

Ned woke with a sore head. The boys would be bailing hay,  
might have a spare half-one of whiskey for him. Still  
wearing yesterday's overalls, he yanked on wellie boots and  
mosied along the pot-hole filled coast lane up to the farms.  
Fred and Slap-head saw him weaving in and out of the  
irritated cows. Sneakily Fred poured a laxative into his  
moonshine. Great craic!

After a few good slugs of the bottle Ned hobbled quickly  
through the gate back to his stone cottage. Aggie was  
furious. He didn't make it to the outhouse. Her mother's  
floral sofa was ruined.

### **Spotlights**

Emerald patchwork quilt; hills streaking beyond.  
Thunder murmuring quietly in the distance!

Hare's legs bouncing wildly as she roams;  
Foraging, chewing grass, sniffing the sweet air,  
Glancing at lush surroundings.

Shaking her head as she plays;  
Racing invisible shadows along fresh streams.

Clouds darken.  
Ears fall back,  
Further she darts relishing change, finding something  
new....

Grey, solid, rough,  
Her paws stroke the surface.  
More thunder!  
Not thunder.  
Rumbling....  
Two brilliant perfectly round suns ahead, the black rabbit  
comes.  
Redemption!

### **Paradise Island**

Pelted by salty water as the boat speeds out to sea;  
Ascending gentle waves,  
Dropping with a bounce.  
Roaring engine slows as the Island approaches.  
Away from the world; emerald fields and bog land. Diving  
gear waits in the small wooden huts.  
In thick dunes of sand preparations are made.

Sea seduces the swimmers, drawing them to the deep.  
Enticed away from the rough sands, another world,  
illuminated;  
Sweltering sun rays, sparkling, submerged below.  
Colourful creatures swarm by,  
Life teeming, bustling, blobbing, but serene.

Aquatic paradise shaded with hues of coral and weed.  
Nestling beasts cuddle on the soft, sandy seabed,

Dropping over an underwater ravine;  
Plunging into deeper Nirvana.

### **Father Forgive Me!**

Father forgive me.....  
I'm a sinner, the holy book says so,  
The wife you found me is a good woman.  
I cannot destroy her through a loveless marriage,  
I'm a sinner, and our creed says so!

How can falling in love and cherishing another be wrong?  
Forgive me father I bring shame on our family,  
But I am not ashamed for being who I am.  
I love, I am loved, and I know that it is right.

### **Brothers in Arms**

'You used my envelope,' 'You weren't using it!'  
'It's my fecking envelope.'  
'There's a draw full of envelopes!'  
'I wanted that one,'  
'It sat on the kitchen table two weeks and you didn't touch  
it you  
fucker ya!'  
'But I was going to and I paid for the feckin' thing!'  
'I'll give you the money,'  
'I don't want the fucking money, I want my envelope back.'  
'It's gone now use one of the others!'  
'Bollocks to this shite, I'm going on the Beer!'  
'Well fuck off then....'

### **Mayo**



I found my beloved home in Mayo,  
Rolling hills overlooking the ocean.  
Seals and dolphins meet by the head,  
Scrutinised by puffs of sheep.

Boat laden piers in coastal parishes.  
Wrecks emerging from Davy Jones' locker.  
Mountainous cliffs, rushing rivers pouring, Into the sea's  
waiting mouth.

Rocks emanate from the waves housing fish.  
Sandy beaches spread for miles.  
Stunning turquoise coves curve, caves gaze at lively rock  
pools.

Old monasteries and manor ruins spread;  
Between farmlands and fields.  
Taverns ring folk music as the sun sets.  
The catch of the day makes it to the fryer.

### **Glimpses of Irish Life**

Just for today, house  
Clean yourself, give me a break  
Let me sleep soundly

Thundery rain taps  
Beating melodies on glass  
A perfect night's sleep

Red eyes burn, lips swell  
Nose clogs, skin itches, irate  
Throat tickles torment

Buzzing, roaring, din  
Crackles on radio wake

Bang as it hits wall

Equal pay, housing  
Food for all, clean fresh water  
Utopian dream

My son  
Climbs the sofa  
Builds tents from sheets  
Picks plants, plays football at the pitch with older boys, so  
cute!

Writing is hard work,  
Harder when you are tired!  
Never surrender!

Black Wasps swarmed hard  
Moon eclipsed sun, waters blood  
The plagues had begun

Muddy, high windscreen  
Huge black cogs for wheels, cab, clutch  
Road rocking tractor

Leave the phone at home  
Intrusive, annoying ring  
No mobile, great peace

'Buddy,' said the man  
'No more whisky you're  
Shaking, vibrating!'

Oven  
Hot, steamy  
Boiling, roasting, baking  
Cooking family meals, maintaining and storing food

Cooling, chilling, preserving  
Glacial, frosty  
Fridge

Three men gone, a feud  
Police called, found in bed, drunk  
Big bottle between

'Bought your phone, answer!'  
'Thanks brother, it was on silent'  
'You're on fucking silent!'

Milk of Magnesia  
Poured into moonshine, coddling  
Man messed home, two days

Curtains pulled back, eyes staring, nosey  
Neighbours better than Judge Judy.  
'Come away from that window Paddy!'

Your man stank, whisky  
Police gave him to the wife  
'Bring that thing away!'

Bulling with bottle  
Pissed with friends, singing loudly  
Being a big fool

Unbearable depth  
Teen love crushing young sweet souls  
Knotting the bellies

'Sweetcorn' says my husband  
Comes out the way it goes in  
Balls of 'Bowl Skitter'

Dying blond hair brown  
Looking, green striped reflection  
Regretting Upset

Man talks, stuck record  
Cars, fishing, farms, on a loop  
No response needed

Farmer in boots, tractor  
Silage delivered to cows  
A lot of gossip!

The Cain Dilemma  
His brother slaughtered  
Forced to roam among people  
Where did they come from?

Platinum melting  
Creamy, perfection on tongue  
Sophisticated

Lilith was ignored  
Adam's defiant first wife  
Not in the scriptures

There was a man named Theo,  
As a neighbour he was unkind,  
He stole some turf,  
For his own hearth,  
And blamed the man behind!

## **Forever**

Forever, the lie, tied forever!  
For when the hardships come, forever goes.  
For when the sleepless nights come, forever goes.

For when social plagues destroy the very foundations,  
Forever goes.

Forever; the lie, tied forever.  
For when the money is sparse, forever goes.  
For when work overwhelms relentlessly, forever goes.  
For when someone catches his eye he promises,  
Forever to another.

### **Mark's Ants**

Flying ants crack their whips,  
Encircling soldiers and workers.  
Flying ants crack their whips,  
Starving and killing all shirkers.

Queen ants labour their hands,  
Ignoring the soldier's poor plight.  
Queen ants labour their hands,  
Never needing to fight for a right.

Black and red ants starve by the hive,  
Absorbing the wise words of the dead.  
Black and red ants starve by the hive,  
Ready to storm for the chance to be fed.

The red ants are flying ants now,  
Poor black ants driven far and wide.  
The red ants are flying ants now,  
For non-supporters, there's nowhere to hide.

Red ants are workers, soldiers and officers,  
That is the underlying premise of equality.  
Red ants are workers, soldiers and officers,  
The way it has always been, it always shall be!

## **Mary's Mirror**

Mary stared in the mirror, her azure eyes gazed lovingly at slender curves. She shook her head wafting strands of dark hair about her waist. A grey tracksuit clung to her physique mounted above designer trainers.

She waltzed out of the house, across the field in view of the adoring workmen and down to the muddy cliffs onto the sandy beach. Her feet clomped to the rocks, where she climbed the coral. At the summit she perceived a clear pond. Therein, beyond the sea creatures' majesty and waves of seaweed, perfection shone back. Fixated, even when the tide came in.

## **Flock**

Sunday morning and the pious gather in the chapel,  
Ready to hear instructions on how they must behave.  
Thou shalt not kill!  
Thou shalt not steal! Love thy neighbour.

The blind sheep following into the slaughter cart,  
Appearances and reputation require attendance,  
But sweet, naive following cast your minds back....

Thou shalt not kill,  
Did David not slay Goliath?  
Was Jerusalem not sacked in the crusades?  
Were poor widows not burnt as witches to save Parish  
funds?

Poor sheep, indoctrinated, unable to form their own beliefs,  
Led by man-made dogmatic principles not reflected in  
scripture,  
But sweet, naive following cast your minds back.....

Thou shalt not steal,  
Were indulgences not sold to the poor?  
Did those shrouded in poverty not have to work for free?  
Were the wealthy not encouraged to donate funds to ensure  
their son's positions?

Ignorant sheep, forced to believe dogmatic rules without  
reason,  
Told that faith is enough,  
Closing their minds to new philosophies,  
But sweet, naive following cast your minds back.....

Love thy neighbour as thyself,  
Was Galileo not imprisoned until he condemned science?  
Were the Irish church's gates not shut?  
To the suffering during the famine?  
Were clergy not found to be abusing their positions of trust  
with the young and helpless?

Sweet sheep be like the lamb, be kind, give charity,  
But interpret your own philosophy without subscribing to  
man- made faith.  
Have faith sweet, naive sheep, let God lead thee to  
paradise,  
Let not man lead thee to purgatory.....

### **The Seasonal Collection**

Lonely, silent moon  
Surrounded by stellar mass  
Glaring at dragons

Spitting embers glow  
Smoke lifting through the night sky  
Dogs curled on the rug

Bare trees hold robins  
The harvest lazily ploughed  
Winter prepared for

Night fires rattle  
Humidity from the sky  
Firework explosions

Red berried holly  
Innocent icy flakes glide  
Shelled tortoises sleep

Sparrows nest, new life  
Joyful, sandy rabbit's race  
Chickens lay fresh eggs

Wind beaten moored boats  
Rocky, rural parish pier  
With gossiping gulls

Red urchins, green weed  
Clustered shells, living rock pools  
Waves scaling the rocks

The midnight clock strikes  
Fizzing glasses lifted high  
The sun rejoices

Crimson hearts on cards  
Eloquent rosy bouquets  
Make up for the bad

### **Heated Repairs**

'Come fix me lawnmower,' the greying publican said.  
The young, dark haired buck toiled all day,



His hairy chest scorched by the sun that May.

'Now, I need my lawnmower this year, not next year! Fix it for me and I'll get you a beer.'

After stripping it down and building back up,  
The young buck called brusquely for a cup.  
Opening the cap, he could see,  
That the little tank was truly empty.

He called to the Landlord and stated quite clear,  
'There is no fuel,' so, the neighbours could hear.  
Without hesitation, the older man sucked his lip,  
And gave his answer straight off the hip, 'now, that was the problem last year!'

### **Ox Mountains**

Initially a heavy snow laden yomp;  
Ever upwards with hope.  
Air thins,  
Life below disappears beneath stinging, wintry clouds.

Wind rushes silence away.  
Climbing, chapped hands and lips.  
Stabbing the rocks, heaving ever upwards.  
The risk of failing or falling,  
Hope driving forwards.

Fatigue, icy pain pushing back.  
The summit is reached.  
Beyond lies a taller mountain, beckoning.

### **Wild River**

At the mountainous peak a hawk swoops,

To observe a sharp-needled Juniper bush nestling on barren land.

Nearby pure, jaded waters trickle from elevated earthly stones,

Born of the ground and recycled in the formidable smoky sky.

Rams feed from the fountain sheltered by pinnate Ash leaves,

Which flap in the nectar breeze, sprayed from golden Luburnham flowers.

Meanwhile the spring erodes with subtle strength,

And steers a downward course passing the hanging spruce by...

At lower lands, shining leathery reflections of the stream,  
Echo in the festive crimson holly.

The delicate descent drags sediment laden fluid,

And drenches the living woodland turf,

The catkin of the pale leaved hornbeam thrive;

Heather and lilac, lemongrass and rose flourish.

The pebbles are dragged with clanking sound and

Dragonfly soaked banks are formed,

Beneath protective Copper Oaks and giant shrubs.

The enslaved minerals bleed sustenance into the land,

Where purple damson, greengage and wild cherry flourish.

The tributary drives on dampening the flat home of the poplars,

Hydrating the dense Creeping Willow and giving life to the Lime's sunshine flowers.

The unchartered world surrounding it thrives like Eden waiting to

be explored...

Yet, should drought, heat and hardship suffocate the cool  
ripples,  
Should stresses dry the pool then the green leaves wither,  
The vegetation and cattle shrivel;  
A desolate, hopeless desert is all that remains!

But when several streams converge, and rains are plentiful,  
And waterfalls pour on a turquoise lagoon overseen by  
emerald, ruby and sapphire big-billed birds.  
When tiny springs are nurtured by ancient lakes or  
mangrove rich bays and the river joins at estuaries,  
Then the spring's potential is realised through the  
abundance of the ocean

And later its plankton is shared with smaller seas,  
Overseen like a new born child, by the wise guidance of the  
aged  
moon.....

### **Displacement**

Love at first sight, different people from different cultures.

Driving my Pajero along the rugged coastline of Mayo.  
A fortnight I had lived in Ireland.  
Banished for my own safety; a key witness in court against  
something dark, dangerous.  
Displaced from my family for doing what was right, exiled  
into the night.  
The previous eve I lost myself in similar lanes, crying.

In daylight the shadows dispersed.  
He was in his tractor, he belonged, a descendent of families  
forever etched in the Irish soil.  
Appointed by chance as my gardener, meeting by fate.  
I never once doubted. Three years married.

Aliens.

### **The Iron Lady**

God bless the Iron Lady, her heart a rusted stone,  
God bless the Iron Lady, her cruelty well known,  
The wench was not for turning over an imprisoned land,  
The wench was not for turning starvation seemed quite grand!

God bless the Iron Lady, her deaf ears caused true pain,  
God bless the Iron Lady, people tried to warn her in vain,  
The wench was not for turning to save an elected MP,  
The wench was not for turning, her treachery all could see!

God bless the Iron Lady, her husband hid in his drink,  
God bless the Iron Lady, men's heads were plunged in the sink,  
The wench was not for turning as the streets of Belfast burned,  
The wench was not for turning as empty stomach's churned.

God bless the Iron Lady, thinking support for the cause was rare,  
God bless the Iron Lady, as funeral masses gathered with care,  
The wench was not for turning as public opinion transformed,  
The wench was not for turning when all of Ireland mourned.

God bless the Iron Lady, her stubbornness opened the door,  
God bless the Iron Lady, Irish people cried out freedom more,

The wench was not for turning and her callous heart let  
them die,  
The wench was not for turning now a peace agreement does  
fly!

### **First Night**

With garlands spread across her head and flowers trickling  
down,  
Wearing a delicately made pure white dress, she headed for  
the altar.  
Her man a simple farm hand waited brimming with love so  
true,  
To take her home this night his precious wife until death do  
they part.

With a gallant, overjoyed smile he spoke, and in his  
promise he did not falter.  
As the ceremony closed with great mirth the locals danced  
and sang,  
A perfect union blessed by God, witnessed and supported  
by a family feast.  
All scraped together to save and store the foods needed for  
the night,  
With ale made from potatoes, meats and roots kept from  
the produce,  
But an evil shadow loomed over the night when on a horse  
came the beast.

It was agreed in foolish circles across the sea that to subdue  
the peasants rising,  
The landlord had first rights to fulfil his perverse lust with  
any new good wife.  
In anger and vain the joyful yelled and mourned, but their  
cries came to no avail,

As he stole the nubile woman from her husband and her  
fairy tale evening.

Forced himself onto her in a cruel, demeaning way.  
And in that night, he ruined her life.

So shocked and pained was she,  
As shamed as shame can be,  
That in the dead of the night,  
She forfeited her own soiled life!

### **The Deer**

The deer she was, so frisky and manipulative too,  
Her soft heart held Henry and nothing more would do.  
His eloquent wife Catherine was locked in her palace,  
To appease the one he worshipped, eyes were full of  
malice.

Defender of the faith turned his back on the Church,  
To legally disown his wife a solution he had to search.  
The reformation offered an exit, but the consequences  
would be,  
Horrendous to Irish Catholics living across the sea.

The monasteries were looted, and land and money claimed,  
Those who objected were killed, tortured and often  
maimed,  
Even his friend Thomas was killed for denoting the final  
truth,  
NO king can make themselves Pope, for he was long in  
tooth!

Under the Supremacy act he dominated Ireland by force,  
Using violence and tyranny to conquest the isle of course.  
Without a moment forethought to the years of suffering  
due,

He waded in without care and killed the deer his love true.

## **Hidden**

Scrubbing hands, checking handles,  
Dodging worms, talking scandals.

Tidying sheets, bleaching doors,  
Straightening menus, washing floors.

Hiding money, dimming lights,  
Unable to sleep, restless nights!

Unbearable noise;  
Tapping, screeching, slamming sound.  
Under water, peace!

Hurting misjudged,  
Aimless, jumping thoughtlessly.

Water drowns drags, shore.  
Glints of sunlight,  
Shining through bleakness of hell.

The Rays in the Storm!

## **Irish Eyes**

She waits at the bar every night, alone in the corner. Her eyes smudged with fine lines and tear stains from years gone by. Lipstick is applied to chaffed lips and she brushes harsh, greying hairs. Her wrinkled hands fiddle aimlessly with yet another glass of the only fluid that offers relief. Her clothes are worn, unchanged throughout the fashions of the last two decades.

Every night she drinks in the corner. Every night she drags herself home, a cigarette slouching from her drying mouth. She remembers little else.

With heavy heart she waits for him. He promised to return.

### **Drifting**

Ice melted on her burning, scrawny arms. Plagued bumps crawled beneath her skin causing shivers to eek down her spine and squirm in her soul. Surrounded by white, staring across the glaciers at decades of snow and ice. Lost, walking forever, alone. She fell repeatedly, her heavy legs sucked into the magnet of the drift, dragged eternally down until her corpse hit the icy lake below. There she saw herself drowning beneath the glass.

### **Around**

Hoodies up, looking cool. Around the town with Shane and Luke. Bright eyed teenagers, half a can of beer between them. Maybe a smoke and a cough. Hanging outside of the shop, feet back against the wall. Looking cool. Ditching school.

Caps on, looking old. Around the town with Shane and Luke. Welfare spent on horses. Good odds. A pint or six. In the shop for the lotto. Home alone. Where did the long years go?

### **Grandfather Clock**

Tick, tick, tick, a large Grandfather clock breaks the peaceful silence.

Tick, tick, tick, deafening in the confines of the floral papered walls.

Tick, tick, tick, a white old-fashioned dado separates brink from ceiling.



Tick, tick, tick, the elderly lady with curled grey hair  
snoozes gently.

Tick, tick, tick, her scarlet knitting ball pierced with  
needles in her lap.

Tick, tick, tick, she reclines in a high, cushioned, green  
patterned armchair.

Tick, tick, tick, a large emerald mat covers the colour  
streaked fading carpet.

Tick, tick, tick, her leather clad, black Bible rests,  
bookmarked on a table.

Tick, tick, tick, the tables leaves are dropped and a crochet  
ivory cloth covers.

Tick, tick, tick, behind the lady sits a Formica, glass cabinet  
full of nostalgia.

Tick, tick, tick, photos of children and grandchildren adorn  
the sweet trolley.

Tick, tick, tick, the serenity is reflected in a huge hanging  
blue tinted mirror.

Tick, tick, tick, Beautiful roses decorate the frumpy sofa  
lazing below.

Tick, tick, tick, a ceramic clown looks out of the single  
glazed bay windows.

Tick, tick, tick, the curtains neatly opened, providing a  
view of the quiet street.

Tick, tick, tick, Sunday afternoon after morning worship  
and a lovely roast dinner.

Tick, tick, tick, please clock turn back, undo the loss and  
grief, all is now memory.

Tick, tick, tick, let me not rush, busy with my own life,  
forgetting what is important.

Tick, tick, tick, and let me waste an afternoon with my  
Nan.

## **Flying Free**

Crying Sighing  
Dying Flying  
Crying, sighing, ill  
Fighting for life, dying, flying and free.

## **Fury**

The cliff head juts out, a ragged drop shadowing smashing waves.  
In temper the water barges over reef and rock below,  
Plunging into shallow weed-soaked caverns,  
Forcing vexed crabs onto golden sand.  
Unrelenting gushes climb stones,  
Spray pours furious foam.  
Roaring, thrashing,  
Unforgiving!

## **The Perfect Moment**

The perfect moment is one of stillness;  
Experienced in the early hours of the morning.  
All is quiet, except blinds slipping against the open window,  
Waking together, not awake, somewhere between lies affection.  
Together we cuddle saturated in fatigue, drenched, adoration.  
Arms wrap about each other in the cool darkness.  
The perfect moment is one of stillness.

## **Jasper**

Licked my face as a child,  
And sat in the paddling pool.  
Barked at strangers coming to our back gate,  
Readily let us pet you!

Adored babies like an Irish Nurse,  
Dressed up in clothes without complaint.  
Over protective, dribbling friend;  
Raucous, chubby, liver-coloured Labrador.

### **Eulogy for my Nan**

Stories in bed;  
Four in the morning before being found out!  
Short bread, biscuits and sugar lumps,  
Monopoly with Aunty Glad.  
Religion takes up Sundays, liquorice allsorts,  
And hard fruit Bon Bons!  
Fifty pence for an ice cream,  
Pocket Money for Busy B's.  
Roast dinner on a Sunday.  
Beaches, Trampolines, Buckets and spades!  
Stories and photo albums,  
Bustling Christmas!  
Great Grandchildren.  
Toys, trolley and big ugly bear....  
Good advice.....  
Great Nan, a Great Nan!

### **Shangri-La**

Born into an extended family,  
Homes provided for all.  
Reaping the sowed seeds of summer,  
And turf for the new winter's fall.

Unpaid, changing representatives,  
Community hinging on good.  
Universal healthcare and education,  
Compassion taught as it should.

Beliefs based on strong ethics,  
Flaws improved through teaching and prayer,  
Some don't believe it could happen.  
Tell this to the American Natives,  
Years ago, they were already there!

### **Tithe Tábhairne**

Glas Tuaithe  
Tithe Tábhairne  
Tarracóirí  
Ba  
Tithe Tábhairne  
Shamrock  
Beannacht  
Tithe Tábhairne  
Stair  
Iarsmalanna  
Tithe Tábhairne

### **Shore**

Acrid air lies abandoned against the beach,  
Boats cunningly crash beneath the clouds.  
Crumbling crustaceans form colourful curves.

Disused dens sit dilapidated in the distance.  
Frosty foam forms edges on the gravel's glow,  
Humidity hangs heavy on the harsh horizon.

Isolated ivory and incandescent contrasted skies,  
Licked by lacerating lightening illuminating.  
Murk on the molten, mildew, misused mud.

Puddles and pebbles permeate the petrified pier.  
Ragged and rotten remnants soaked on the shore,  
Spattered with strew shrimps and spiked shells as  
Tides whiz white water over the forsaken shingle.

## **Redemption**

Encaged with temperamental individuals,  
Dressed alike.  
Forced into two systems, living as a prisoner.  
Living within an alternative hierarchy.

When guards' eyes are conveniently averted,  
A new order arises,  
Based only on brutish strength and spite.  
Morals disappear, anger grows.

Encaged with peaceful individuals,  
Dressed in Monastic compassion.  
Encouraged to read, immersed in nature,  
Living in an Egalitarian society.

Able to learn and grow in wisdom.  
In time, willing to change.  
Accepting noble ideas for good living,  
Preparing to return as a benefit to society.

## **Episcopi**

Long hot summers, sprawled on loungers, surrounded by  
shrubs.

Perched over emerald grass as two tortoises bumble  
around.

Fresh soda stream lemonade in a glass bottle, straw peeking  
out.

Salad for lunch:

Grated cheese and carrot, lettuce, cucumber, home grown  
tomatoes.

Around the conservatory table enjoying organic freshness,  
Watching the water butt on the patio, the insect screen  
rattles.

Gentle summer breezes blow.....

Grandad; swarthy, dark haired and wisely silent  
redecorates.

The old narrow bathroom replaced, and the kitchen  
widened.

He sits on his lounge armchair overlooking tall book  
shelves; Natural history, touring guides, history; books to  
digest.

Small guitar, wooden Rhinos and Stags on window sills.

He loved the countryside; the gushing waterfalls, flowing  
rivers, ragged hills.

Together we went one last time, perfect tiny cottage,

Understated, farming cottage with orange beams,

Overlooking a stream.

We went to say goodbye.

Early winter's morning, huddled around the lounge fire;

Nanny liked to watch the news early with a bit of toast and  
tea. Crossing to the newsagents to get the paper.

Walking the dogs, visiting the park and eating fried egg and  
chips,

Macaroni pudding. Homemade,

Nan made.

Baths in the new bathroom, so relaxing, instant hot water.  
Roomy, rose scented body wash, frothy bubbles, pure  
indulgent luxury.  
Cuddly bathrobes and a queen size bed.....

Nan liked to talk about the old days; the parties, the friends,  
Weekend smoky dances, working in the factory.  
Working with Grandad,  
Lost in nostalgia and memories.  
In those reveries one day she remained and stayed trapped.  
Five years locked in the past.

Only occasionally did Nanny know us,  
Her soul was with Grandad.  
She was in a smoky room; dancing and singing with people  
passed,  
Waiting to join Grandad forever.

## **Gift**

Teddy  
From my true love Sandy fur, scarlet nose  
Sits smiling on my pine wardrobe Serene!

## **My Boy: Our Man**

My boy grew into a perseverant man;  
An intelligent designer unafraid of hard graft,  
Able to let go with a glass of wine dry like his humour,  
Capable of loving a beautiful, hilarious and loving woman  
for a lifetime.

My boy grew into a caring father;  
A guide leading his lads to become successful men,

Able to spread his vocational, expert wings to foreign soils,  
Capable of loving two hair tugging, tormenting madams;  
his sisters.

My boy ached at the loss of his Dad,  
A voice of reason weeping silently with family; Mum  
endured.  
Able to stand stable and firm in logic with each devastating  
grievance,  
Capable of caring as he evolved into a grandfather,  
supporting his children.

My boy became our man, spread thinly,  
A boulder of strength hurtled along life's speedway,  
Able to share time between work, family, friends and life,  
Capable of attracting the angels' attention enough for God  
to take him home.

We will be together again,  
My boy is with his mum and dad, his brother in law, nan  
and his grand-niece,  
Our man will be waiting to bring us home and be one once  
again...

### **Seven Steps: Universal Wedding Vows**

Groom

Creation began in God's light, energy,  
Earth, plants, creatures and lashing sea.  
Today we create our journey which begins in the home if  
you walk with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to treat with utmost care our  
family and home,



God bless you dearest husband, from your safe shelter I shall never roam.

Groom

I will love you alone my wife, but our spirits and bodies must be kept tenderly.

I wish to show you the soft glow of the moon light, take the second step with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to caress our unified body, soul, spirit and mind,

God bless you dearest husband, for to your safe keeping I am wholly resigned.

Groom

In your tenderness, our prosperity will, like the spring flowers, grow wild and free.

Now I wish to show you the emerald, living forests, take the third step with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to allow the Earth to yield us honey and sweet milk,

God bless you dearest husband, for keeping our lodge and bed wrapped in silk.

Groom

May God bless us as he blessed Eden with fruitfulness, life and the shrewd apple tree.

Now I wish to show you the wide-eyed wise owl, come take the fourth step with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to fill the home with truth, Knowledge, wisdom and light.

God bless you dearest husband for keeping the dark shadows from our home at night.

Groom

Our journey began with Adam and Eve and continues with the merging of the family.

Now I wish to show you the rabbits burrowing in warrens, take the fifth step with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to digging our dens into one and being a true, charitable wife,

God bless you dearest husband I am yours, I cannot live without you for you give me life.

Groom

You are mine forever we will share all with a single mind and through our longevity.

Now I wish to show you the steadfast, ancient tortoise, take the sixth step with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to you a balanced long cycle like the rain becomes sea and river,

God bless you dearest husband your kindness, thoughtfulness and love make me shiver.

Groom

My beloved wife with spiritual union in God our love and friendship affirmed shall be God bless you dear wife,

Let our companionship never end, take the seventh step with me.

Bride

Beloved husband I commit to you an eternal love before the angels, saints and all,

God bless us dearest husband I shall never harm you and may our love never fall.

Groom

My beloved wife our long journey is underway, and I do pledge this to thee;  
I will love you through joy and sorrow, sickness, health or whatever shall be,  
I ask God that the vows on Earth are upheld in Heavens great sea,  
Because my wife I commit to you as you have committed to me.

Bride

Dear husband our long journey is underway, and I do pledge this to thee;  
I will love you through joy and sorrow, sickness, health or whatever shall be.  
Thankyou beloved husband for committing to take this journey with me.

### **A Universal Love Song**

May the night's bright stars delight us  
May the flowers shed honey-sweet nectar for us  
May our souls entwine and enshroud us  
May sweet rain pollinate and enrich us  
May reflections of the other empower us  
May new happiness complete us  
May the sun's stark energy enlighten us  
May the abundant highland springs water us  
May jaded palm rods of Kush shield us  
May love's perseverance fulfil us  
May the crisp Alpine snow purify us  
May the profound Ocean's inspire us  
May the fruitful world open to us

And may we never listen to counsel to abandon our mutual devotion.

### **The Welcoming**

Who loves me unconditionally?  
Who cuddles me when I cry?  
Who changes my nappy willingly?  
And helps my moist tears dry?

Who feeds me when I'm hungry?  
Who assists my mum every day?  
Who sings and entertains me?  
And teaches me to play?

Who wipes away my dribble?  
Who mops up my chewed food?  
Who finds my clothes no quibble?  
And gauges my every mood?

My cherishing sisters provide arms.  
My brother dotes tenderly.  
They will keep me from harm,  
So, they my Godparents shall be!

### **Should She?**

The burden heavy in her womb,  
A devastated walking tomb.  
She did not consent as a wife,  
But should she take away young life?

She did not know her aggressor,

As explained to her confessor,  
To her throat, he held a sharp knife,  
But should she take away young life?

‘A sin it is’ the people say,  
But a greater sin was in play.  
No woman should suffer such strife,  
But should she take away young life?

Could she love a product of hate?  
And support life without a mate?  
Who will take her now as a wife?  
But should she take away young life?

### **Flanders Fields**

Field of poppies where filthy soldiers once trod, hungry,  
cold, afraid.  
Fighting wars for fat politicians directing from afar.  
Existing in dirt holes, rats, and the foul stench of death and  
fear of a raid.

Field of poppies where filthy soldiers once trod, hungry,  
cold, afraid.  
Freezing winters, malnourished, wishing at home they had  
stayed.  
Entering the war as heroes, sleeping under a lonely star.

Field of poppies where filthy soldiers once trod, hungry,  
cold, afraid.  
Feeling numb, cheated, wishing for their families from afar.

Field of poppies where filthy soldiers once trod, hungry,  
cold, afraid.  
Deserting their emerald homeland, fighting for freedom  
afar.

## **Proverbially Irish**

Travelling so far into the future that she landed in the past,  
The world froze at the alter as he signed away his soul.

Night sky beating ice,  
Shattering!  
Earth battering,  
Another bed day.

Spin the mirror and watch the reflection wither,  
Jealousy bit hard drove him insane forcing her to stray.

Metal wheels on ice,  
Staring down a fair chasm,  
Lifeless form stares back.

One with the warm sea,  
Summer Irish paradise.  
Cold fish stings callous.

Too busy watching others that he trips blindly,  
Saving, working, slaving and then passing after retiring.

Collecting nest straw,  
Feeding crying young kindly.  
Squawking too early.

## **Dear Departed**

You have not gone,  
You are still here,  
Hidden behind a fine veneer

Hot kettle's moisture,

A gentle mist fair,  
Changing your form into warm risen air.

Having merged with light,  
Eternally laughing at life,  
Spirit's learning completed having overcome strife.

And when we mourn we cannot see,  
Your glowing heavenly soul now travelling free...

### **The Cage**

Cold and dark with gaudy green paint,

A nude cell with a stone bed and flat mattress,  
Buzzing light breaking the silence.  
A rough blanket slung carelessly, no pillow,  
The toilet; a shameful hole in the floor.  
A small, barred window too high to grab daylight.  
How did I get here?

'Mania,' the Doctor said, 'foolish behaviour.'  
A night of drink and drag racing with a car siren,  
Urgency and uncontrollable excitement,  
A night of spinning with the handbrake and rallying!  
My silver Accord became a toy to vent,

A dangerous weapon!  
I chastise my own insanity.  
Will I suffer another episode?  
Will I always be enslaved by my own mind?

### **Holy City: Pilgrimage**

Jesus prayed in the divine, exotic garden of Gethsemane.  
Each quarter telling a different tale;

Robed Muslims stream through alleyways as Rabbis write  
to the wall.

Under their hair, the women wipe the slab in Golgotha,  
Steam mists with incense swing from priests' arms.

Ancient ruins lovingly preserved, orthodox ornaments.  
Lying in the valley splattered with emerald bushes.  
Evidence of devotion point skywards from holy buildings.  
Many small homes steeped in sandy hills surround the Holy  
City.

### **Golden circle**

Impossible! No one can do it with a young child!  
I proved them wrong, six years of toil,  
A medic in a time where women were defiled,  
And now in the mists of celebratory turmoil.

I sit struggling to recall what seems like eons gone,  
Working around the world in the summertime.  
Through the crisp, frosty winters living on a song,  
Until the news of a parasite hit my ears so sublime.

Shattered in the night, reading past the twelve chime,  
Wondering how I would cope, trying to soothe my fears.  
I never gave up knowing that one day you would be mine,  
Dissecting, testing, diagnosing, fighting and stifling tears.

Then you came repeating life's eternal, golden circle,  
Giving me a confidence unknown to any man.  
I continued each day as if it were our last grateful,  
That you now formed part of my life's overall plan.

Guilt consumed my soul working part time,  
On a journey, together my sacrifice gave you so much.  
You had your Nan just as I had mine,



She was my guiding hand and I was your crutch.

Each day flew by so fast I wish they had not,  
Photos I do not mourn, school meetings replaced with  
college interviews,  
Church on Sunday, holidays, Christmas the lot,  
And finally, your future you and I had to choose.

Now looking back at your being,  
I rejoice every day for your life has been so full,  
You gave me hope and I am not so forlorn,  
For in my life's work you were the best thing of all....

### **Mindy**

Buzzing, annoying buzzing, Mindy knew it was time to get  
up,  
Quickly she dressed, pulling on unattractive navy overalls,  
Scraping her once lush, greying hair into a greasy ponytail.

She calls the children and rushes down the uncarpeted  
stairs,  
Her two boys stir and groggily dress to the smell of bacon  
crisping,  
The only sound her husband's grotesque drunken snoring  
fills the air.

Mindy yawns whilst hastily serving up food and packing  
lunches,  
An extra plate is prepared, and she serves her husband as he  
lays in,  
The boys, brunette like their father, eat speedily and leave  
their plates.

She checks their uniforms and their school bags before  
herding them out,

All three bundle into the dented, purple, ageing saloon.  
The key is turned, Chug, chug and silence.  
Cursing in her mind the haggard woman climbs out,  
The bonnet popped, leads attached and as usual the vehicle  
is jumped from another battery.

Clunking and spluttering the car pulls up at an overcrowded  
first school,  
The dilapidated building complements unruly ragged  
children tearing around,  
Mindy's day has just begun, she correctly anticipates being  
stuck in urban traffic,  
There she sits, moving like a snail through the polluted,  
overgrown town's messy jams.

Finally pulling into an ancient hospital she sighs as her  
money enters the machine,  
Struggling with the notion that she has to pay for working a  
thankless job.

In the hospital she is an invisible presence pottering from  
ward to ward,  
The medical staff are blind to her as she mops floors,  
scrubs toilets and changes beds,

The trust struggles to maintain nurses and cuts had to be  
made to cleaning staff.

Mindy has a thankless extra work load.  
Her ankles swell, her feet ache and her eyes are bleach  
stung.  
For seven hours she toils knowing that the man who  
promised to cherish her rests.  
Back through traffic she poodles, returning to collect her  
babies.

The washing basket is overloaded.  
Filthy dishes and a sprawling husband meet her,  
Mindy cuts herself peeling potatoes and scalds her hand  
when washing up.  
Mop, bucket, duster, spray, more bleach.  
She moves from room to room fatigued.

Clothes are hung on the airer and another bundle shoved in.  
Her husband sleeps,  
Only waking when handed his roast, he eats and complains  
about hard carrots.  
The boys need help with their homework.  
They need a bath.  
They need a drink.

Her husband demands money, his mates are in the pub;  
A release from nagging wives,  
She sighs, the bills are mounting.  
He holds his fat, soft hand out and she fills it sadly.

The boiler is broken, has been for some time.  
She builds a fire from litter in the hearth,  
Plastic melts on her stinging hand.  
The boys run in and out soiling tiles with dirty prints,  
The mopping begins again.  
Mindy is tired, not just sleepy, tired of living.  
The boys argue.

None of her friends come around now, she is too ashamed  
of her home,  
Ashamed of a home she slaves to keep.  
Ashamed of a bullish husband, depressed by apathy.

There is no light ahead for Mindy.  
She cries in the bathroom alone whilst wiping the sink.

Or pulling hair from the scum laced shower plug, in the  
next room her sons bounce,  
A slat snaps and she rushes in dutifully to fix it, over the  
years becoming adept at caretaking.

The bedtime story is ignored, music booms and the lads  
bicker even though bed time has passed.  
Midnight, she cleans again, the children are silent. She  
hates waking up to mess,  
She dozes until woken by the front door banging at two in  
the morning.  
Mindy lays still.  
It doesn't matter, the oaf still wants congress.  
He tries and falls asleep moody and frustrated.

Buzzing, annoying buzzing,  
Mindy knew it was time to get up, again and again,  
One dark, foggy morning she takes her husband's  
abandoned hunting gun,  
The trigger is pulled, but first she cleans.  
Every woman in the street knows why.

**Please check out other books by this author!**

Dark Matter: A Brief Chapbook of Poetry  
Artist or Madman??  
Dark Matter Light Matter

And

Trigger Warning: Twisted Tales (August 2018)

Thanks for reading!

@valkyriekerry Instagram

