

Well don't just stand there come on in !!!!!

# Fight to Write!

Magazine of Bishopstown Library Young Writers Group, Issue 1 Autumn 2008



Inside this first Edition you will find—Short stories, poems and a graphic illustration created by the members of Fight to Write—the Young Adult Book Club. We hope that you enjoy our offerings.... and welcome any feedback. New members are always welcome to join the group which meets on the last Thursday of the month in Bishopstown Library.

Contents—  
Book Reviews .Short Stories, Sagas/Chronicles, Poetry Page, Graphic Page

The main contributors are :

Nee Black  
Aaron McCarthy  
Gary Moloney  
Conor McCarthy  
Carolina  
Guest writer -  
Adam Feehely

## Conor McCarthy

Conor attends Colaiste and Spioraid Naoimh where he enjoys art, history and naturally, English. In fact Conor loves everything about his school. His spare time is spent playing videogames (especially the Super Mario, Legend of Zelda and Super Smash Bros series), computers (typing and making my own games), filming, eating and most importantly writing.

At the moment, Conor has just finished his first "real" novel, *Tom Eccleshare: The Curse of the Royal Warrior*. It is, according to critics, a "very entertaining read that can't be put down no matter what, as it is so exciting and is full of surprises".

Conor hopes that his book will introduce new readers to the world of "reading" as well as appealing to the avid reader.

Conor says—" I dream that when I am gone, I will be remembered as a man who did the best he could with the talent he had".

## Aaron McCarthy

born an Irish man on the 20th of December 1994 and since then has loved reading, writing and playing videogames. He has written countless short stories and has just finished his first novel— *The School Heroes*.

He lives in Bishopstown with his family, and his dog Cara, who plays a major role in his novel.

His favourite published author is J.K. Rowling (Harry Potter). When he is looking in the games shops he usually looks for a game with *Mario* written on it. He attends school in Colaiste and Spioraid Naoimh where he is top of his class at English. He is also pretty good at History and CSPE. His teachers regard him as a "really talented young fellow". He strongly recommends going to the Bishopstown Library's book club because it is a great way of making friends and sharing ideas.

## Nia Black (pseudonym)

Nia Black has spent her almost fourteen years living on the outskirts of Cork City. She enjoys listening to most types of music— especially rock music.

Ever since she was young, Nee loved hearing fairy tales and nursery rhymes which opened doors to completely new worlds for her. Now some of her favourite authors include J.K.Rowling, Christopher Paolini, Stephanie Meyer and Darren Shan. On day she hopes to publish fantasy works of her own and to capture the attention of readers as other authors have done for her

## Gary Moloney

aka Lord Gazz a aka Gazza of the Funk is a writer/musician from Waterfall. He's in the middle of writing a fantasy novel and he has just finished his Junior Cert.

When not writing he plays music, hangs out with his friends and plays Metal Gear Solid and Final Fantasy games. Everybody seems to know him but he doesn't know half the people who know him, he's just that good!

## Carolina

is a fourteen year old girl who loves chocolate and spends way too much time on the internet. She also likes writing, reading, listening to music and taking photos. She wants to become a writer and own a cat or a hamster.

## Rave Reviews Page

**The Last Taboo** by Bali Rai

Published 2006

book review by Nee Black

Simran, an Asian girl lives in England with her parents and brother. She goes to a school densely populated by Asians and is home to the gang known as the Desi Posse. A riot erupts one day between the Desi Posse and another school. Teachers try to stop the riot—but to no avail. It is during this fight that Simran spots a gorgeous boy called Tyrone. Her friend Lisa drags her away but her thoughts are back in the fight with Tyrone. By chance Tyrone approaches Simran and they swap phone numbers. Simran wants to date Tyrone but is worried about her family's prejudice. After some serious thought, Simran decides to go against her family and date Tyrone in secret. However, it's not long before they're discovered and all hell breaks loose.

An interesting read about two teenagers forbidden to see each other because of cultural differences and a tale of true love. Jam-packed with excitement, this book is a definite page turner!

**Exchange** by Paul Magrs

Published by Simon and Schuster 2006

Reviewed by Nee Black

Simon is sent to live with his grandparents in a small town after his parents die. Winnie, Simon's grandmother, and Simon go out every Saturday on the bus to one of the surrounding towns or cities. They share a strong love of reading books of every genre. It is on one of Simon and Winnie's Saturday excursions that they came across the Great Big Book Exchange, a shop owned by a man named Terence, assisted by the Goth, Kelly. The shop stocks books that no one has heard of, books that lie forgotten, limited editions and books out of print. Simon and Winnie feel as if they have stumbled across a treasure trove. They return home with a bundle of books each.

Kelly and Simon are very taken with each other, but is Simon's inexperience annoying Kelly? Is Simon too intimidated by Kelly's Goth look?

I found this story interesting and it is most definitely character driven. The ending was bitter sweet which I enjoyed a lot. This book is great if you are looking for a light read

**The Black Book of Secrets** by F.E. Higgins

Reviewed by Conor McCarthy

I got the Black Book of Secrets thinking it was a simple but creative story. The cover and blurb are really inventive. F.E. Higgins had me hooked from the first page onward! The powerful and rich characters, along with the inspiring plot, held my attention to the last word. I simply couldn't put it down.

Poor Ludlow Fitch, the book's main character, who is rather a street type, leads a distraught and sorrowful life until he decides to blaze his own trail and find a new home and friends. Once he makes his way to the snowy village of Pagus Parvus, he finds his life has only just begun in many ways.

As you read, you will feel that you've taken every step alongside Ludlow, and you will feel his every emotion. The magic and adventure really caught my attention and it was a unique, exhilarating read that I really enjoyed.

A+ to mention every good aspect of this book would be to mention everything.

**Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows (audio CD)**

Written by J.K. Rowling Read by Stephen Fry  
reviewed by Aaron McCarthy

This time around we join Harry, Ron and Hermione as they set out on their most dangerous adventure yet, to destroy the final five horcruxes belonging to "He-who-must-not-be-named"

Stephen Fry is the ideal reader for Potter's final outing. He brings life to the characters in a way no other person could dream of doing, there are over seventy characters that need a unique tongue and Fry somehow manages the task.

Harry Potter makes his final and most treacherous journey in one of the most amazing stories ever, from weddings to deaths, from the Order to the Death eaters, from House Elves to Patronuses...there is a lot of magic — All in all I feel that it is a must listen to!

**Star Wars: Darth Bane: Path of Destruction** by Drew Karpyshyn

Reviewed by Gary Moloney

The novel is part of the extended universe of the popular Star Wars franchise and is set 1,000 years before Episode 1—The Phantom Menace. This book tells us of the origin of the Sith Lord who set up the Rule of Two (there can only be two Sith—a master and an apprentice). The story centers around Des (Darth Bane) a young miner who is desperate to escape from his "hell hole of a job". At the time the galaxy is in the middle of a civil war as the Sith Empire moves against the Republic.

You don't need to have seen any of the Star Wars films to understand this book. It is well written and is very descriptive. A classic fight between good and evil. A bit of a love story as Bane falls for the traitorous Guitany.

As a fan of the Star Wars series this is great read. I recommend it for both Star Wars fans and newcomers to the series, like many books it has its flaws. ....I give it 8/10!

*Stand and Deliver*

by Gary Moloney

The time was nearing. Our efforts were not in vain, the crown was giving in, we were to be free. It was to be the end. But it was still only the beginning.....

The Treaty was a hoax, not freedom, but monarchy dressed as it. It was not what we fought for. But war was threatened if not accepted and so it passed as the supposed will of the people and was nothing more than the fear of the people. We will not stand for it.

With great difficulties having some members of my army on the other side we recuperated and found new allies and weapons. Some people refused to fight their former allies. It was understandable. But the few of us that remained knew that we would never get another shot if we quit then.

It was hard robbing and fighting our old guys but it had to be done. We made sure never to kill, though, unless necessary. We were seen as outcasts in the village. Troublemakers and thugs no better than the Black and Tans to them. We faced excommunication and exile if we didn't stop. It was then in my house my wife confronted me.

"Can you stop this carry on before you get us killed please?" asked my wife, "it's not as if we're worse off since the Black and Tans left".

"But we're no better then", I said. "We're still poor and our children are still half starved. Life's meant to be better than this, I go without food to feed them and it makes no difference. We get no help!" Then Jim, my youngest, came in and hugged me. Inside I knew he was thanking me. I sent him off with my slice of bread and water in his hands.

"Please stop this", my wife said. "I can not", I replied.

"What if you die? What about him?", my wife asked, referring to Jimmy.

"I'm doing this so he can have a better life", I said. "Will you not do as I ask?!", my wife said again wiping crumbs off the newspaper which served as a tablecloth.

"I have to go", I said as I got up, picking up my hat. "I love you", I said and walked out.

That evening we ambushed a gun supply transport.

The joke was on us. They knew of our plan and turned it on us. The fight was hard but with great difficulty and lots of ammo we managed to kill each and every one of them. Only one was still barely alive. I walked over to him as he lay on the ground. I lifted the mask from his face and I stepped back in horror. It was my own brother!

Distraught, I hugged him and tried to save him. It didn't work. Crying and overwhelmed by guilt we both uttered our last words to each other "Forgive me".

The next morning I resigned and over time things got better for me and my family. The children got healthy and grew up fine. I sorted things out with the wife.

But I never forgot and never will forgive myself for the death of my brother.



*The Monster*  
By Aaron McCarthy

It was a quite night just like any other when a shrill scream suddenly came from the kitchen. I went to find out what it was. On entering the kitchen the lights flicked off. Feeling around for the light I happened across the door which was, surprisingly, locked. Then I stepped on something gooeey, which thanks to the dim light coming through the tiny window I found out looked like blood.

"Soon *your* blood will be added to it!", a ghostly sound echoed. The hairs on the back of my neck stood up, what was going on? Frantically I felt around for the light and found the switch. However crawling up the switch were many scaly creatures that I couldn't see but could feel. Just then one of them bit me and the ghostly voice returned, "Remember I will get you!" Now I was totally freaked. Not knowing what to do, I screamed like a little girl and then it dawned on me.

A little girl? Of course!

"Jade, is that you? I demanded.

The lights turned on and there stood my little sister, Jade.

"Gotcha!" she smiled.

Then I remembered, it was still April Fool's Day.

As for that "blood" I stood on? That was tomato ketchup! "I will never forget that day", Andrew retold.

"whoa", his friend gasped.

"I know. I've always wanted revenge and finally the day has come. What day is tomorrow? Halloween!"

"So?"

"I have tricked Jade, who can't read into thinking that the two tickets I found are to *The Princess Play* but they're to some stupid monster concert".

This is how the next night saw Jade and her friend Susan at the Megapolis Theatre, dressed as princesses, unknown to the fact that they'd see *Ghouls and Witches!*

They sat near the front.

Many people who were dressed up as monsters were sitting around them.

"Are you sure this is the right concert?" Susan, who was far more intelligent than Jade, asked uncertainly.

"Of course". Jade smiled although she was also nervous.

Just then the red curtains unfolded and there standing on a castle's grounds were a witch and wizard.

"Welcome foolish mortals to *Ghouls and Witches!* I am Witch Grizzelda!" the witch snapped "flying" on her broomstick.

"Now Grizzly, be nice. We don't want to scare them *yet!* Now turn off all mobiles and take note of the Emergency exits" the wizard smiled.

For the next five minutes people were turning off their phones. Finally they all seemed to be finished.

"Now shall we..." the witch began but was interrupted by a phone.

"We said phones off, *Enohpsihekat!*" the wizard pointed a twig at the phone which flew into the air and into his hands.

This was met by a round of applause. This illusion was followed by many more just-as-spectacular ones and the concert ended at the stroke of midnight.



## In the Freshest Greens

By  
Conor McCarthy

In the freshest greens,  
Where daffodils are growin',  
A rabbit plays with the fox,  
For they are friends, the fox isn't the villain.

In the deepest blues,  
Where fish swim,  
A shark plays with the dolphin,  
For they are friends, the shark isn't the villain.

In the highest highs,  
Where a robin flies,  
He is playing with the raven.  
For they are friends, the raven isn't the villain.

In the realest reality,  
They are all scared,  
There is so much pollution,  
As if the humans never cared.  
For the animals are friends, we are the villains.

## The Vampire's Girl

By  
Nee Black

Three years ago  
There lived a girl  
All pure and white  
Without a blight

Until one day  
Came a man  
Dressed quite dark  
His face was stark.

Him she could see  
One day in the garden  
He was a vampire  
Drank blood lest he tire.

For our girl  
Fate was most unkind  
To one who fell in love  
With one who took her life.



## I am a thirteen year old

By  
Conor McCarthy

I am a thirteen year old  
With dark hair, black glasses and who is very bold.

In school I give people laughs  
And act very daft  
I often get into trouble  
Luckily it isn't double.

I enjoy sending stories  
I send them away to Writer's Literacy Agencies'  
The publisher who agreed is Dorrance  
When I heard I did a dance.

What is the name of my book?  
Why it's called Tom Eccleshare  
The Curse of the Royal Warrior.

It is about a boy who stops a curse  
And defeats the villains  
But did he succeed?  
Or did the villain get presents?

I enjoy going on the computer  
And the Wii, which is made by Nintendo.  
I browse the web and write my stories  
In Mario I go to many galaxies.

For Christmas I got a video camera  
And I film everything  
And now you hide, don't ya?  
My poem is near an end  
So I say these two words

THE END

Poetry  
is  
a window  
of  
the soul

## The Adventures of the Book Club Fairy

By Carolina

*In forests, pretty meadows and the gardens of lovely old manors, certain fairies are frequently found. These are fairies that live in flowers, and generally resemble flowers themselves, with little dresses made of petals and such things. But there are other fairies, and they live in other gardens. And in the garden of the library, a particular fairy sits in the grass and reads. This, my readers, is the Book Club Fairy.*

One day, the Book Club Fairy, (whose real name was Penelope, though in the quietness of the garden nobody ever really talked to her, which made a name somewhat useless), sat cross-legged on the grass of the library's garden. The sun was shining overhead, and the only darkness was the shadow of a nearby tree. She was reading, and stayed reading there for several hours. She looked up when she realised that it was too dark to read, and saw that night had fallen.

The fairy yawned, and decided to go home to her tiny tree-top apartment in the forest behind the library. The thought of flying home crossed her mind momentarily, but the walk was quite short so she decided it wasn't worth the effort. She strolled up the path, cautious about where she was stepping as the stones were illuminated only by moonlight.

When she went into the forest, even that moonlight was gone. The only light was the slight sparkly light that shone from her purple wings onto the leaf-covered ground. That light fell for a second onto an acorn on the ground, and the fairy picked it up out of curiosity. It glowed for a second, but she hardly noticed as she put it into her pocket.

She reached her tree and put her hand in her pocket only to find that she had forgotten her front door key. The only other person with a key was her roommate the squirrel, and he wasn't going to be back until morning. She sighed, and lit the lantern that hung on the tree so that the small space around the tree was lit up. She sat down cross-legged again and returned to reading her book. It was a fantasy, the kind with dragons and dwarves and all kinds of things.

As the fairy became more and more engrossed in the book, she felt the strange acorn in her pocket move. If she hadn't been too enthralled by the story to look down at her dress, she would have seen a bright light in her pocket. The acorn was glowing again, much brighter than before, and the light coming from it sparkled in almost the same way as her wings. It became brighter as she continued to read, and suddenly there was a flash of blue light—the same blue as the cover of the book.

She woke up surprisingly peacefully. She considered that she had fallen asleep, but she wasn't in the forest, and the flash of light had been much more sudden than drifting into sleep. She took the acorn out of her pocket and found that it had turned silver. And, she realised, not just the colour of silver; it was heavier than it had been before, and it shone in the sunlight. It was real silver.

She stood up and looked around her. She seemed to be in the countryside. There looked like there was a village nearby, but it didn't seem very quiet. The fairy got a feeling that something bad was going on. She looked around more, and saw forest and high mountains in the distance. A magical part of her imagination stirred, and she realised that the village was very familiar. She had somehow ended up in her book. She held the acorn again, and knew that it must have had something to do with what happened.

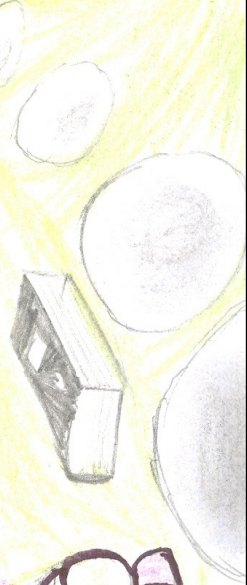
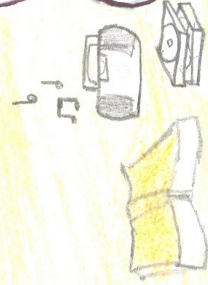
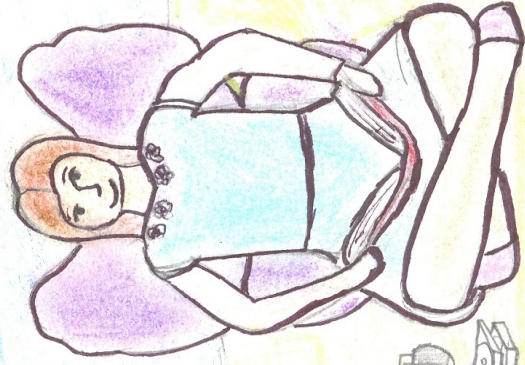
Something was flying in the sky above her, and it didn't look like a bird. The part of her imagination that had recognised the village shocked her again, and excitement flooded through her along with the feeling of her heart sinking. It was a dragon, she knew it. The acorn in her pocket seemed even heavier as she stood there staring at the sky, with the dragon fast approaching. She opened her mouth, first in shock, and then to speak. "This can't be real!"

To be continued.....



*A not-very-well-known fairy,  
with magical book-reading powers.*

# The Book Club Fairy



LIBRARIES  
LEABHARLANNA  
CORPUS CHRISTI COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY



Part 1 of the *Chimera Chronicles*

*Chimera's palace*

I couldn't understand how my parents were so willing to leave the city. Wouldn't they miss anything? A nice change of scenery they said. We got into our car and followed the moving van to our new home. I stared back at the place I had come to know, already missing it. I felt like I was leaving half my life behind.

Over two hours later we reached a Victorian house, miles from the city. It was the most beautiful I ever laid my eyes on. My room was where the attic should be and I thought I might as well have a look at it.

My first thought when I saw it was that it was big! Finally, I had a spacious room for all my things. Then I noticed some strange sort of painting protruding from the wall. It was quite horrific. The painting showed an animal with a dragon's head, a goat's body and a basilisk's tail. What type of person would paint such a thing? I tried to prise it off, but to no avail. Great, I thought. Some idiot's gone and *glued* it to the wall. I then tried pressing it closer to the wall, hoping that it would crack the glue. Surprise coursed through me when the painting actually slid into the wall with a click. I turned around to go back downstairs when I saw that a panel of wall had slid back to reveal a passage.

A thousand questions resounded through my head, not one of them making sense. Curiosity was beginning to overcome me even though I knew it was dangerous to go down the passage. I had my phone though, that way I could call anyone if I got into trouble. I began to walk down the passage.

It was strange in here. I was reminded of the pyramids at Giza and was scared in case I got trapped when I stumbled into a large, candle-lit cavern. A large stone slab rested in the centre of the floor with stains on it. At a closer glance I realized the stains were of dried blood. I began to feel nauseous. My memories flitted back to a TV show about cults. Whatever had gone here reminded me of that show.

My eyes came to rest on a cage in the corner. My instincts were screaming at me to run but I wanted a closer look. Once closer, a creature lunged at the bars. I screamed in terror. It was the same creature from the painting and I remembered from a mythology class that it was called a chimera. Growling and ravenous, it was the most fearsome creature I ever saw. I turned around and ran to my room. Collapsing on the floor, I got splinters in my hands as my body racked with sobs.

Even now I remember that day as clearly as it happened. Even now I hear the Chimera growling, calling for me.

Nee Black

To be continued.....



## O'Sea's Odyssey

By Adam Feehely

It is widely accepted that there is but two reasons to directly disobey God. The first if he is wrong. Which he has been, seen in most of the rules within the priesthood and the fact that he sent his own son to die for our sins when he could probably have just forgiven our sins anyway, him being God and all!

The second reason is that if one doesn't believe in God. God has always accepted this along with the fact that many different religions had many different perceptions of God. In fact, there was a happy Buddha district and unhappy Islamic district in heaven. Apart from these two separate districts, the rest of the religions that flock to paradise tend to co-mingle and be happy with each other.

Fergus O'Sea believed in God. Why wouldn't he? Was it not God that gave us life? Was it not God that helped produce a healthy harvest? Was it not God that sent little baby Jesus to die horribly for us? Fergus had no care for science; he still associated science with half-bald, head-scratching school masers that ended most sentences with an exclamation mark. Them and the thick canes they exercised on raw bottoms.

Fergus had never coveted (whatever that meant; he was sure he hadn't) his neighbours wife. He rarely swore, never stole unless "extended borrowing without intent to return" was stealing nowadays. He didn't believe in any false Gods' except for perhaps good 'ole Mick Collins, God bless his soul and the Republic he delivered.

"And so ya see Paddy, I'm not one to be out here!", Fergus explained as he fidgeted nervously with his cap.

"Call me Patrick", St. Peter said as he continued to labour over his glorious ledger, "and it says here "Fergus Michael O'Sea, October Twelfth, Nineteen-Ninety-Nine, Fifty -Seven, Liver Failure". "And right her", Fergus leaned in as Peter's thin finger tapped the page it says "Purgatory or Hell, by Choice of Gate Keeper". "If you leave now I'll gladly catch you the next floating cloud to Purgatory".

Fergus nodded meaningfully, unwilling to reveal he was illiterate. When he realised what the saint was saying he bit his lip and exhaled loudly. "Ah Jaysus. Well is me Da in?", Fergus asked; hope glimmering in his bloodshot, brown eyes. These piercing orbs watch Patrick trail his knobby index finger down the page and stop.

"Ah yes! Michael O'Sea, December third, Nineteen-Twenty-Two to August seventh, Nineteen-Fifty-Three. Down in the "Self-claimed freedom fighter" section. Investigation pending...young death. You were eleven? My apologies. Good-bye". St. Patrick returned to scrawling with his quill humming softly as he did.

"Well, it's just I was hoping to see him sir. Then I'll be off to hell to visit me wife and brother ,sir".

St. Patrick couldn't refuse the yearning oozing from the man. He was a saint; it was his job to comfort those doomed to a life of absolute boredom. He pulled an intercom microphone towards him with a sigh and spoke into it. The amplified noise didn't reach the two and Fergus could only hear St. Patrick's voice. "Michael Mary O'Sea, a Fergus Michael O'Sea to see you". He replaced the microphone, licked his finger and tossed the page. He placed his sharp quill on the textured parchment. "He should be here any second. Michael was a very popular name back then...", Patrick commented, stroking his luscious, grey beard.

"Sure that was the year ole St. Mick himself died. Me grandfather, God rest his soul, loved that man more than he loved the cause. Me grandfather lived 'til I was seventeen and I loved him like me Da. He always told me, "Even when our struggle is over and won, Nationalist Ireland will not be a chapter in history, but a blessed virtue passed in the spilled blood of our beloved fathers. "He lived in Tipperary after the civil war, couldn't bear Cork after the injustice to Ireland that was committed there". Fergus stared into the distance, his rebellious past consuming him. Suddenly he smiled glumly. "Ain't seen me Da since I was eight. Just a little fellar, I was, when he signed to my Countries' cause."

"Mmm, yes, absolute shame", Patrick replied passively, arranging his beard into intertwining strands.

Slowly as the clouds parted behind the saint and Fergus gasped with awe. A huge white gate appeared amongst the silver clouds and deep-blue sky. Fergus sighed pleausurably and whispered "The Pearly Gates!".

"It's actually mostly made with ivory, only a few ornamental pearls" Patrick muttered, intertwining the intertwined strand of his beard. The gated floated open, spreading wisps of cloud beneath its sweep.

A tall long-haired, bearded man emerged.

"Janey-Mac, it's Jaysus" Fergus yelled, falling to his knees. Patrick snorted loudly at the comment and stopped toying with his beard. It instantly unwound and reformed into its inspiring shape.

"That is not Jesus! Jesus is four foot tall and a bit...grotty" Patrick spat out, shifting uncomfortably at the last word.

The two men beamed at each other, bursting to their seams with happiness. They would have loved to embrace each other but they were Irish. Instead they settled with roaring at each other and grinning.

"Da, yer here! Paddy won't let me in and won't tell me why. I says "Yer our patron saint , gice us a break" and he tells me he's welsh. Can ya imagine Da? He's even denying the snakes! How's it been anyway Da? What's heaven like?"

"Oh, 'tis grand. Like a thirty-two County Republic where the drinks are all on the house and the rebel songa are all the bands know. I even had a drink with Mick Collins when I first arrived. And a busy man he is, being the true patron saint of the emerald isle. You here me Patrick; at least he'd the decency to be Irish!" Fergus smiled, his mouth salivating as he imagined a heaven that could be so great.

"Why is my son standing out here like a Fiddlers Fart, Paddy? :et the man in!" Patrick rubbed his eyes and sighed again. He had perfected the art of sighing after many years of taking abuse when controlling God's front door when St. Pete was on his ten-year holidays.

"I can't he took the lord's name in vain..."

"Who hasn't?" Mick interrupted.

".....A lot. He's had dirty thoughts. He once took a shilling from a collection-plate when he was six....Look this place is filling up. He's lucky he was even considered. Cloud isn't easy to command, especially since the Jewish split and formed their own ever-growing paradise. Purgatory isn't bad, just a bit like the West of Ireland during the Depression. These are the rules and I can't break them".

"New rules my home-rule loving arse!" Mick exclaimed with Fergus urging him on. "My son ain't ever done anything wrong. He might enjoy the odd drink, but sure your murder for the poison yourself. Tis all well for the Saint with a day dedicated to him every year, but when one of God's beloved Catholics comes knocking on heavens door you shun him away like a beggar!"

"Don't stamp and fuss at me Michael! I'm just taking over for Peter, it's not my fault", Patrick spat venomously, "Go speak to God yourself and try to get something done! I'm not your messenger boy and I'll not take an earful of it from a terrorist!" The two men stood glaring at each other, the tension tighter than a bow string.

"Right boy, you wait here. I'll get the big man to sort this out!" and with that Mick spun on the spot and stormed back through the large gates into paradise. The gates shuddered to a close and disappeared once again.

After a silent hour of expectation, Fergus tottered away from the shinning podium and the tittering saint. After a few desperate moments of searching, he gathered a large tuft of cloud together and plonked down into it. He placed his head in his hands and waited for over a year.

Surprisingly not that many people arrived at the gates of heaven in those seven-hundred and eighty-five days. It was mostly peace protestors, devout old woman and clergymen. When Fergus questioned St. Patrick he said it was because "a lot of people did bad things on the millennium". After the seventh entrant to God's domain arrived, Fergus started chucking gathered balls of cloud shaped like rocks at the gates. Every time they bounced off and seemed to shoot back at their launcher. Fergus soon developed the correct angles so more often they hit Saint Patrick who would grunt and sigh.



On the seventh-hundredth-and-eighty-sixth day the gates reappeared. At first Fergus thought this was for a bishops that was idly chatting to Patrick and Fergus who had gathered a cloud-rock, ready to launch it, when the gates slithered open and a small bald man sauntered out. He looked around with his gaunt face and hollow eyes, which settled on Fergus. He was carrying a red clip-board and consulted it for an instant before looking up again.

“O’Sea, Fergus? Ah yes, it is you. Mr. O’Sea, my name is Judas. Would you like to follow me? Judas had the look of someone who had expected more of the afterlife. Or the look of an unfulfilled janitor. They were both the same look anyway

“What is it? Out with it man!. Judas commanded.

Fergus stood up slowly, his legs creaking like an old house under his weight. Each joint moaned with as much harmony as an out-of-tune orchestra. Bones grinded against each other like tectonic plates and this terrible symphony as all accompanied by the soloist, Fergus’s loud exhalation of built up gas as he rose. Groaning was the subtle rhythm-keeping percussion. Gingerly he limped to Judas and bowed before him. Then he took his cap from his balding head and started wringing it between his wrinkled hands. Judas looked into his wizened face questioningly.

“Well, Mr. Judas, if you don’t mind an ole humble pilgrim like meself asking, why are you up here? Not to be rude or anything, but you gave up Jaysus and then killed yourself”.

Fergus looked to the soft ground and added “Sir”.

Judas didn’t look enraged or offended. He looked hurt and sad. With a hint of sarcasm he began to answer and as he spoke he grew increasingly flustered. “Well, as an answer to both accusations, God tends to forgive and accept the man who makes his will possible, that being that his son should die for the sins of all man. So technically, without me, you and every other soul in this place except for the Amish and the Popes would be burning in the fiery flames of hell, thank you very much!” Judas took calming breaths and counted to ten. He then produced a fake smile. “now come with me, it is God’s will that he interview you now”.

Fergus muttered an insincere apology, deciding not to mention that Judas’ answer didn’t answer the suicide question. Then with Judas leading him, he stumbled through the Pearly and Ivory into the blinding light of Paradise.

St. Patrick watched Fergus go through with mild interest, glad to be rid of the man and turned to the grey old man with glasses before him. “Now Bishops Dennis, just sign here and you can go ahead”. But the old man didn’t clutch the quill but pointed at the closing gate with a look of absolute shock on his face. St. Patrick turned on the spot and observed a wrinkled hand demonstrating the two-fingered salute disappear between the thin cracks of the gate.

Peter smiled and turned back to his podium. Flipping the ledger around to face the bishop, he forced the quill into his hand. He insistently tapped the dotted line on the beautifully decorated parchment. But the bishop didn’t react so Patrick decided soothe his uneasy mind.

“Never mind. Awful alcoholic; it was the poison that killed him. Only drinks Guinness I believe. Wait until he finds out that they only serve wine beyond those gates. Let’s see how precious his thirty-two County Republic will be then.”

To be continued.....



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