

Bourne toWrite...

creative writing
workshops

Missed Vocation

by Stuart Carruthers

The thunderous sound of work boots on timber floors vibrated around the small terraced house on Vincent Street. The working day had arrived. Packed lunch boxes and bottles of warm tea capped with yesterday's newspaper were carefully placed into coat pockets and then came the silence. The house was hers.

Rosie MaCracken was 15 years old of slim build and was striking beautiful with her locks of long ginger hair. She was regularly told that she looked like her mother whenever she encountered the older women down the market. Unsure of what to say she would smile politely and carry on with her business, never engaging them in unwanted conversation.

Since her mother had passed away nearly two years ago, Rosie hasn't attended school. Every day she recalled her father's words that changed everything,

"I'm afraid you'll need to leave school Rosie, there's a house to run now."

Her childhood dreams were shattered by the man she worshipped, yet despite her disappointment at his drastic decision, her love for him remained the same.

Within the cramped two-up, two-down house five working men and two children lived side by side. The men of the house needed tending too and since her mother wasn't around anymore, this was now her job. A girl so young suddenly found herself mothering the men who since the day she was born had protected her.

Rosie's younger brother Kieran still attended St John's Catholic school and as they walked hand-in-hand along the cobbled streets, they practiced his maths tables and daily spelling tests.

Kieran would often ask his older sister to recite stories their Mother once told and this would spark Rosie's love of the spoken word. Her imagination would suddenly open long forgotten locked doors and Kieran smiled as his sister once again looked happy.

Margaret MaCracken would spend hours reading to her children and educating them on the importance of attending school every day. She desperately wanted them to experience a life that she could only dream off. Rosie and Kieran were her last hope after the boys had followed their father down the hill to Macabe's Quarry.

Placing her bags on the kitchen counter Rosie set about her daily chores. Her grandparent's carriage clock provided the monotonous ticking sound that followed her every move as she prepared the house just as her mother had liked it. Entering her Father's room she carefully folded his evening clothes and as she made her way over to his bed she noticed the corner of a book emerging from under his pillow. Taking a moment to remember the last time she had read a book, Rosie sat on the edge of her Father's bed and flicked through the pages until the hand written notes on the blank middle pages appeared.

As the tears slowly emerged the young girl remembered the woman who had never said goodbye. Rosie was now engrossed in her Father's book and unaware of the passing hours. When the factory whistle screamed in through the open window she panicked when she noticed the time on her father's bedside clock. Walking briskly down the street as the cold horizontal rain blinded her young green eyes, her love of the spoken word was reborn.