

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

## It Doesn't Really Matter

by Stuart Carruthers

Why wouldn't you want him as your uncle?

Uncle Colin wasn't really my uncle. He wasn't directly related to any member of the family, yet he was ever present. My mother said she was married to two men but only slept with one, which I didn't really understand until I was fourteen.

Deep hollow, bloodshot eyes, shoulder length grey hair and double-denim, that's all he ever wore. My dad said his accent was perfect for the radio. They were friends from school, travelled the world together, worked in the same factory, they were inseparable.

As kids he would take us on great adventures for days on end. His white Nineteen Seventy Two twin-screen Californian Beatle jammed packed with kids, food and his eclectic music collection, would turn up in the most random of places. We once spent a weekend in an abandoned sugar factory that his brother had worked in, under strict instructions not to tell anyone. However, returning home covered in red rust and with pockets full of old metal fixings ensured mother read him the riot act, while at the same time serving him dinner.

Whenever he told a joke if he started with the words "don't tell your mother," you knew it was going to bad. In class one day we were asked to recite a poem, so I raised my hand to get the teachers attention and recited "Gorgeie Porgie". I was sent home with a ringing in my ear and a week's suspension. Thinking about it now still brings a smile to my face. After mother had finished with me and banished me to my bedroom, I could hear voice tearing strips off Uncle Colin downstairs.

"What did I tell ya son, don't tell your mother, now wait until you hear this one!" he said as I met him and my dad on the way home from work the following day.

There comes a period in your teenage life when you become disinterested in adults. You start rebelling against everything they say, while at the same time trying to figure out who exactly you are. But not in Uncle Colin's case. Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 1982, he was tasked with looking after my cousin Paul and me, while our parents went to some dinner dance at the social club. They had only just left when the call came and before we knew it, the white Beetle was screaming down Parnell St towards a life changing moment. Rory Gallagher.

Why wouldn't you want him as your uncle?