

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Loaded Mind

by Stuart Finegan

Sean you're awake before your breakfast... wipe the sleep from your eyes

What time are you leaving?

There's no breakfast, your sisters will look after you.

Have you?

Later Sean...you can read it to me later, I'm late for work.

You promised.

*

Taking his place at the back of the slowing moving line, Sean stared patiently at the floor. Mrs O'Rourke's ladle worked overtime. Lost souls devoid of emotion filed past with their outstretched arms grateful for what they would receive. Sean, his face bright red with embarrassment couldn't look her in the eye.

Hello Sean.

Mrs O Rourke.

Your mother's, ok?

Yes, Mrs O Rourke.

Tell her I said hello.

I will Mrs O Rourke.

Bernadette, Sean, you can call me Bernadette.

Yes Mrs O Rourke, thank you.

She watched him take his seat by the window, content in his own company. A light rain dusted the large pane of glass.

*

As the racket from the radio filled the house, he searched in vain but couldn't find it.

Angry words greeted every failed attempt.

Shelia left him alone.

Tracing footsteps back over cold tarmac roads down to the bridge, he peered over.

Nothing.

Maybe its words have dissolved into the silty brown water?

Maybe they have Shelia

Someday the truth will come out. It always does.

*

Tuesday's rain gave way to welcome sunshine. Sean wiped the condensation from the window to reveal a very welcome sight.

Today's lesson, like yesterdays, passed him by.

Removing the brown crumpled piece of paper from his textbook, his finger glided slowly over the words. His lips spoke in silence the words of his new hero. This was unknow love. As the blood rushed to fill his veins and his emotions entered a new room unknow to him, the rain returned. The clock struck three.

*

Sean...wait a minute.

Sir.

Do you know who Mr Heaney is?

I think so Sir, didn't he come her once?

You do realise what you have here Sean?

No Sir, yes Sir, not really.

You can't keep it Sean, it's not yours. You need to return it.

Will you teach me sir?

What?

How to write like him.

Do you understand what he's saying Sean?

I think so Sir, his emotions, maybe he's lost something sir.

Do you know what that is?

Do you mean have I experiences it sir?

Have you?

In a word, yes I have sir, but not...

*

SEAN. Dinner...come in from outside.

Waiting until the others took their places and the usual drum of noise engulfed the room, Sean carefully removed his secret from his trouser pocket. Desperate to impress her. He couldn't take his eyes of her tired stressed looking face. Pushing his share of their evening meal around the plate, his inner excitement played havoc with his

nerves. Their cruel words couldn't dent his new found passion. As the older two retreated to the back room, the youngsters fell asleep. He asked her again.

Ok, so were did you find it?

By the river Mammy.

What does it mean?

I don't really know, he mentions building, but I think...

Sean stared nervously at his hands. Before he had time to think words emerged to an astonished look on her face

*Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;
Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.*

*

Sean.

Yes Sir.

The other day you asked me to help you.

Yes sir.

Just write it down, whatever comes to mind.

Who Sir? I mean, I don't understand?

You're a go-between Sean, write what you feel son.

I don't know what you mean sir.

Yes you do, you just don't know how yet.

*

As the bus pulled into the station, Sean stepped off into the drizzling rain. Walking slowly down the town his mind was awash with ideas, yet clouded with confusion on how to put pen to paper. As he approached the granite stone pedestrian bridge he couldn't help but notice the man standing by the street lamp. At first he was too shy to approach him, so he stepped into the doorway to shelter from the rain. After what seemed like an age, Sean plucked up the courage and crossed the street.

Have you lost something?

My mind son and not for the first time, I lost it here.

Sorry?

We argued the other day, I wrote it for her, Shelia.

Who?

It came easy son...the words...then as easily as I wrote it, it was gone.

The other day I found...

She told me someday the truth would come out, it always will.

I found this Mr Heaney

What did you find son?

Love...I think.