

Callum J. McCready – The Galway Review

Cover Letter/Bio

Callum J. McCready is an Irish artist temporarily based out of Fisterra, Spain, as well as travelling across Galicia. When not working by day in retail at night he moonlights as a writer.

Over fifty poems of his work has been published in numerous journals including *A New Ulster*, *Bindweed Magazine* and *The Galway Review*. He has a number of projects in the works and an intention to cross over into other disciplines.

When not bound by the ball-and-chain he enjoys gardening, exercising, reading, listening to music, watching movies and spending time with family and friends.



Another five pieces from an unpublished novel

the hardest part

what scares me

most

is

knowing

the hardest part

is

yet to come.

it's

pulling closer,

sucks,

drains,

consumes

sustenance.

standing on a cliff,

precipice,

looking over at the waves as they

crash against the rocks below,

broken, twisted,

draped across jagged points,

upholstery hanging off,
waiting for an embrace,
taking a seat,
assuming throne,
Rodin's Thinker upon a stone pedestal,

living on the edge
to make me
feel
closer to life.

I sleep, and don't.
I wake, unawake.
I walk, not on two feet, but glide, above and beyond
gravity.
I speak words without emotion.
I do, not without thought or motion, but
lacking guide or purpose.

She's become
something else,
more;
cavorting, torturing, smothering, punishing,
cutting, flaying.

Lashes from whips

bruise my body with
hobnailed jackboots
till
I can't breathe.

The strain's
killing me.

don't know how long it'll last till
- .

it will;

it must.

There's only so much I can take before
I'm pushed beyond limits.
drained, leaking, trickling bloody streams from
gaping wounds,
never closing, added to daily,
multiplying, increasing
till my body can no longer hold
up.

Knees go weak,
buckle underneath,

threaten to break from
pressure above.

Will they snap dramatically,
or collapse
uneventfully?

Thinking
how we attained
beauty,
simplicity,
fitfully,
brings no joy.

The sadness of nostalgic
longing,
what used to be,

playing old scenarios over;
each works out differently,
never matching how it turned out.

If it was possible to go back,
would you change the past, or
accept fate?

looking at the creature
of my own creation,
sapphires,
clear blue sea
melting into custard yellow,

I swim, struggle
against mucus,
pus,
slowly sinking
down a black slit,

pass through the eye of the needle,

hymen,
pudenda,
lips of labia,
forever falling,
lodged
in a deep, dark chamber;

It laughs.

I die,

in the blinking of
a cat's eye.

still I go

sleep's tug

pulls, dragging, tet

still I go

there's time,

but none like

the present.

a few sups left.

sisters of mercy's

afterhours

plays

on repeat,

soundtrack to

night-time

wandering...

movement,

slow,

mistakes abound,

my body tells me

put the head down,

but still i go.

sitting upright,

head tilts back

on neck,

eyes close,

mouth open,

dribbling,

I smack lips,

but

still i go

on, on

i go.

dum-dum-dum-dum,

dum-dum-dum-dum,

dum-dum-dum...

phonetically translate,

looped, repeated hook.

i hear it

but can't

transcribe,

transliterate,

liberate,

libera me,

domine.

loast croak,

pale replication,

liturgy,

requiem,

office,

recurring theme;

pastoral fields,

walk among reeds,

cold mist of

winter's day.

clouds in sky

cast shadows

over.

eternal,

lovely

sleep.

welcome me.

embrace,

lovingly,

comfortingly,

howls of nothing.

throw your

black hooded veil

over.

permit me to

rest

at ease.

Killing Passion

so tired I
want to spend the
day in bed.

losing the will
to
press on,
drive ahead.

No words left,
nothing more to say.

fly the white flag,
let do
what will.

I wish I was
unconscious,
unknowing.

It twists, turns
in my mind,
a knife in the gut,
fatal wound,
mortal error,

aware

you're losing grip.

Throbbing drumbeat,

pulsing,

pounding,

bashing, battering walls,

the bones holding together.

Voices distorted,

echoing chamber,

empty

in absence.

I no longer care if

I'm part of this world,

withdrawing within,

shrouded cloak of seclusion,

paranoid self-delusion,

obsessive degrees, routine,

ways to convince.

I thought the day I lost it would be the day I lost awareness.

coming not from ignorance, but enlightenment, self-possession, maintaining,

justifying the reasons,

hours

rambling,

trying to figure out

what's going on?

Does it make sense?

Am I closer

to learning the truth,

building this monument,

effigy?

figure

it's part and parcel.

Other times I say

everything's relevant.

it's therapy,

satisfying urges,

conduits for energy,

doing something,

a reason to keep going.

But

what are they?

You've done well,

but

you've got to think,

is it worth it?

for all the work,

are you any happier?

Priding yourself,

man's man,

principle, logic, reason, discipline;

where did it get you?

forces

within,

inside,

outside,

against;

now you

see

things aren't any better. they're

worse.

battling

dark forces,
inexplicable.

turn back
from fear,
charge,
bullrush,
head-on

no grey inbetween days.
black or white,
fight or flight,
adapt or perish.

pick your poison.

every story has an ending;
time to choose.

Every movement,
flicker,
pushing,
knocking:

what do you do?

Losss (to B.)

drags on cigarettes
burn my lips,
crawling down the stem,
a flower withering in
sun-baked heat.

mourning
inwardly, for
losss,
innocence.

leaves
blown,
scattered by
the wind.

forces
beyond control.
where they land's
anyone's guess.

I want roots,
buried deep
within the earth.

drifting,
endlessly.

Nowhere to settle,
be,
the comfort of
knowing.

Dreaming wakeful,
you sleep beside me,
peacefully.

I torment myself
with what was,
could have been.

things
horrible, disturbing,
treacherous meandering,
trying to catch something...

The silent house
speaks,
breathing
heavy.

voices

engage in
vociferous debate, regarding
fate.

Decisions made in the
absence of decisiveness.

It's all I can do to keep from
tipping.

Walking streets,
expression of painful intent,
scowling at anyone
looking sideways.

surrounded by emblems,
aspects,
trinkets,
telling myself
there's so much to me.

droning, chanting,
rotating cycle,
bland, vacuous,

Advertisements

catered to me,
supposedly.

roles assigned, designated.
What do they know?

Predictive text, spell-check,
technology guiding
interaction.

expectations
to meet.

If you don't,
you're abject,

deviant.

I used to be
a rebel.

all I want
is to be,

Alive,
existing.

as you turn over,
face away,
I know
it's not to be.

This thing's
come between us,
driven a wedge.

I torture myself,
hoping, wishing.

You use
my past
against me,
drink from
the well of guilt.

I
did my best
for you.

something's made
you go
the other way,
betray

what I could be.

I lay in bed,
jolt at the slightest sound,
faintest movement.

When last order's called,
and the nails are driven in,

will you be there?

Blood and Oranges

symbols of - ...

what?

a rhythm, tune.

I don't know the words

to songs I've never heard,

but guess

the words

ahead of time.

icons

on my screen

dance

in front of me.

Skulls,

loutish, leering,

fixed smiles

laughing long and hard at

horror.

tombstone,

recently covered

hole,

above the
coffin housing
my body.

carrion crow,
vulture waits,
raven watches
black cat
sitting on my
grave.

Clocks tick,
sand drops,
hourless
sundial turns,
obedient to laws
diametrically opposed.

a banshee screams,
howling.

her brother walks,
carrying scythe,
riding atop
a black horse,
through

columns, towers, pillars.

covered in drapery,

laurel wreath

on my head.

listening to the lyre,

I watch the trees

falling.

a room at

the end of a corridor.

Enter, present garb,

lacking character,

relative blankness.

Torches hang

upside down off walls,

dead dog on floor beside

broken chains and severed knots.

At the

centre's a

vacant,

empty chair.

thinking of symmetry,

painter's framing;

everything's

facing the wrong way.

The door

slams shut behind.

I

bash, punch, kick, batter

against,

but

it doesn't budge.