



Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7

■ **T:** +353 (0) 1 865 6613 ■ **F:** +353 (0) 1 873 5283
■ **E:** info@smashingtimes.ie ■ **W:** www.smashingtimes.ie

Thou Shalt Not Kill

Installation of 'living theatre' performances

Created by Mary Moynihan

Written by Paul Kennedy

Produced by Smashing Times Theatre Company

Smashing Times Theatre Company Ltd
Coleraine House,
Coleraine Street,
Dublin 7,
Ireland

Tel: +353 (0)1 8656613

Email: freda@smashingtimes.ie

Website: www.smashingtimes.ie

Facebook: www.facebook.com/smashingtimestheatrecompany

Patrons: Tim Pat Coogan, Joan Freeman, Sabina Coyne Higgins, Ger Ryan

Directors: Dr Eric Weitz, Edwina Albrecht, Sandra Berger, Victoria Durer, Bryony May, Olivia O'Hagan

Company registration No. 245850. **Registered Charity No.** CHY 11932

Thou Shalt Not Kill

Installation of 'Living Theatre' performances

Thou Shalt Not Kill is the title of a body of new writing and physical theatre work presented as an installation of 'living theatre' performances exploring themes of conflict and trauma. Using the body as a site of performance, memory and emotion and centers on experiences of conflict, ***Thou Shalt Not Kill*** imagines the future through a remembrance of things past. All performances followed by a post-show discussion with the artists and invited guest speakers.

The stories (monologues and duologues) are referred to as 'Living Theatre' installations. They are fictional pieces of theatre however they are 'Living Theatre' in that they are inspired by real life experiences drawn from interviews, research and stories gathered by Smashing Times Theatre Company as part of our work with a range of organisations in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Smashing Times Theatre Company are in an on-going process of creating and commissioning 'living theatre' installations from a range of writers that can be performed collectively and individually. All pieces performed under the heading of ***Thou Shalt Not Kill*** are based on themes of conflict, trauma, war, peace and reconciliation.

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Thou Shalt Not Kill

Installation of 'Living Theatre' performances
 Created by Mary Moynihan
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As at July 2013 ***Thou Shalt Not Kill*** is centred on experiences of conflict in Northern Ireland and consists of the following scenes:

Depth of My Being – Physical Choreography: Part One
 Devised by Mary Moynihan and Fiona Bawn-Thompson
 Character: FATE

Thou Shalt Not Kill by Paul Kennedy
 Character: ALICE
 Commissioned and based on research and stories from Smashing Times Theatre Company

Depth of My Being – Physical choreography: Part Two
 Devised by Mary Moynihan and Fiona Bawn-Thompson
 Character: FATE

Crossings by Paul Kennedy
 Character: TOM
 Commissioned and based on research, interviews, stories from Smashing Times Theatre Company

Depth of My Being – Physical choreography Part Three incorporating text from Viktor Frankel's *Man's Search for Meaning*, Devised by Mary Moynihan and Fiona Bawn-Thompson
 Character: FATE

The play runs without an interval and is followed by a post-show discussion.

Cast of Characters:

Depth of My Being devised by Mary Moynihan and Fiona Bawn-Thompson
 Character: FATE, ageless,

Thou Shalt Not Kill by Paul Kennedy
 Character: ALICE, mid-thirties

Crossings by Paul Kennedy
 Character: TOM, mid-forties

Setting: A parallel universe. An evocative otherworldly of semi-darkness, shadows and mist, where ghosts of the past linger on the edges and also the real world of people who are haunted by ghosts of the past and experiences of violence and conflict and who come into the space to tell their individual stories.

Set: The space is defined by a series of tall lights placed around the edges of the stage and at varying heights. Stage right and to the front is a mound of rubble with varying pieces of large and small concrete and stones. On top of the rubble is a small stone.

Depth of My Being is a choreographed physical movement piece performed by the character of FATE that surrounds and links each 'living theatre' installation that makes up ***Thou Shalt Not Kill***, opening up the space for stories to be told. FATE offers possession of the stone, passing on the stone to those troubled by past experiences of conflict, bringing the person into the space to tell his or her story. When the story is finished the stone is passed back to FATE who then passes it on to others, there are thousands of stones and thousands of stories to be told.

Character of FATE and the STONE

FATE is a creature or ghostly essence who lingers in the parallel universe, passing back and forth between the twilight world of ghosts and the world of the living where she exists within and around people haunted by the past. She is the link between the ghosts of the past related to conflict and the living who are still haunted by those ghosts.

FATE has several layers of meaning. She may be friendly, evil or neutral. Fate cannot be named yet carries the memories of souls past, present and future and specifically ghosts of violence and conflict that still haunt the living and linger on the edges waiting for the stories in which they are present to be told. FATE may become the different ghosts that haunt or an embodiment of trauma itself or simply lives freely within the space and watches as an impartial observer.

For example the character of TOM is haunted by 'ghosts' of the past that refuse to leave him alone. He initially rejects the stone. Hearing other stories and being in a 'dark place of the soul' he takes the stone, comes into the space and tells his story. For TOM, the stone represents 'to awaken, to catch and to release'. TOM goes on a journey and at the end, while the ghosts and the past still remains, he starts to feel a sense of feeling free and owning the space he is in.

FATE communicates only through physical movement s (ritualistic primal dance and physical movement) until all the stories for the evening have been told. Then combining physical movement and words she embodies text based on Viktor Frankl's, *Man's Search for Meaning* echoing a reflection on the 'defiant power of the human spirit' and the striving to find meaning even in suffering.

The stone in ***Thou Shalt Not Kill*** is a **Shaman Stone** in that it is an energy stone deeply connected to the earth and used to bring someone on a journey, to bring them into the space to tell a story and to release 'ghosts from the past' that continue to haunt.

The stone can be many different things; a key that unlocks the way forward for speaking the story or unlocks memories; an offer of support for opening up; a healing stone; a stone to protect a person who wears one on their body or a protection against negative energies; it can represent rubble from a bomb site or marks on a grave or a small piece of rubble from the conflict of the past; it can signify the stone of life, or someone who has died or many who have died.

As a ritual stone it can be used to ground, to connect (a connector to the earth's energies or to connect to the present by releasing ghosts from the past), to cleanse or purify negative energies and to energise.

Stones have been used to teach a person that the bonds and restrictions placed upon people are self-imposed and discarded easily. Shaman stones are also known as Navajo cherries, Indian marbles or just plain balls. In Native American traditions there is a Seneca legend referred to as The Storytelling Stone – how stories began which tells of a large stone and the beginning of the storyteller. Each stone is said to have a distinct energy, which depends on its size and gender. The gender of the stone is linked to the motion of a pendulum when it is held directly above the stones. If it moves in a linear direction the stone is male while a circular motion indicates the stone is female. Small stones are believed to have faster, more vibrant energy while the larger ones have a slower, deeper energy.

Depth of My Being

Physical Choreography: Part One

Lights Up

FATE enters.

FATE carries out 'Physical Movement Sequence' drawing in ALICE and TOM.

FATE carries out 'Physical Movement Sequence', ritual movement in centre of ALICE and TOM.

FATE reaches out to Tom who turns away.

FATE turns to Alice who responds, a connection is made.

*FATE carries out 'Physical Movement Sequence' as she moves to rubble, saying 'All we have experienced' and retrieves **Stone** from rubble and then circles ALICE.*

ALICE is receptive to FATE and begins to move in sequence with FATE.

FATE passes Stone on to ALICE drawing her further into space.

TOM exits to side of stage and listens to ALICE story.

FATE moves to the edges of the space and remains in the space watching as ALICE tells her story.

Lights change, first installation begins

***Thou Shalt Not Kill* By Paul Kennedy**

ALICE: The phone rang just when I was just about to head out and do my choir practice. It was my sister Jessica and she says, all excited like, 'Did yeah hear the news?' And I'm going 'What news?' And she goes 'Did yeah not hear? Robbie McFarelane was shot down just off the Shankill, not even an hour ago. It's been on the news and all' And I'm like 'God, is he dead?' 'They shot him in the back of the head, executed. It was his own that done it and all. Not the Taigs', she says. "Jesus Christ, his own!" 'Alice, Alice, are yeah all right, is there somebody there with yeah?' "Ay Jamie's here" I goes . . . Jamie's my husband. He's in the sitting room playing this video game with my wee wan Adam. They're shooting some kind of aliens. I can hear the guns going thuf thuf, thuf thuf. And when my sister hangs up. I look at my face in the mirror in the hallway, it's like looking at a face that I don't recognise. And my hand is shaking and I want to talk to someone. But I don't want to talk to my husband and I can't go to the choir practice. And I'm standing there and it feels like someone has put their hand through my chest and ripped out my heart.

I close the front door quietly and I walk out into the street. The Church is just down a bit past the shops and chipper, and when I come to the church I continue walking past it and it's started to rain and I see two of the other woman from the choir on the other side of the street, but I keep my head down and keep walking, I'm not sure to where.

I cut along through the housing estate and then I get on a seventy-two bus and that eventually takes me onto the Shankill Road. And when we get to the end of the Shankill the traffic slows down into a single lane and then we pass it, the area marked off with yellow tape, the PSNI cars and a white tent that the, the people who do the forensics and that.

And I wonder who's inside the tent, is Robbie McFarlane lying there? The back of his head blown off. And there's a few people standing around behind the cordon, a few women and a few men, some of them with shaved heads and tattoos and a little girl holding a bunch of flowers.

There'll be no tears from me for Robbie McFarlane.
I always thought that when this day came I would feel jubilant, I'd feel a weight lifted from me.

But all I felt now was a numbness, a terrible numbness as if my body were about to turn to stone. And the bus moves on.

When I get home I'm all wet and Jamie is asking me was the choir practice cancelled. And he's looking at me, knowing something's up and I just say 'Robbie McFarlane was shot today down on the Shankill'. That's all.

And I wanted him to put his arms around me and he does. And he doesn't say anything, just holds me and there was nothing to say....

Except that on the Tuesday I says to him 'I'm going to the funeral on Thursday'.

And he goes 'Are yeah sure yeah want to do that?
Would there be any purpose served in doing that?'
And I say 'I dunno. I'm just going'.

I sit at the back of the church, there's so many faces there that I know that I haven't seen in a long time. People I knew growing up.

Nobody's being unfriendly or anything, but I don't feel that welcome. And there's the hard men, up the front of the Church, the coffin draped in the Union Jack, and there's that strange electricity you get in the air at the funeral of someone who's been murdered. I dunno what that is, vengeance or something, hovering.

You get the feeling that when they're praying for the repose and rest of the dead, that in their heads, they're planning revenge on the living and there'd be, another coffin in another church, with another set of mourners . .

And it's just that now, it's more likely now that it'll be us killing our own.

And the Reverend speaks and it's, it's what has to be said, a call for peace, for forgiveness. And when the service is over, I turn to leave the church when Andrew Watson comes walking up to me. I knew Andrew growing up, he'd been part of the set I hung around with. And he goes 'Its nice of you to come and pay your respects to Robbie'. I didn't come to pay my respects' I say. And he goes 'Then its best that yeah didn't come at all'

I walked out of the church into the morning sunshine and all the memories that had been stored away in the back of my brain were now unleashed and ghosts that I thought had been laid to rest arose again.

How do I explain Robert McFarelane?

(PAUSE)

When I was seventeen I got this wee job working in a flower shop just off the Lisburn Road. The woman who owned it was called Beryl. Her husband had been blown up in an IRA bomb a few years back.

She showed me how to wrap flowers and create little bouquets and wee basic flower arrangements, she was like a wizard with the flowers, she'd weave the colours together, the pinks and yellows and lilacs.

We were selling more than our fair share of funeral wreaths back then, but also on Valentines Day you'd be run off your feet.

Beryl was nice to me. If she was bitter about her husband being blown up, she didn't show it that much but I'd get the feeling, without her saying too much, that she didn't like Catholics. I wasn't mad about Catholics either, I didn't really know any that well.

Except this guy Eamon who used to deliver flowers in a van from the markets to our shop.

He'd always be in a good mood and joking like.

And he was nice too, I mean nice looking, a little bit roguish looking.

And on this Valentines Day, it was my second year there, he's bringing in boxes of flowers and he says to me . .

'See all them flowers ?'

'And I says 'Yeah...'

And he goes 'See all them flowers, they're all for you'.

And I'm laughing and I says 'Yeah. Catch yourself on, will yeah'.

And then he asks 'Did yeah get many Valentines Cards?'
 'Aye, thousands. I haven't had time to count them all yet'.
 And then he blushes a bit, really red like and says 'Have a look under that box of carnations' and out he goes. And when I do, it's a wee Valentines Card, from him. I'm reading it when Beryl comes out from the back of the shop and I put it away.

Then one Saturday morning, he comes up to me, very sheepish like, and asks me would I like to go out to the pictures?

And I'm saying like 'I'd love to but I don't know anyone who would ask me out'.

And he's getting more awkward, .I'm a terrible bitch sometimes.

And he goes 'Well, what if I was to ask yeah?'

'So you're asking me, are yeah?'

'Em....Yes I am'.

I take a long pause as if to think about it and then I put him out of his misery and go 'Ok I'll go, if I can pick the picture'.

'You can' he says 'yeah drive a hard bargain'.

And we both laugh and we make arrangements.

And Beryl doesn't need to know anything about this.

It's just the pictures.

That's all it was.

(PAUSE)

That's all it wasn't.

The first time he kissed me was at a bus stop in the rain and I knew then that there was a connection between us not like anything I'd felt before.

A kind of electricity.

And Beryl cops it, I don't know how.

But I noticed she'd kind of give him a slightly cold stare when he came into the shop in the mornings.

And Eamon was sensitive, I know he felt it.

And then when he's gone, Beryl brings me out a cup of tea and says "I know you're old enough to make your own decisions in life but if you're going to get involved with a Catholic then you'd better be prepared for lots of complications and you might find out in the end that the cons outweigh the pros'.

I don't say nothing to her, just listen.

(PAUSE)

What was she shiting on about, it was none of her fucking business.

But it turns out that it's everybody's business.

Once the word got out it spread like wildfire, Alice Thompson is going out with a Taig, even the dogs in the streets knew it.

My Da went mental, he's saying that I've disgraced the family and my Ma says 'what about that Protestant boy you used to like, David Bradwell?'

'I was eleven, Mum, when I liked him, we were in primary school.'

'But still, he's got a good job now as an apprentice in Shortts.'

And it's the same for Eamon's side of the family. 'Would it not be simpler if you went out with a nice wee Catholic girl?'

The area I lived in then had a lot of paramilitaries.

I never got involved nor did my family, but some of them lived on our road and despite everything, they made us feel safe.

They made us feel that we were protected from the IRA and the INLA, who hated all Protestants and who would gladly kill any of us if they got the opportunity.

And they had said things to my Da, advising him to get me to break it off with Eamon.

And I never brought Eamon back to our estate, and I never went back to his (only that one time) and there was a secrecy to the whole thing.

But we loved each other and we both felt, how amazing it was to be in love, just to have some other person in your life who is the centre of your universe.

But back on the estate, when I'd be walking to the bus stop and that, I could feel people staring at me and judging me and it was awful.

Everyone in our estate was terrified that more and more Catholic families were moving into the adjoining estates and for me to be courting one...that was seen as a betrayal.

I understood that.

I understood all that tribal loyalty stuff. Eamon understood it too.

We'd joke about it, when I'd kiss him he might say, 'You kiss all right for a Prod' or I'd say to him 'You're not bad looking for Taig'.

Anyway we're in the centre of Belfast, Donegal Road, and we'd been to see a film and Eamon's got his arm around my shoulder and I've got my arm around his waist and there's lots of people around and I see a fella I know from my estate walking towards me and he sees me.

I nod my head like to say hello and he just stares at me, blanks me, and walks past and I feel, I feel a chill over my whole body.

'I know that guy who just walked past' I say to Eamon.

'He lives on my estate, he's one of the hard men.'

And so there was that tension. Always there.

The bullet in the envelope that was sent to our house?

There's a little scrap of paper with it and only two words on it - Eamon's first and last name.

The IRA had exploded that bomb on the Shankill only weeks before and there was a cut knife tension around in our area.

'Time to stop your messing around with this Eamon fella or get out of the estate' my Da says and my Ma's crying and I'm like 'Fucking hell.....this was sent to me from someone in my own community maybe someone I know, maybe someone I grew up with?

'Stick to your own' my Ma's saying 'You're only putting yourself in danger'.

And I'm now filled more with rage than fear, I'm afraid too but God, you can't do anything on this estate without it being everybody's business. The hardmen, the paramilitaries, they run the show, they call the shots, we might as well not have any police. I get dressed and I'm lying in the bed and not knowing what to do and then I think I'll do something.

I go out down to the Taxi Cab Office beside the chipper and I know someone in there I can talk to, someone who's involved with the UVF and I'm hoping that he can sort this out, or have a word with the people who sent the bullet and I go in and I ask the girl at the desk is Robert McFarlane around. 'He's in the toilet' she says and I wait and hear the little toilet flushing and out he comes and I says to him 'Robert can I talk to yeah, outside? It's important'. And he goes, 'Sure yeah can, Alice'. He's a couple of years older than me, but I knew him growing up and I'm telling him about receiving the bullet in the post and he says he doesn't know anything about it. 'Someone in our area sent it', I'm saying. And he's nodding his head. Then he lays into me. 'I'll tell you something Alice that maybe you don't wanna hear. Them there Taigs and, that Sinn Fein crowd, they'd slit your throat with a rusty knife sooner than look at yeah. No one cares about the Protestants in Northern Ireland. No one's going to defend us unless we defend ourselves. Now you're sleeping with a fucking Taig when my comrades are getting blown up by the IRA and you think 'ah fucks, we're only teenagers in love' and I'll say to you, get fucking real. You're spitting on the graves of our dead so you are Alice, that's what you're doing. Next you'll be breeding more little Taigs to grow up and kill Protestants, get the fuck out of the area if that's what yeah want to do, that would be my advice to yeah' And I'm standing there, on the street, and I feel shame and anger. Part of me is thinking he has a point, Eamon and I will never work out, not in this city, not in this country. And another part of me is thinking, I hate you and your fucking comrades. I hate you and your war. I never asked you to protect me. I never gave you permission to tell me who I could love and who I couldn't love. I don't want you running my life, you're not God. And I'm thinking too, I bet you know who posted the bullet to our house. But I don't say anything, and there's just a bitter silence hanging there between us when the girl at the desk comes out and says 'You're wanted on the phone Robbie' And he looks at me and spits on the pavement and goes back inside and I leave.

About six months after that Eamon and I quietly get engaged and we've plans to have a very low key wedding. We're going to rent a house in a mixed estate.

My parents met his parents in a wee restaurant in town and Eamon was great, he cracked jokes, broke the ice, he was a charmer....

(LONG PAUSE)

They killed Eamon. They shot him on a Friday, it was Halloween.

I had gone out to buy a sandwich and when I'm on the way back I can see them through the flower shop window....two RUC men and I can see Beryl's face...her eyes are fixed on them.

When I go in they ask me... 'Are you Alice Thompson?' and I say 'yeah'...

....and then one of them asks me 'are you related to Eamon Burke?' and I go 'I'm his fiancée'.

'We regret to tell you he was killed today. We're very sorry.'

I felt myself getting weak and then there was a kind of sensation of things blanking out.

People use that phrase, the earth opens up and swallows you, it felt something like that.

And over the next few days I was kind of numb for lots of it, it would be numbness followed by tears and more tears then numbness again and people talking to me and I'm not hearing what they're saying.

And there were all the details of the funeral. I was advised not to go and see him in the morgue. . Eamon's older brother John and his father identified the body, they didn't want his mother to go in either.

It was a closed casket at the funeral parlour and I regretted that always, not having seen his face that last time, and everybody around me, it was like being wrapped in a blanket of love, and yet I could not be comforted.

It had happened at three o'clock on that Friday afternoon, at a little Interflora shop in a quiet street just off the Hollywood Road.

He had just pulled his van up outside and he was taking boxes of red roses out of the back.

A guy in a balaclava appeared from nowhere and shot him in the face and then in the chest and then he fell . . . and his bloodied body lay there on the road among the scattered roses.

I was the last to hear the rumours that were going around in our estate.

I'm with my friend Angela having a coffee and she's telling me that people are saying things about Eamon.

That Eamon was in the IRA.

They were saying that he had been using the flower van to transport guns and explosives. They were saying that he had had a hand in that bomb on the Shankill three years previous.

They were saying that the police searched his house after he was shot and found a balaclava in his bedroom, and I'm going 'Angela, none of that is true'. They were saying that he had got several girls pregnant and that I was pregnant.

'I'm pregnant, am I? Well thanks for letting me know.

'Right! That's it. I'm moving out of there Angela. I can't bear to walk down my own street. In their eyes, I'm not a victim. For some of them, I got what was coming to me. I got what I deserved. I'm responsible for Eamon's death. I can't stay there.'

And then I think of him, in a cold grave, the wind blowing over his gravestone and I'm thinking, I won't ever wake up from this nightmare.

And then I see Robert McFarlane and Andrew Watson, they're walking towards us and I see a kind of sneer on Robert McFarlane's face

And Angela's going 'just ignore him'.

'He's some fucker' I say. 'He's a fucking bastard and his mate is too' and I'm gonna walk after them and make a show of myself and scream at them, only Angela has grabbed me and is stopping me.

They disappear into the crowds of shoppers.

And I know that bitterness serves no purpose and yet I'm still bitter, and cannot imagine a day when I won't be.

A month later my father told me that the RUC had taken Robert McFarlane in for questioning over Eamon's murder and they held him for eighteen hours but they hadn't charged him.

And then I'd hear things, that he'd had a hand in it, Mc Farlane. That he was the one who had fired the shot.

That he'd been drunk one night at a house party and said things about Eamon like 'the little Fenian fucker got what was coming to him'.

And then he referred to me as a 'whore'.

So, one day when I'm passing the taxi cab office, I go in. The girl's at the desk and I just walk past her into the back office and Robert McFarlane is there playing cards with Andrew Watson.

They both look at me, shocked

'Did yeah just drop in to say hello?' Robbie says, smart like. I don't speak for a few moments.

And then, these words come out of my mouth, something lodged in my brain from my Bible classes as a child, I just look at him and my face is like a stone, and the words just come out.

'Thou shalt not kill'

That's all.

And I walk out.

I don't know how I'm being so dignified because I want to rip his face off. I walk past the girl at the desk and she can tell from my demeanour not to say anything and when I get out onto the street my whole body is shaking.

My hands are trembling, my feet are trembling. And I know the two of them inside are continuing their game of cards. I punch the window with my fist, and punch it again until there are little dark bruises on my knuckles and I walk away.

Two weeks later I moved out of the estate.
The following September I went to study at the College.
Four years later I met Jamie.
And three years after meeting Jamie, Adam was born.

I'd never seen him after that day in the taxi office but he had lived with me, he was part of the air I breathed, just as Eamon was.

And then, a week ago I'm taking our wee Adam (it was his birthday) up to see his grandparents.
And at a pedestrian crossing I find myself standing beside Robert McFarlane's Ma.
She's old looking now and she's holding the hand of a little girl. Maybe she was the girl I'd seen that night on the Shankill with a bunch of flowers.
And the wee girl smiles at Adam and he smiles back, that lovely way children can smile at each other.
And his mother goes to me 'Alright?' and I go 'Aye'.
And we cross and go our separate ways.
That little girl was Robbie McFarlane's daughter.
And just that, just that moment, crossing the street, the kids, the innocence, the hope, something . . .

And as we walked down the road of our estate, towards my parents house. I was thinking of all the lives of all the people who had lived in those houses.
And I knew that my tears weren't the only tears.
And I knew that the strife that had torn our lives apart, was, against all the odds, diminishing.

And when we get near the house my Mum and Dad are at the window, waiting for us to arrive and they rush into the hall and open the front door and Adam runs up the pathway and my father holds out his arms to catch him.
And any moment now, he's going to lift him up and swing him in the air and the sun was shining, shining on my mother's smiling face.

Lights Change

Note: At times during the above piece, Alice works on preparing a bunch of red roses that she places in a small bowl and places on the stage.

Depth of My Being – Physical choreography: Part Two

TOM enters.

Physical Movement Sequence as FATE moves to ALICE.

FATE and ALICE move together as STONE passed back from ALICE to FATE.

ALICE moves and sits on edge of space listening to TOM.

Physical movement sequence as FATE interacts with TOM before passing Stone to him which he now takes.

FATE repeats the line "all we have experienced".

FATE moves to the edges of the space, opposite side to ALICE and watches as TOM tells his story.

Lights change, second installation begins.

Crossings by Paul Kennedy

TOM: They say time heals, and that's true for a lot of people.
But for me, the old ghosts of the past would come and go.
And one day you'd say to yourself I'm free of them now and the next day they'd be back again.
Very persistent.
For me anyway, the healing, if I can call it that, started somewhere I wouldn't have expected. Just as the bad things take you by surprise, the good ones can too. I went back to somewhere I hadn't been for years . . . but how that started, I'll have to go back to that wee café in Letterkenny, that afternoon.

(BEAT)

Got talking, I did. With a black woman who lives just outside Letterkenny. Normally you know, I keep to myself, I'm friendly and that . . . But this woman had, she had a nice look about her and we were sitting at a long table and she asked me to pass her the milk and I says to her, 'I can tell by your accent that you're not from around here'
'Just my accent', she says and smiles.
And I'm like 'Ah, I didn't mean . . .'
She laughed again, good humoured like, and we got chatting. And it turns out she was from Chicago.
'And what has yeah over here in Ireland in Donegal?' And she goes 'I fell for an Irishman' and she smiles as if to say that wasn't altogether a very wise thing for a woman to be doing. And she's telling me that she lived in Dublin first, but that she could never settle in Dublin, on account of it being so big and impersonal and to be truthful, racist as well. They'd be thinking she was a refugee, from Somalia or somewhere, when they'd set eyes on her first, and

then they'd hear the Yankee accent and they'd be a wee bit nicer then. She says to me that Donegal is the nicest place she's ever been to and I'm telling her that I was born just outside of Strabane, in Tyrone but that I've been living in Donegal for a long time.

'What made yeah settle in Donegal?' she asks me.

'Well, that would be telling yeah, have yeah got all afternoon?' I says to her, joking like.

But she could tell from my face that she'd hit a nerve yeah know.

She had her wee boy with her, 'Aaron', a lovely little fella, plays GAA and all.

And when she gets up to leave she says 'It was nice talking to you. I'm Audrey by the way'.

'Tom', I say, 'Tom Mulhearn'.

And we shuck hands, kinda formally, but still, she was nice.

(BEAT)

I didn't think anything of it, but on the drive back to Kiltroy, I nearly had to stop the car because there were tears streaming down my face.

Just that simple question she asked me, 'What made yeah settle in Donegal?' She'd ask me, not knowing that for me it hadn't been a choice.

The tears were for my father.

I remembered that day I got a phone call from my sister in Strabane, that would have been eighteen years ago now, telling me that my Da, he'd had cancer, that he was dying.

And I, I couldn't go back there, to the North.

I couldn't cross the border on account that the RUC were looking for me.

And I remember that night, it was in February, it was dark and cold and wet and my sister was crying on the other end of the phone, saying that Daddy wanted to see me, that Daddy wanted to talk to me, that he was going in and out of consciousness and he was saying my name and Sean's name, that's my brother who died.

And I'm saying back to her 'I'll not be able to get back, I'll be done for if I cross the border. I'll be lifted. I'll be locked up'.

And I drove to Balloughry Road and I could see the British Army checkpoint in the distance, the silhouettes of soldiers with their guns against the arc lights and I says to myself, 'Fuck it, I'll take my chances, I'll try and blague my way through'.

But I didn't have the bottle for it, I couldn't.

And I says to myself 'My Da knows I loved him'.

I couldn't take the risk.

When I heard the following night that he'd passed away, I went to the local pub and drank a lot and walked home later in the rain wishing that a truck on the road would run me over.

I never got to the funeral either.

(BEAT)

A few days later I was on my way back into Letterkenny, driving on the road outside of Ballyraine and I sees Audrey and her young fella standing at a bus stop and I pull up and offer them a lift.

She remembered me and all and gave me a nice smile and the young fella hopped in the back and Audrey sat in the front.

She'd missed a bus so she was delighted to get the lift and we're chatting about this and that.

The young fella plays for a team in Letterkenny.

I dropped them off and she says 'Thanks Tom' and the young fella goes. 'I'm playing a game on Sunday, we're playing against Drumogil'.

Audrey says casually that if I have nothing better to do I could come along and see the match, and I did.

I went to another game two weeks later and afterwards I drop them off to her house and she invites me in for a cup of tea. (*Fate moves further into the space and lingers in the background during the following*). Aaron goes off to play with his friend next door and Audrey and I got chatting, and it was the anniversary of my father's death, and I could feel all that hanging over me, in my stomach, a tension.

And Audrey picks up on this, and for some reason I began to talk about my Da, about the time he died, and I was thinking, 'why should she care? But she did, she understood.

She understood in a way that not even the people who were born and bred here could understand, or so it seemed to me, and she reached out and held my hand and I fought back the tears.

I didn't want to be blabbering there, in front of her.

She wasn't intrusive or anything, she just listened. (*Fate moves back to the edge of the stage*).

'And do you go back often now?', she says to me 'back to Strabane?'

I haven't been back in a while', I says, 'I should go back more often to visit my parents grave'

But the truth was...I hadn't been back there in over ten years.

There was no checkpoints now and no British army and no having a gun stuck in your face but still, I, the border was still there, in peoples minds, in their memories, in all the terrible things that had happened around it, because of it, whatever.

(*BEAT*)

That day, talking about my father to Audrey, stirred up things inside of me, about my brother Sean too.

Sean was never far from my mind.

That day, yeah, eighteen years ago, I'm in the kitchen with my Mother helping her put up shelves, when there's a knock on the front door.

I go and open it and it's an RUC man and my mother comes out to see who it is.

I could tell by the man's face that something bad had happened.

I thought it might have been my Da because he was away in Magherafelt but he looks at us and asks us our names and tells us that Sean has been killed. I remembered a sound coming from my mother, a scream, it was like no other sound I'd heard before or heard since.

And when we go down to the morgue to identify the body, the doctor doesn't want my Ma to go in.

We both go in anyway and see Sean there lying on a steel trolley.

There's a blanket over his chest and legs, his face is black and burnt, and his hair is burnt, he was bald like, and he looks like a burnt rag doll that had fallen off the top of a bonfire.

My mother hugs him away, she holds him in her arms, her lifeless, dead, shrivelled up son.

And I put my arm around my mother's shoulder.

I'll never forget that.

(BEAT)

Sean and his mate Fergal had stolen a car in Strabane earlier that evening and they drove out the back roads. There was a British army checkpoint and whatever happened, they said the car didn't stop, and one of the soldiers so the story goes, fires a warning shot. Some shot, it hits Sean in the chest and kills him and the car crashes against a tree and bursts into flames.

The other lad was killed as well.

They were both only fifteen years old.

And Sean, he wasn't stupid, he wouldn't have just driven the car into an army checkpoint, he knew where the brake pedal was. He didn't deserve to be shot and fuck it, it was after that, that I got involve, did some awful things, terrible things, things that will stay with me till the day I die.

I started by just hiding semtex and detonators in the back field of a farm where I worked part time and then attacking the RUC and then I learned how to put bombs together and then . .

(Beat)

I got a call from Audrey a week or so later.

She wanted to know if I was doing anything on Saturday afternoon.

'Saturday', I says.

She told me she was going to Castlederg, she worked in a library in Letterkenny and she had to go there for, something to do with events the libraries were organising all over Ulster And I was like, I didn't say anything, she said the meeting would only take an hour and maybe we could go for a drive in the countryside.

God, it crossed my mind, was this a date? Was she asking me out? It had been a while since I had done that sort of thing yeah see.

I had the jitters.

'Can do? I says ' when will I pick yeah up?'

'One thirty', she says 'if that's okay with you?' that lovely American accent she has.

'Yeah, see yeah then.'

Cool enough like.

But God, when I put the phone down, I was in a sweat, should I bring flowers, wear my best suit?

Cop onto yourself now Tom, you're only a chauffeur, you're only a glorified taxi man without a meter.

But the thing with Audrey was, I felt, there was always more going on with her than what she said

She was deep like and Castlederg was across the border, only a few miles from Strabane.

And I was happy to be doing her a favour, but at the same time, I was terrified she have it in mind to do me a favour, to banish ghosts.

(BEAT)

I pick her up at the time we agreed.

Bought a little present for Aaron, a Playstation game.

He was going to be staying with a neighbour, and after we dropped him off we set our on the road for Castlederg.

Audrey and I make small chat at first, we're both kinda nervous, me more than her.

I tell her about my brother Sean and about how he died.

But aagh, we were supposed to be enjoying ourselves.

By the time we get to the border things lightened up, we had the radio on, I hardly notice it when we cross over the border.

Just a little shiver run down my back.

I drop Audrey off to her meeting and buy two bunches of flowers in a petrol station and drive to the graveyard outside Strabane.

It's deserted and desolate, I put one bunch of flowers on my parent's grave and say a prayer and do the same for Sean.

There's a little photo of Sean on the gravestone, that cheeky little grin he had on his wee face, he was an awful messer, so he was . . anyway . .

(BEAT)

The incident happened later that day.

You can run but you can't hide, as they say.

After I pick up Audrey she suggests that we go to Strabane, she wants to do some shopping and I'm like 'not up for that' but I goes 'Okay, why not?'

When a woman wants to do shopping, you're best just to go along.

On the main street just outside a clothes shop I bump into Dan McGuinness, God, I hadn't seen him in over twelve years and we just stood there...just looking at each other for a second and I felt then that this visit had been a bad idea.

Dan takes my hand and shakes it, warm like, and he's going . . .

'God Tom, how are yeah? How the hell are yeah man?'
And I'm like 'Grand, grand, and yourself?'

'Good', he says.

'It's good to see yeah Dan'

But I didn't really mean that, what else could I say?

'Oh, this is Audrey' I says and he shakes her hand too, and he's nice to her and all, saying hello and asking her where she was from and I says 'We've got to be heading back to Letterkenny Dan'. But he wouldn't hear of that, wants us to go and have a drink with him.

'I'm driving Dan'

'Have a bite to eat then'

Dan had this way about him, a bit overpowering yeah know, it was hard to say 'no' to him.

He had served time in Long Kesh while I was on the run in Donegal.

We'd both been in the same unit in them days.

(BEAT)

We end up in a pub on the Main Street and we're chatting about this and that. Audrey is great, listening and chatting away, and after we finish eating Dan says he wants to go outside to have a smoke and asks me to go with him.

We go to the little smoking area out the back.

It's just me and Dan there.

He looks at me and says 'God, I'm so delighted to have met yeah'

I thought he was going to give me a hug.

After he lights up his smoke he says to me 'What do yeah make of all this peace malarkey? They sold us out, Tom. Down the Swanee, after all the sacrifices we made.'

'I'm out of all that now Dan'

He blows out some smoke and looks at me, disappointed like.

'Yeah?'

'Yeah Dan'

'What's with you and the black lady?'

'We're just friends Dan'.

I got the feeling he didn't quite approve of her.

Just the way he said that 'the black lady'.

'And her name is Audrey by the way', I say

And then he goes on, talking about how Gerry Adams had betrayed everyone, how he had hoodwinked everyone, talking about how people like him were getting ready to 'finish what we started' about how 'the war wasn't over'.

And I goes 'Look I'm not interested Dan, I better go back inside to Audrey'

'Hear me out', he says.

I go to turn and he puts his hand on my shoulder.'

'I'm going back in, the war is over Dan'. 'Go on then Tom' he says 'you were never much use to the Cause anyway, you're as bad as all them other fuckers, go on if you're going and get out of my sight.'

'See yeah Dan'.

(BEAT)

I go back inside and Audrey and I leave and when we get outside into the street, its raining and we walk to where our car is parked.

'Is everything okay?' Audrey asks me.

'No, its not, we shouldn't have come here' I say, a bit sharp to her.

And when I'm putting the keys in the car door I see Dan walking towards us in the rain.

Here's trouble, I'm thinking.

He's tall and he kind of stoops a bit when walking and with his long hair and beard he looks like a cave man, an angry cave man.

He walks up to me and puts his face in my face and says...'You were always a bit of a fucking coward Tom'.

I can smell his breath.

I just look at him. 'And you were always a bit of a bigot Dan', I says to him.

'And another thing', he says 'Everyone around here knows it was you who was responsible for Sean's death, everyone knows that.'

'Go on about your business' I says and he raises his fist and I raise mine and he gets to me first, a hard blow to the side of my face and I'm knocked back against the car, and I can hear Audrey saying something and I get up and he goes to hit me again and I duck and hit him on the rebound.

There's blood coming out of my nose.

I hit him hard and he falls and I'm bending over him, and all this anger rages inside me. 'I was responsible for Sean's death?' I going to let him get away with saying that.

And he's getting up and he's kind of grinning at me and he has his fist clenched to continue fighting and I hit him again, and he falls and gets up, and when he stands up Audrey is shouting at us to stop.

But I can't stop.

All this buried anger just comes rushing to the surface, and he hits me another blow and Audrey is tugging at my shoulder shouting 'Tom...for Gods sake stop it' but I won't. I hit him hard on the face and then hit him again and I hear something crack, his jaw, and he bends over and spits out blood and then holds up a hand to his mouth and spits out a tooth.

God help us.

He was a mess, he was trying to say something to me, but I couldn't understand what . . .

'I'll not be back here again Dan. I never want to set eyes on you again' I says to him and we get in the car.

(BEAT)

Aaah, I'm thinking, on the way back, what must Audrey think of me now?

'You didn't have to do that Tom' she saying to me and she's crying now, tears streaming down her face.

And she doesn't say anything to me for a long part of the journey back.

When we get back I stop the car outside of her house.

I tell her that I feel ashamed of myself, that I had thought all that anger had gone away, but obviously it hadn't.

(BEAT)

Then I tell her what Dan had meant when he said that I was responsible for Sean's death.

See in a way it was true, I was.

It was me who taught Sean how to drive my Da's car when he was only fourteen.

I used to sneak out the keys when my Da was in the pub and we'd go driving around in it out the back roads.

I also showed him how to hotwire a car.

I taught him everything he needed to know to make that last final journey into oblivion. *(FATE moves further into the space)*

And I told Audrey all this, I'd never told anyone before, never spoken these words before and in all the sadness and all the pain I felt something lift from me, some weight. *(HE BEGINS TO SOB QUIETLY)* because I too was young, back then and I didn't know what I was doing, where it would lead to, and I knew there is nothing in this world that can bring Sean back to life again.

And I told her too about the terrible things I had done during the Troubles, the bomb I planted in Magherafelt that killed a young girl, blew her arms off.

I remembered someone saying that if you're going to forgive, you have to be prepared to forgive the 'unforgivable'.

And that was true, for the things that were done to me and the things I'd done to others.

(FATE moves across SR and music in)

A few months later, it was on the day after Audrey and I got engaged, we took a trip in the car to Derry. Just me, her and Aaron. It was in mid December and it was snowing, the snow was drifting down, swirling gently over the hills, soft puffy flakes of snow falling, and when we got to the border the hills were covered in a blanket of white, so that you almost couldn't tell where Donegal ended and Derry began, and that was fine by me.

That was fine by me.

Lights Change

Depth of My Being – Physical choreography Part Three incorporating text from Viktor Frankel's *Man's Search for Meaning*

FATE enters.

Physical Movement Sequence as TOM passes the Stone back to FATE and moves to the edge of the space to join ALICE.

ALICE and TOM stand side by side watching FATE.

FATE carries out 'Physical Movement Sequence' as she speaks words:

Fate: What we have experienced, no power on earth can take from us. Not only our experiences, but all we have done and all we have suffered, all this is not lost, though it is past. Does our sacrifice have a meaning?

How much suffering there is to get through! There is no need to be ashamed of tears, for tears bear witness of the courage to suffer. I have wept it out of my system.

What do you live for, what do you long for in the depth of your being? What is your mission in life, a task unique to you? The striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely chosen task. A reorientation toward the meaning of one's life. Pain; guilt; death. How is it possible to say yes to life in spite of all that?

To create a work or do a deed, to experience something or encounter someone, love, experiencing another human being in his very uniqueness—by loving her.

(As she speaks, takes rose from bowl at grave and places rose on the mound of rubble, then takes larger stone from mound of rubble and places it centre stage where she then releases collection of dust and feathers into the air)

To face a fate we cannot change, may rise above himself, may grow beyond herself and by doing so change ourselves. The defiant power of the human spirit. When we are no longer able to change a situation we are challenged to change ourselves.

END

Stage Measurements

Playing Area

Width : 20 ft / 6.1m

Depth : 16 ft / 4.88m

Set Positions

Table position : 7' 8" / 2.34m (from SL) x 8' 8" / 3.15m

Centre of rocks : 5' 4" / 1.63m (from SR) x 1' 4" / 0.4m

Fate Part One

Alice's mark : 4' 1" / 1.25m (from SR) x 5' / 1.5m

Fate's mark : 9' 1" / 2.77 (from SR) x 7' 1" / 2.16m

Tom's mark : 4' 6" / 1.37m (from SL) x 4' 6" / 1.37m (doubles as mark for roses)

Fate Part Two

Tom's mark : 6' 11" / 2.1m (from SL) x 6' / 1.83m

Thou Shalt Not Kill Toppers:

Fate

1. Shaman Stone
2. Mound of Rubble
3. Large Stone
4. Dust or glitter and feathers to throw (Placed beside mound)

Thou Shalt Not Kill

One table with four legs on each corner – average 2.5 foot x 4ft (light enough to lift during piece and foldable for travelling)

One Chair to match table and fits in easily underneath table

1. Grey Bowl
2. Green stuff
3. 12 Red Roses
4. 2 Baby's Breath
1. Grey Metal Scissors
2. Waterspray
3. Pocket in costume for stone

Crossings

1. Pocket in Costume for Stone