

Steven G. Farrell

**Our  
Path  
Leads  
to  
Readers**

Our Path Leads to Readers;  
A Compilation

Steven G. Farrell

This is a work of fiction. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

OUR PATH LEADS TO READERS

**First edition. June 26, 2022.**

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# Table of Contents

[Title Page](#)

[Copyright Page](#)

[Our Path Leads to Readers](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Poetry](#)

[□□](#)

[Short | Stories](#)

[Essays](#)

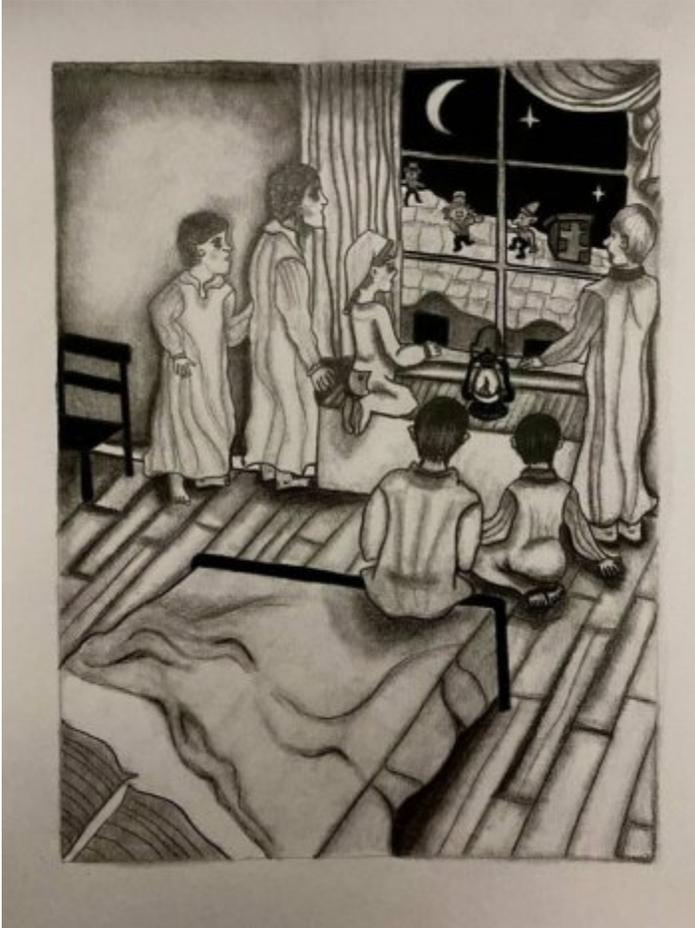
[Interview](#)

[Book | Reviews](#)

[About the Author](#)

[About the Author](#)

# Poetry

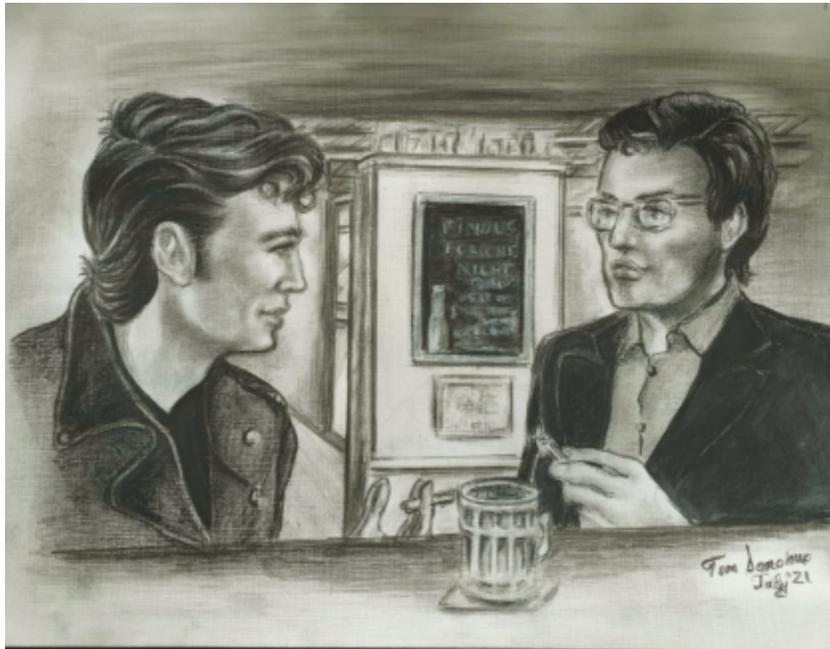


## An American in Galway City, Ireland

It has been 200 years  
You have clearly forgotten me,  
But you appear to remember  
My name.  
I have returned to see you,  
Reliving the olden times:  
I am a Yankee exile,  
Staring into shop windows.  
Please welcome me home after  
My long journey back to the  
Land that was once mine  
As much it is still yours  
Three damp days,  
Wandering in cobblestone streets  
Buskers singing *Red is the Rose*  
Forcing me to cry  
Weeping in October  
With her on my side,  
Seeking tea in Galway city  
She did not notice my sighs  
I have been gone for 200 years  
You have clearly forgotten me,  
but you appear to remember  
My name.  
Rocky roads  
Old town walls of stone,  
Smelling the turf  
O'Farrell lettered above a door.  
The donkey knows the way:  
To a battered Norman Tower  
Where a monkish manuscript  
Provides a lost clue.  
Passport identifies  
While the green earth  
Signifies something  
More than birth.

Not asking for much  
Not even a Gaelic greeting  
Perhaps a nod acknowledging  
The wandering Celt's return.  
I have been gone for 200 years  
You have clearly forgotten me,  
but you appear to remember  
My name.

# Short Stories



## **A Letter from Al Moran**

Gerard Moran, an American who resided in South Carolina, appreciated the friendliness of the Irish, but he had a less than favorable view of the constantly wet and raw weather of the west of Ireland. Moira Moran, who was prettier and more positive than her uncle, merely adjusted to the never-ending rainfall by carrying an umbrella and by wearing boots. The two foreigners entered the front door of the Loughrea, Galway home of the late Professor Al Moran as the neighbors' dog barked at the two Americans as was his annoying custom.

Moira shook-off her umbrella and left it in the hallway as she entered the parlor to take on the ancient heating system. She was becoming adapt at the twisting and pulling of the right levers of the contraption to generate heat. Gerard, still rather depressed after his late uncle's funeral, went into the study to get on with the awful duty of packing items away for home and pitching the rest into the rubbish bin. The grimness of the October day did not do anything to lessen the old man's darkening mood.

"What are you doing, Uncle Gerard?" Moira called from the front of the house.

"I'm just clearing out more of Uncle Al's things in the study, Moira," responded Al.

The sound of his niece's voice and the sense of her presence made Gerard feel somewhat better. It was nice of her to fly from Milwaukee, Wisconsin down to Greenville to join him on the long flight up to Newark, New Jersey and then eastward across the Atlantic Ocean to Shannon Airport, where they were picked up by Uncle Al's new Irish mate, Paddy Murphy. In many ways, Gerard was much like his Uncle Al: a man of letters, books, old photographs, mementoes from around the world and autographed baseballs.

Gerard had just opened up a desk drawer full of old letters when Moira entered the room and came up from behind him. She had hardly known her Uncle Al, but she had had a life-long relationship with the man who was sitting at the desk and lost in his thoughts. She loved her Uncle Gerard in the way that he had loved his Uncle Al. She felt the old man's grief. He turned to look at her with that smile she had always loved. She impulsively reached for his broad shoulders and briefly massaged them as she gently asked, "would you like some tea, Uncle Gerard?"

He turned around just enough to be able to pat her hand as he responded, “that would hit the spot, sweetheart.” The two exchanged an affectionate smile but left it at that because the Moran family had never been ones to share their feelings since they had fled the Irish potato famine for the flat farmlands of the American Midwest during the year known as *Black 47*. Uncle Al had been the only one of their exiled Irish American clan to return to live in Ireland: and this was only when he was an old man ready to die, retired from the Liverpool Art College, and after he had buried Ginny, his beloved wife in English soil. He was too old to resume his life in the United States and England had become washed out and dead to him without his wife, so Al Moran had found himself in a remote and peaceful village in the outer reaches of Ireland.

Gerard started to read a letter that Al had addressed to his brother Adam. The postscript was dated 1959. The item belonged in the family archives because it was fifty-eight years old.

*Dear Adam:*

*I am ready to get cracking at my new teaching post at the Liverpool Art College on Monday. To kill some time on Saturday I went into a pub very near to my new digs, as the English say, and I saw a band that called themselves the...*

### **October 21, 1959 Liverpool, England**

Professor Al Morn, a newly appointed lecturer at the Liverpool Art College, was behaving just like a cocky American tourist that night. He entered *Ye Old Grape Pub* like it was his own castle and that he was the lord of the manor. He was a rather handsome devil of a man with a proud beard to adorn his healthy and hearty face. His bulk, height and appearance of prosperity set him apart from the clientele. He became a bit annoyed when his order went unheeded by the bartender, who was gabbing away in a loud voice with some other customers. The Yank kept his composure long enough to hear the bartender addressed as “Squire Clancy.”

“Squire Clancy, is it?”

“An American Yankee, is it?” asked the aproned man behind the bar with a gummy smile. “I’m running behind me time because the tart who helps me out is running late as is her usual custom.”

Al attempted to digest the near gibberish of the Liverpool dialect as he studied the draught beers labels in front of him. In frustration, he took a peek at the drink in the hand of the person standing the closet to him and

pointed at it, declaring with Catholic conviction, "I'll take one of those black beers."

"On this side of the pond the natives call the black beer *Guinness Stout*."

"Is it an English brand?"

"Ireland, mate," Clancy said as his jaw dropped at this Joe's ignorance, "but, then again, there are some who say that Liverpool is the capital of Ireland because there's more Paddies here than in any other city outside of Dublin...and New York."

"I'm from Chicago," said Al, hoping to steer the conversation back towards himself.

"Here comes our Ginny Browne just now."

Al turned around and for a moment and he was afraid he would fall off his stool; for Ginny Browne, who was dressed to the nines in the most current fashion from London, (green parka, knee-length boots and black netted tights) was a living doll! She brushed back her reddish auburn hair as she flashed Al an elfin smile. She exulted the confident of a beauty queen who realized all male eyes were upon her at that moment: even the ones with dates. She what the doctor had ordered for Al Moran: tall, leggy and busty. He hoped she had green eyes like the incubi legend in medieval literature.

"The ferry boat ride across the bloody Mersey River was slower than ever this evening because of the crowded deck, the choppy waves and the..."

"Never mind the weather forecast, lass, I'm glad to see you because this local is filling up rapidly.

The noise of the band setting up their gear for their nightly performance on a makeshift stage caught Al's attention. He frowned when he saw the electric guitars and amps plugged in for a night of loud music. Three scruffy and pimply teenagers, clad in black leather jackets and tight blue jeans, were going to provide the entertainment. The educated American had no use for Elvis Presley, rock and roll or teenagers. A fourth young man, the drummer, arrived and began to arrange his kit. Al must have been staring and frowning for too long, for one of the Teddy Boys returned his stare and frowned. To avoid a showdown, Al turned his attention back to the activity up at the bar.

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