



Creative Writing



Glenwood Forest

THIRD YEAR

In the heart of the Glenwood Forest, where the whispers of the past echoed through a tapestry of ancient bark and leaf, the world seemed to hold its breath in reverent silence. The canopy above was a mosaic of green, filtering the sunlight into a kaleidoscope of warmth that danced upon the forest floor. It was here, amidst the serenity of towering oaks and whispering pines, that the old tales spoke of a hidden magic, woven into the woods.

On this day, the forest was disrupted only by the soft footsteps of Mark, a local woodsman known for his affinity with the wild and his heart as sturdy as the trunks that surrounded him. His voice, a gentle baritone, hummed an old folk tune, *"Ah, Glenwood, what secrets do you guard beneath your emerald veil?"* he mused aloud, not expecting an answer, yet feeling the forest listened all the same. Mark's query hung in the air, a soft challenge to the ancient silence of Glenwood. The forest, undisturbed by his presence, continued its endless cycle of life; the rustle of small creatures in the underbrush, the distant call of a hawk circling above. Mark, with his keen eyes, often found himself lost in the artistry of nature, each tree a brushstroke of a larger masterpiece.

As the sun began its slow descent, casting long shadows that stretched like fingers across the forest

floor, Mark felt a subtle shift in the air, a change that whispered of evenings approaching. It was during these twilight hours that Glenwood seemed to stir with a more profound energy, as if the setting sun unlocked the doors to older, more mystical realms.

On this particular evening as Mark followed the winding path that he knew as well as his calloused hands, he stumbled upon an unusual sight. There, stood a doe, her coat a rich, golden-brown that glowed in the dying light. But it wasn't the doe that caught Mark's attention, it was the peculiar markings that adorned her fur, symbols that seemed to swirl and shift before his eyes. *"By the elder spirits"* he whispered, his voice barely a thread in the vast tapestry of Glenwood's evening chorus. The doe, as if understanding the reverence in his tone, did not bolt, but instead locked eyes with Mark. It was in this moment, in the stillness between them, that Mark realised Glenwood had indeed answered his earlier musing. The forest had secrets, and on this rare occasion, it had chosen to share one with him.

The story of Glenwood was unfolding and Mark, with a mixture of awe and curiosity, was about to become a part of its next chapter.





The Tale of Bog Bunny and the Sting

REBECCA DALY
SIXTH YEAR

Once upon a time, there lived a little bunny named Bán. His burrow lay snug in the forest of Falias, in ancient Ireland. He shared this burrow with his mother. This woods was home to a great many creatures, all living together in harmony. Bán lived a happy, cosy life surrounded by neighbours who gathered and frolicked all day, cushioned in a mossy neighbourhood. Bán's mother, Rosemary Rabbit, was known in the village for being quite adventurous. From a young age, he mirrored her traits. He regularly trailed after her into the forest, only for her to realise and send him back on his way.

Now and then, when the mist had ascended and the sun showed great promise, Rosemary Rabbit would travel to the human settlement. She always left her kit in the care of Felicity Foxglove. Bán always awaited his mother's return with anticipation. He'd spend days pacing the burrow or jumping near the tallgrass to distract himself. When she did return, she recited her tales by the fireside, with Bán tucked safely in bed. She told stories of the Gaelic monks, scribing for hours and hours into a parchment-woven book. Rosemary Rabbit adored the red berry ink, watching with curiosity as they crushed and ground the mixture to write with.

One day in spring, Rosemary Rabbit announced she was leaving for the settlement. As usual, Bán was twitchy and anticipated her return. He spent two days gathering blossoms and chasing the young fox cubs in circles. Then, two moons later, Rosemary

Rabbit did return. Bán gasped as he saw his mother, eyes dripping with tears. She had gotten too close to the monks, and a housecat had swiftly scratched her back. Rosemary Rabbit barely escaped. The village did what they could. Ben Badger boiled a nettle soup, Saoirse Sparrow steamed lavender while Felicity Fox did the laundry for a week. To everyone's sadness, Rosemary Rabbit's condition languished. Bán never left her side, hopelessly watching over her each night.

He thought long and hard about what he could do to rescue his mother. He sat long atop the burrow, searching in the stars at night for an answer. He immediately wanted to track the cat that did it, but this idea was no good, for he was far too small (and frankly, timid). At once he recollected an old tale his mother would recite when he was a firstborn. It told of the magical 'Banríon Bee', said to have magical healing powers, but nobody had ever seen or heard tell of her for years. Bán heard of animals which never returned from her palace of guards. Her kingdom supposedly hung beside the sweetpea meadow, deep in a thorny nook. Bán looked to the stars and wished for his plan to work. He couldn't be left alone, without a mother, a father, or siblings. It was simply not an option for the young bunny. He had more love for his mother in his heart than words could paint.

Hurridly, he tiptoed past his sleeping mother. He slung a leather satchel around his furry body, stuffing it with a compass, a pocketwatch, a knife and, a great helping of Emléda Raccoon's get-well-soon tarts.





Kissing his mother gently, he set off on his journey. He pit-patted on the forest floor, leaving little muddy trailmarks. He hip-hopped over stones on a babbling stream and darted under shade after spotting 5-inch-long sparrows! For days he scurried, leaving crumbs which invited a friendly parade of insects after him. With his little heart beating fast, he peeked around him. He had reached the meadow. As far as he could see, colour burst into vibrant lilacs, pinks, blues, yellows and whites. The sugar-sweet smell danced on his twitching nose. He began to hop under the tall flowers, their underbellies sending dancing colours of iridescence like a spectacle.

At last, the little bunny came to the Banrion's castle. A cacophony of humming rose like a symphony, matching the drum beat of Bán's heart. With an exhale, he put one paw in front of the other and entered the dark trail. Sharp angry thorns pinched at his ankles until they gathered so thickly his only option was to clamber upward. He reached a mossy ledge where he was greeted by almost 30 drone bees, undoubtedly the queen's guards. Bán's marble eyes widened, his ears frozen. He hadn't quite imagined this far ahead. He stood up tall, reaching high, and bowed. The bees, who had assembled a gate around him, dispersed in approval. Bán hopped on timidly, into a sort of cave crafted by hard honeycomb. His feet were smothered in sticky honey. His vision failed him, but squinting he was able to make out a singular fragment of golden light. There, hovered on a golden pedestal, a glowing, illuminated bee creature. She rose, flying at direct eye level to Bán. He bowed again, and presented a tartlet, for he wanted to be polite. Banrion Bee rose again, and it seemed the room began to sway. It was like a violin orchestra had begun to play, harmonising and singing in unison. It was the most beautiful music Bán's too-big ears had ever heard. It sounded like honey.

Banrion Bee led him to a small, beautiful corner where a dark sword crafted from a bee's singer lay. On the other side, a jar of honey. Bán felt he was invited to take one, as the Banrion motioned two and fro. Bán stretched eagerly for the honey, for it glowed like a thousand suns and swirled and swam within the jar. Suddenly, the melody stopped. The drone bees circled Bán, and the Banrion rose to a greater height,

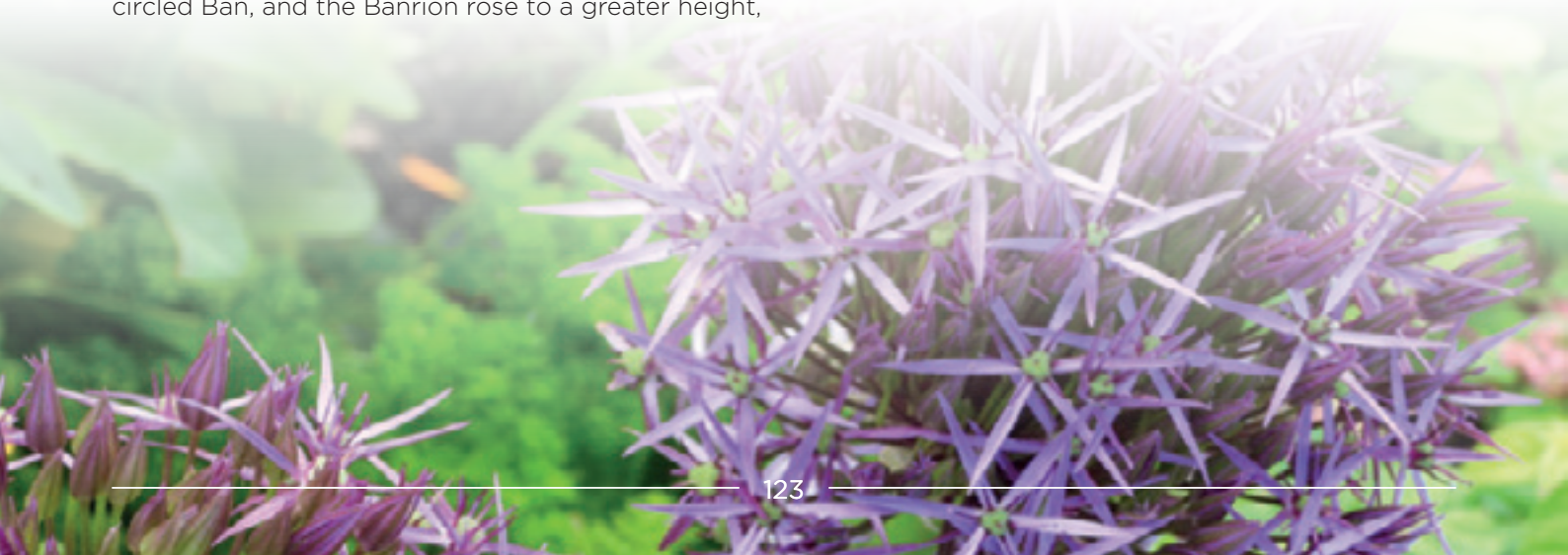
preparing to dive. Bán dashed out of the hive at full speed. He didn't quit running until the babbling brook, and as he caught his breath, he realised he was being followed. A villainous colony was fast approaching. Bán continued to hop and skip and jump until his little paws reached home.

He plunged into his burrow, lodging a piece of timber over the round entrance. His mother awoke with all the panic. Bán was covered in mud and honey, with strange petals and seeds sticking to his fur making him look like an embellished bedcover. He dashed to his mother, producing the golden honey. As he pleaded with her to drink it, the colony of bees stabbed and climbed at his makeshift door. All at once they came tumbling in, and a harmonious light illuminated the burrow like a flame. The banrion had arrived.

She swooped at the jar of honey, and it tumbled to the floor, landing with a great smash sending ice-like shards in every which way. Slowly, she landed on Bán's nose. With sympathetic eyes, she nodded. Bán was stunned, for the Banrion was shining like never before. She seemed to possess some magical quality, for the room was peaceful at once. Her army took up their chords again and hummed a beautiful tune which echoed across every tree, rock and pool in the forest. Animals crept timidly from their homes, following the wonderful lullaby. The banrion bee then flew to Bán's mother and produced the grey, sword. With one swift motion, she pierced Rosemary Rabbit's tail, and after a few moments, she began to recover. Her infection left, her open wound sealing slowly with a sparkle so small Ban thought he fantasised about it. The music swelled and the bees danced like fragments between the queen's glimmer. They swooped low and high, fleeing the forest for good.

Ban understood a valuable lesson. He learnt that just because something seems good, pure and beautiful, it doesn't mean it is the right choice. Sometimes, the thing which seems the most ugly can transcend appearance.

He also learned that he treasures his mother very much, as that night she sat by his bedside, and Bán got to recount a tale of his own.





This is Just to Say...

4F Poems Modelled on "This is Just to Say..." by William Carlos Williams

This is Just to Say...

*I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox*

*and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast*

*Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold*

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

This is Just to Say...

*I have taken
the markers
That were on
your desk*

*And which
You were probably
Using
For your homework*

*Forgive me
I couldn't find
My own
For my homework*

AMELIA TOBIN

This is Just to Say...

*The kids miss you a lot
They cry
And so do I*

*I know
I made a mistake
But please
Come back soon*

*Forgive me
The house is empty
The kids
Need their mom*

STEPHANIE FINLAY

This is Just to Say...

*I have hidden my plums
That were previously in the
icebox*

*And which you were
probably going to eat*

*I won't forgive you
They are delicious
Get your own*

BETH WHITE



Chips

2D Poems Modelled on "Chips" by
Stanley Cook

Chips

Out of the paper bag
Comes the hot breath of the chips
And I shall blow on them
To stop them burning my lips

Before I leave the counter
The woman shakes
Raindrops of vinegar on them
And salty snowflakes.

Outside the frosty pavements
Are slippery as a slide
But the chips and I are warm inside.

STANLEY COOK

Poem on Ice Cream

Ice cream so cold and creamy
It makes me so dreamy
I dream of a summer's day
When winter has gone away

I eat it beside the sea
As I smile with glee
The sun shines on my face
This is my favourite place

Oh I love Ice cream
It is the best
Sweet and delicious
It always passes the test

LILY McDONAGH

Pizza, Pizza

Pizza, Pizza
I love u so much especially when
ur hot out of the box
Fresh from the shop

Topped with cheese and sauce
That dance and prance on my
tongue
With your crisp crust it is a must

Hot and fresh out of the oven
I dont think twice
I will always gobble it up
Slice after slice.

EMILY PLUNKETT

Pasta, Pasta

Pasta, Pasta I love you I do
tomato, cheese or even stew
Pasta, pasta I love your taste
spiral, shell or any other shape

Pasta, Pasta you're a creamy
delight
even on a long flight
Pasta, Pasta your a delicious
meal

You really do appeal

Pasta, Pasta I will give you
my heart
event if your a nasty fart
Pasta, Pasta I will not share
I love it so much I will swear

SHAUNA O'BRIEN



Cookies

Freshly baked warm cookies
Always can be made quickly
they can come in the shape of
brookies
they are never sickly

I always watch and wait to try
them
They are fresh out of the oven
They burn my mouth
But at least they are not muffins

We don't have them often
It is not very fair
But I'll take them into my coffin
To live with me in there

REIDIN DOWNEY

Chocolate Cake

When I see a big cake covered in
chocolate

My whole world stops as the
Love I have for chocolate cake
Is infectious

The second I put the cake into
my mouth

It feels amazing
The texture and richness is too
die for

The rich taste stays in my mouth
all day long

How I wish I could have cake all
day long

As I love it so much my world
would be gone

Oh Chocolate cake you are
the best

Thank you oh thank you!

HOLLY McILWAINE

Pasta and Pasta

Pasta comes in many shapes
Curly, long, short and straight
It comes in many sauces too
Red, white and meatball stew

It is yummy and easy to make
And I think it has no mistakes
A plate of it I could eat
Again and again on repeat

Sometimes, it can be messy
Especially when u have spaghetti
No matter what I love it a lot
and right now I wish I had a pot.

FRANCESCA LEE

Penne al Arabiata

Spicy pasta on my tongue
Tingles and keeps me young
Feels like a fire in my belly
I know the water is ready

I feel the pasta heat up
And I know it's gonna be good
Warms me up like a radiator
I know I will gobble it up later

Can I inject it in my veins
Sauce like blood , but that's not
what it contains

Spicy, creamy and oh so good
Can't wait for dinner, gonna be
good

SIÚN HUDNER



Nationwide's St. Valentine's Day Visit

*Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.*

W.B. YEATS

Inspired by our Leaving Certificate literary voyage, Ms. Byrne's Sixth Year English class had spent some time philosophising about the agony and ecstasy of love. Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath, W.B. Yeats and Maud Gonne had shed light on the complexity of unrequited love and passion which propels poetic inspiration. Therefore, it was with great ease that the same group of literary lovers took on the task of writing a response to the essay title:

'Sometimes somebody walks through the door and changes your life irrevocably'.

Little did they know that **Nationwide** was going to come a courting in February to film a segment in our school on the attitudes of young people to love in the 21st Century. Four unsuspecting novice writers penned heartfelt pieces to their loved ones which were immortalised on Nationwide's St. Valentine's Day programme in February 2024.





Dearest Granny,

It is three years since your passing and yet I feel your presence so keenly. Like Carson McCullers once said 'How can the dead be truly dead when they still live in the souls of those who are left behind?' Growing up I was known as 'mini granny' because we were so alike, from our curly hair to our bright blue eyes, the resemblance was uncanny, that's why you used to call me your 'little dolly'.

One of my lasting memories of you is of when I used to paint your nails with shiny pink polish. I remember waving at you through the nursing home window when Covid 19 broke out and noticing that you still wore a few chips of the pink nail polish before we were so suddenly separated. Each time you waved at me from that window, you smiled such a brave bright smile and yet your blue eyes carried a different message, of distress and fatigue.

Your eyes were never brighter than when I was singing for you. You loved Adele, especially the song 'Skyfall' and I remember how your eyes would light up when you heard me sing. One of my fondest memories of you is when you taught me how to sing 'que sera, sera, whatever will be, will be'. I regret not being able to sing for you more in your final years.

We had many traditions but one of my favourite ones was baking for you. You loved my signature ginger biscuits which, although a Christmas treat, you persuaded me to bake all year round. I would drop them up to your house in your personalised biscuit tin and you would have them devoured before grandad 'lala' could even get a look in!

Your passing signalled the end of our treasured traditions. However, I think of A.A Milne who once said 'How lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard'. My heart was broken when you passed away but I know that a broken heart is a heart that once loved deeply. I will forever be tied to you, my wonderful grandmother, through my curly hair, bright blue eyes and sense of humour. I love you more than words can describe especially now that you are dancing in the sky.

Yours,
Alex

Dear Sister,

Our relationship may have begun with you asking our parents 'when is she going back?', at two days old I was a bit of a distraction afterall. However, they say our parents leave us too soon, our spouses come too late, friends come and go but our siblings are with us for the whole journey, making it arguably the most important relationship in our lives.

When I was younger, I wanted to be you, your ability to remain calm and collected fascinated me. You truly are the only person in the entire world who knows more about me than I know myself. For example, you can tell when I am sad, anxious or excited. Kindness and compassion characterise you and you have taught me to be more open minded and less judgemental.

While it is easy to get caught up in minor difficulties, you remind me to be grateful for what I have; a roof over my head, food and a bed. It is easy to forget how hard life is for others, but you help me to put my challenges into perspective.

'A sister is a dearest friend, a closest enemy and an angel in a time of need'. While we might have had our moments when we were younger, I think it has strengthened both of our characters. Our relationship has made me realistic, resilient and has shaped our identities. I know you are my best friend and greatest supporter, I never feel alone in your company. You make me feel like I belong and give me a sense of purpose and for that I will always be grateful.

Yours,
Emily



Dear Auntie,

Companion, role model, super star are some of the words that spring to mind when I think of you. As a young child I remember you dressing me up and styling my hair so that I could make my big entrance into my grandparents' sitting room singing 'Ladies Night'. Looking at the audience of my family, I would notice your loving, amiable smile cheering me on. It never failed to make me feel simultaneously confident and loved. I don't know if you realise what a positive impact your soothing smile has on me.

From playgrounds to bowling alleys there was never a dull moment with you. However, then one evening my Mum revealed that you were expecting a little girl of your own. This big surprise was exciting but I couldn't help feeling a little bit jealous. What if our relationship changed? Meeting my cousin for the first time, I didn't feel jealous at all, only exultation. My heart filled with love for this exquisite baby girl. I was so proud that you had brought such an angelic little human into this world. I remember holding your second daughter when she was born and thinking how both of my cousins were replicas of you, your solicitude and sympathy shines through them.

Your gentleness and tolerance permeates your work with children with additional needs. The way you teach and care for these children has inspired me to pursue the same path. I would also like to work with such exceptional, extraordinary children. You have given me tremendous opportunities to not only work with but also to learn from the children and teachers in a special school. The effect that your kind nature has on those around you motivates me to do the same.

This summer you will get married and I admire the deep, heartfelt love between you and your fiancé. He has changed your life, in the same way that you have changed mine; the love I bear you is infinite.

Yours,
Alia

Dear Sister,

As children we were so close that I vowed I would have two children of my own so they would never be lonely, as we were not. Someone who they couldn't hold a grudge against for longer than an hour because they would make each other laugh. Even though I am your big sister, I have never felt in charge of you. Growing up together, our world was a democracy where we were on the same wavelength. It was a golden age of tea parties and dancing until we fell to the floor, exhausted but exhilarated by our synchronicity.

However, golden ages are only known as that because they are temporary and the same can be said about you and I. We were never estranged but eventually I didn't want to play pretend anymore and started to focus on friends and school work. Often we found ourselves sitting at the same table, eyes glued to our screens as we mutually ignored the other's existence.

All of a sudden, I found myself alone in the world without a companion at my side. Of course I had our parents, but they could never fill the chasm in my soul that you could. I realised that our relationship was entirely unique and could not be replaced by videos or even school friends. I reached an epiphany; what we had was unlike any other friendship I had ever had, my life was emptier when I let our bond wither. It is true what people say, you never miss things until they're gone. In a way I felt incomplete, like I was one of the original humans in Greek mythology with four arms, four legs and two faces. Just like the myth, I was split apart from you when we had once been twin flames. A little part of me became hollow and dull; a certain side of my personality was shelved like it was an antique doll, leaving only memories of the fun we had once shared.

Once you began secondary school, we gradually bridged the gap between us and the chasm in my heart was filled with the healing elixir of connection. Our intimate web of inside jokes painted our worlds neon and I could always rely on you for a good time. I can't believe how isolated we had become from each other during the pandemic and I pledge that I will never let that happen again.

After sifting through my catalogue of life lessons, the most important one is this: nothing can replace sibling relationships, not friends, social media or possessions. Our sibling bond is unique and I would not trade you for anything in the world. I know I am guaranteed a lifelong companion whose love will never waver.

Yours,
Jamie



Ulysses Through the Knee-Deep Snow

The icy wind whipped across Ulysses' face as she trudged through the knee-deep snow. Her numb fingers clutching what was left of her snowboard, she looked around for any sign of life, a glimmer of light, a lone hut, anything. All she could see for miles was snow. An entirety of white - a whiteout.

Her body grew weaker, minute by minute - she slowly began losing the ability to move. *"I should have stayed in the hut, at least I could rest, I was safe,"* she muttered to herself. However she knew that wasn't entirely true. She hadn't been safe by herself; she had no chance there, no hope, but at least it had been warm, warmer than the freezing, inhospitable arctic plains of Dublin she was currently desperately scouting. She'd have starved there eventually or died of loneliness, or both.

Just yesterday she had been sitting in her grandfather's cabin in County Dublin, a once cheerful old shack, full of life, laughter and love, reading, and hearing stories of Ireland back in the old days before climate change transformed the lush landscape. But with granddad Joyce gone it now felt empty, she felt empty, felt like she'd lost her sanctuary and so she had set out on her epic journey.

Her thoughts of her grandfather kept her going, as she heaved herself through mountains of glacial snow, on a desperate quest to find someone, anyone.... All of a sudden, through the clouds of snow, a dark shape appeared, breaking the monotonous, endless white. Heart leaping, she quickened her pace as fast as her numb body would allow. But as quickly as it

had appeared, the shape seemed to melt back into the snow, and it was gone. *"God damn it! I'm not just freaking out here, I'm going crazy too,"* she muttered to herself.

At this point her body could no longer move, every hair on her face had turned to ice, her breath shallow and her heartbeat began to beat slower and slower. She wasn't sure if he was dead yet, but she knew she would be very soon.

Her body gave way, falling quietly onto a soft bed of snow. This was it. *"I'm coming grandpa"* she said softly. *"I'm coming..."*

"Oh no you're not" came a loud voice from in front of her. A moment later she felt her body being lifted off the ground, as her eyes closed and her mind blacked out.

Ulysses awoke. *"Where am I?"* she spluttered, feeling warm, a soft tingling all over her body, like popping-candy in her veins.

"Don't worry, you're safe now" came voices from nearby, somewhere in the room. She sat up, covered by warm layers of animal skin, looked around, and saw an old but welcoming cabin, like her grandfather's, and through the window, a village of similar cabins with a glimpse of a stone tower and a frozen sea beyond. A group of people were gathered nearby smiling their welcome to Sandycove.

LARAGH HAYES
THIRD YEAR

