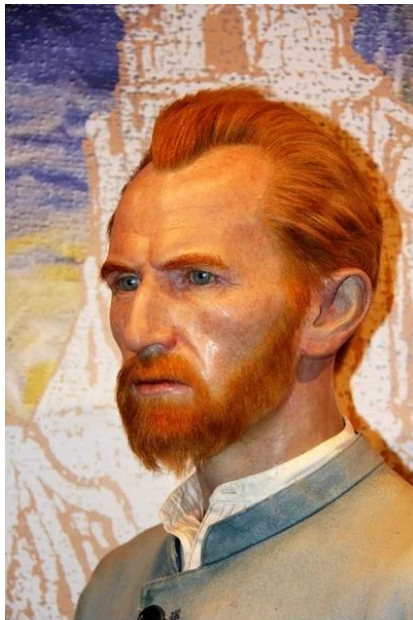


**Westport Writing Warriors**  
**Session in Westport 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023**

**“My Worst Fear”**  
**And the Visual**



*Vincent van Gogh*  
*My Worst Fear*

## My Worst Fear

Eva Creely

("Fear" being the Gaelic word for Man.....)



My worst fear turned in fact out to be my worst 'Fear'. There I was in Matt Molloy's all set for the Craic agus ceol. The musicians were all tuning up for the seisuin in the back room. It was crowded so we sat just behind a partition across from the bar and there was my nemesis. Holding up the bar were two lads with pints in front of them. One of them had on a jacket that had Crew emblazoned on it. But the other fella well you could hardly see his jumper for the flowing beard. It looked like there was eating and drinking in it. I went to the bar to order a drink and that's when it began. Beardie leaned in close. 'Are ye up for dancing' he murmured. I ignored him but nothing daunted he followed me when I stood in the doorway of the back room to listen to the music. Another lean in. I used the elbow to some effect. He wandered off. And at least it was possible to listen and tap the feet along with everyone else.. then a young one hopped up and started to step dance although there was feic all room for it. It was more of whirling Dervish than sean nos. Then in swept mister Crew jacket saying sure you couldn't leave a

woman to dance on her own and there he was shuffling alongside. His feet rarely left the floor but unfortunately the crowd cheered and clapped. 'Don't encourage him' I thought. But that was it, as soon as her feet hit the floor, and I mean hit the floor with her boots, Crew was up and at it.

And beardie was in the wings leaning in using the crowding at the door to breathe Guinness fumes down my neck. Retreat is sometimes the best strategy, so back to the bar I go but the Craic is really beyond the partition. Especially when occasionally the musicians went quiet and others took the floor. There was woman who said a monologue on the joys of being old. For encore she told a joke. About a cat and a mother. Everyone already knew how it would go apart from the two tourists sitting beside her. But she got great applause and even more when she hopped up with three others to dance the Kerry set. I don't know how they managed it in the space between the tables. And the fellows involved were flying and stamping with their feet in proper time. That will show Mr Crew I thought. He will hardly show himself up again. But nothing daunted the Guinness gave him wings and within a few minutes he was back up with your wan not quite tripping the light fantastic. Then I noticed beardie had left off haunting my shoulder. He was weaving his unsteady way across the room. It was the way to the Gents. Good riddance I thought. But then he stopped halfway. He smiled at the younger woman tourist and waved. She being polite rose to shake his hand. He took and bowed low and kissed her hand. She didn't know where to look. Welcome to the club sister I thought, now you've met your worst 'Fear'. .too. She sat down quickly leaving him standing unsteady on his feet. He eventually weaved his way to the Gents and didn't come back for a while. . . It was a relief. But not for too long. Mr Crew was back up dancing when beardie

returned and this time he kissed the woman dancer. Crew and himself obviously worked in pairs. Time to go i reckoned. When we left they were both still holding up the bar. They are probably there still. My worst 'Fear' agus Mr Crew.

## **Her Worst Fear**

**Harry Browne**

Vincent strode into the salubrious library in the seaside hotel, "Where's yer wan that was in Matt Molloy's last night. Rumour has it that she bewitched every man in the place from the twelve year old who should have been in bed to the octogenarian with the long grey beard. And that's not even mentioning the fat bloke in the crew jersey.

Fingering the scarred right side of his head where he had a self-inflicted reminder of a previous inamorata he continued "I've been dead for a hundred years but I got a call demanding that I come back for one last gig to try and catch the essence of this goddess in paints. The celestial choir decided that of all the painters from prehistory to the present day, only I, in my magnificence was the right one to take on this task"

The goddess in question, somewhat the worse for wear after a strenuous night of dancing, drinking, singing and flirting outrageously with anything in trousers, groaned piteously and sobbed "For God's sake leave me alone. My head hurts, I think I've sprained my ankle and my very worst fear is that the weirdo with the long scraggly beard who hasn't been washed since the midwife performed the service might rock up today looking to hook up with me. I'm in no mood for sitting to have my portrait painted just now, even if, unlikely as it sounds, Vincent has come back from the dead to do the deed"

"No" she continued "I'm off down to the spa for a seaweed bath, massage, pedicure, manicure and a hairdo, maybe then I might feel fit enough to confront the vagaries of the world.