

# Westport Warriors Session

21<sup>st</sup> February 2023

"The Prompt from The Bag Was:

*"Two Ducks came waddling down the lane  
Said one to the other what beautiful rain  
Nine Irish writers, some well grown  
Looked out the window and started to frown  
The Clerk of the weather scratched his head  
You cant please everyone, he said."*

And the Visual



## Two ducks

### Harry Browne

“What do I have to do to satisfy these ungrateful whelps”  
The venerable weather Clerk, and part time creative writing facilitator Harry, otherwise known as “Hey you” wondered to himself, scratching his tousled locks in frustration.

“I sweat for hours every week sorting out prompts but what do I get for my labours. Sweet FA that’s what I get for my labours. Half the time they don’t even write to my prompts at all, going off on a rant of their own as if my efforts were of no consequence. Then there’s the ones who shuffle their chairs around and whisper to their next chair over and in penetrating tones demand to know “What does that prompt mean?” And don’t get me started on the ones who think the three minute rule is something to do with toast dropped on the floor”

Then there’s the dreaded writers retreat which someone invariably suggests just after Christmas. I mean, who wants to trek off to the back of beyond with a bunch of wannabe writers to hang about in a rain soaked hotel in the butt end of a god forsaken West of Ireland in mid February? Retreat is it? More like a penance.

“Base ingratitude, that’s my lot in life” He wept, curling up with a good book before a roaring fire, cappuccino close to hand

## **Animal Phobia**

### **Catriona Murphy**

Clarissa had the most scandalous tape; it involved her husband, a donkey, and a shopping bag.

It wasn't the kind that one would read in the Sunday World about what Katie Price did last Saturday night, nor the latest infidelity by Connor McGregor.

But it did involve a scuffle that started when her husband had brought his tape recorder to capture the true sounds of nature - the birds, the gurgling river, the trees swaying etc. It had been his latest entrepreneurial epiphany, that somehow these sounds would sell online for €100 per tape, not knowing they were already splashed across Youtube and one could simply listen to them for hours.

A donkey had escaped its field while he strolled along and blocked his path. Not knowing he had turned the recorder on when he'd accidentally dropped his bag earlier, he began to shout abuse at the poor animal, scolding it for impeding his way.

What listeners of the tape wouldn't have known is that he had a phobia of animals and jumped onto the fence lining the pathway to the woods ahead.

He shook his fist with anger, while cursing his cowardice for not simply walking around the offending beast.

Considering whether to abandon the adventure altogether, he proceeded to get down from the fence, but then fell into a bog that lay on the other side.

He climbed hand over hand towards the edge, spitting out grass, mud, and murky water. The tape even covered the

part where a plastic bag blew straight into his face as he wrestled in the moors (the west coast had been struck with a monstrous gale that day, another great reason to go out filming), when he pulled it from his face, did he look up and see a sign nailed to a wooden post. The instructions read:

'Do not climb the fence; danger of falling into a bog.' That earned a few more roars from the enraged man.

Now, I have the tape.

I've signed a 10 year contract with a phobia management company to provide the first of many tapes.

My husband, for his part, while likely to die of an early heart attack, will be rest assured to know that I'll have a generous pension when I reach retirement.

**Achill**  
**Eva Creely**



The quilted fields of Achill stretch out alongside the bus  
Stitched together with crumbling grey stone walls

Or:

Furze impossibly gay  
Their startling yellow and green  
Showing up the muted patchwork of rusty reds and brown  
Of last year's growth of rushes and bracken  
No sunshine here for quite some time  
Grey mists tip the mountain tops  
Then roll down to the shore  
Where Atlantic rollers sweep into pristine bays  
And make them ready for intrepid dippers  
Rather than toe in the water types  
For Achill is not for the faint hearted or day trippers in  
February

It wears them down like rain on stone  
Until they leave wet through without tea, soup or sandwich  
And cross the bridge desperate to head for home.