

Inkslingers Blended Session

24th June 2023

The Prompt from The Bag Was:

“Will Glass Coffins be a Success? Remains to be seen.”

And the Visual



Will Glass Coffins Be A Success?

Bernadette O'Reilly

Buried or cremated?

A decision we all eventually make

The traditional coffin

Or the environment friendly one?

Is another question

Not sure a glass coffin is the way to go

What if it smashed?

Yes I think like that

We humans are more used to viewing

The remains then the coffin is closed

Seeing the coffin lowered into the grave

Is hard enough but to view the corpse being

Lowered into the ground through a glass coffin

Would not be for me

Every day I hear of things not heard of before

My despair at the way the world is changing

Deepens.

The Gift

Heloisa Prieto

(an excerpt from The Storyteller)

Giulia asked Akin to drive us back home. She sat on the back seat and kept on scrolling

her mobile. I noticed she was exceptionally quiet, but I felt so grateful for her silence

that I kept my eyes on the road. Akin was driving and asked me to stream some Igbo

music. Traffic was heavy and it took us around one hour and a half to reach our home.

As soon as we parked the car, Giulia got out, opened the doors and told us quickly:

“Bye bye! See you soon!”

Akin and I got into the house and I wanted to make a comment on her unusual

behavior, but it felt so cozy to get into the living room with my beloved brother I would

rather not.

“Oh, Akin, all I want is to take a shower and relax. Shall we order some take out

tonight? Maybe some Italian food?”

Akin sat on the couch and asked me to join him:

“Sis, there is something I have been meaning to tell you!”

I shivered!

“What is it? Please, tell me!”

“You see, back home in Nigeria, we also face severe social injustice. But people can

be proud of themselves, they know who they are...”

“Go on...”

“But here, some afro Brazilians I have met seem to have a hole in their souls. As if

they had lost their identity, somehow. At the mall, one of the guards was afro Brazilian

but he couldn't believe I actually belonged to a wealthy family in Nigeria. He acted out

of ignorance, I know, but I also felt an emptiness in his eyes, some hollowness, maybe a

sort of exile.. And when I tried to look him in the eye and speak straightforwardly, I

sounded so foreign. It is as if he expected me to act humbly, with a very low self esteem.

Do you know what I mean?”

I caressed my brother's cheek and told him:

“Absolutely! I must say I feel kind of exiled as well. I am just beginning to reconnect with my roots now, because of you. But for so many years I couldn't feel as if I

belonged to my own family, I couldn't really deal with my school friends as I told you

before. Now, I noticed something very unusual about Kadu. He is proud. He is

self-sufficient. He seems to know who he really is.”

“I am not so sure, sis. I can sense a shadow of sadness in his soul. I guess he must

have gone through a lot. We haven't actually talked to him. But something tells me he is

a private person. I am not sure he will ever open up his heart to us. Does that matter to

you?”

I laid back on my side of the couch and kept silent for a few seconds, then I finally

knew what to say:

“Not at all. I feel Kadu and I are kindred spirits. But maybe, as you always tell me,

these were decisions our unborn souls made long before coming into this world.”

As I said these words I couldn’t quite recognize my own voice. Was I becoming a

stranger to my own self?

“Just a second Sis” said Akin, “I have a gift for you!”

He ran up the stairs to his bedroom and came back with a small package. He sat

by my side and told me to open it up. A homemade herbal soap.

“Our Dad gave it to me just before his passing. He made the soap himself. He

prayed for health, happiness and all that is good while he was making it.”

I placed the soap over my heart and told Akin:

“I shall keep it forever!”

He cracked up.

“NO! It’s just the opposite! Go upstairs, get into the shower. Wash yourself very

carefully with this soap. As you do that, visualize all that you want to take away from

your body. I mean, old pains, old memories, old worries. Focus on your head and try to

feel a new mind space. The soap will melt, it holds no chemicals, and this is how it should be”.

“Oh, Akin, can’t I hold on to this gift? It was handcrafted by our father! I wish I

could keep it! I don’t want it to melt away!”

Akin held me strongly for a few seconds and said:

“Just do as told...”

I went upstairs, opened the door to the ensuite bathroom. I had been sleeping in

Mom’s bedroom, so that Akin could use mine. I had taken several showers after Mom’s

funeral, but, for the first time I realized her toothbrush was still there, in the glass. I got

into the shower and saw her shampoo. I have curly hair, Mom had straight hair, we had

never shared the same hair products. Somehow, this detail gave me some insights about

our relationship. How can a daughter feel so close to a mother and yet never really be

able to open up to her?

As I got under the clean, warm, shower, a sense of relaxation took hold of me. I

started washing my hair with the soap and I felt as if it were indeed magical. My hair felt

conditioned, so soft. I loved my long, tight curls dearly, for the first time. I closed my

eyes and smelled the herbs. It was intoxicating. I used the soap to clean my limbs and my

arms skin shone so brightly, I felt incredibly beautiful.

When I finally reached my toes, the soap had melted away, but I did not mind.

Somehow I knew the herbs, my father's wisdom, my heritage was inside my soul now.

Rapunzel Remastered

Ashley Sterrit

Once upon a time there was a princess in a tower. One day, a prince rode out to her tower and asked her to cast down her long hair for him to pull himself up. She thought, "surely I lack the strength in my trapezius and other neck and shoulder muscles for such a manoeuvre" but she nonetheless attempted it and was delighted to discover that it was not only possible but easy.

In her long seclusion in the tower she had lost her faith, and had not prayed to her God in a long time. So she asked herself from whence did her power originate. Her musings were interrupted when she realized that the prince had been talking to her all this time. He was proposing marriage but a voice in her head said that his priority was the sexual relations that would swiftly follow nuptials. Thinking again of her power, she realized that she had no use for him. She saw a shard of glass on the table from a broken vase, picked it up and stabbed him with it. As she watched him die, she thought "perhaps I'm not a very relatable character".

She decided finally that her power had not come from God, and wondered could it have come from the devil. So she began to pray to Satan and a moment later was transported to hell. She found it neither stifflingly warm nor overwhelmingly loud, and thought "this is probably one of the outer circles of hell, maybe the second or third" (She had had time to read all the right literature in the tower.)

She had just time to muse whether the circles of hell were numbered from the inside out or the outside in when horns began to sprout from her head, great thick twisting horns like some super-charged goat. She thought "hang on, isn't this a bit too much like that video game" and instantly the horns began to recede. Instead, her jacket grew pointy shoulder pads and her hair got a cool streak of purple. "I'm a princess of darkness AND I get to choose my own look? This is brilliant."

Glass Coffins

Michael O'Brien

"Will glass coffins be a success, remains to be seen?, Dave opened proceedings.

"Well we haven't had any complaints so far" Was the trite reply from Rodney.

"But why would anyone want a glass coffin?" Dave was perplexed.

"Well one guy wanted the coffin upright at the altar facing the congregation",

"Jesus, why?"

"Apparently he was a bit of a control freak wanted to make sure everything went as planned",

"And would it be double glazed or single panel",

"Oh double glazed , keep out the draft" Rodney answered enthusiastically

"Obviously", Dave nodded wisely.

"Unless he's a cheapskate of course"

"This fella even had venetian blinds installed in the coffin, and when the service was over the blinds were lowered remotely, frightened the crap out of everyone in the church".

"Wow" Dave was amazed,

"But then a recording came on, "th-th-thats all folks", you remember the way the Bugs Bunny cartoons used to end".

"Ah yeah, nice touch"

"Yeah, classy, calmed everyone down"

"How did they carry the coffin out , I'd say a glass coffins would look a bit unusual"

"Ah not really the blinds were drawn so he had his privacy. Of course then somebody spots that the will is in the coffin with him through crack

in the blinds, and their all breaking their little necks to pretend their not looking while trying to get a peek at it",

"What did it say?"

"The sole benefactor to all my assets and personal possessions is, and all they could see is, N,O, so you can imagine Noel was the only one smiling, none of the others names began with N,O"

"I'd say there was a few sour faces" Dave quipped

"Oh there was, two of the daughter's didn't even go to the cemetery to bury him"

"Noel was trying to hide a smile for the rest of the day, the old man was loaded so you can imagine how much the bold Noely was expecting"

Dave nodded agreeing but was puzzled,

"Wow, bit of a surprise really cos he always said none of his kids were an good for anything, but he hated Noel the most".

"Yep, but there's the rub my friend, some people think that's why the old man wanted a glass coffin, and had a copy of the will put in with him that could be partially seen"

"Why?" Dave was now engrossed in the mystery.

"Well cos when the will was read out, and Noel was sitting there smugly with the rest of them he got a bit of a shock.

The solicitor read out,

The sole benefactor of all my assets and personal possessions is no-- one person, my children are nothing but lazy rich kid dilettantes, my assets to be divided between Smiths Double glazing company and the various charities listed".

"Wow he always had an eccentric sense of humour that old guy, he was a gas man"

"Well he was a glass man, fancy another pint?"

Will Glass Coffins Be A Success? Remains To Be Seen

Angelina Kelly

Coffins come in all kinds – most are made of wood - or something that resembles wood. Some are wicker baskets, and some are lead caskets, but saints seem to be the only people who get a glass coffin.

I guess for someone who was vain in life or had major plastic surgery or enhancement work for beauty purposes, a glass coffin might seem appropriate. Afterall, it would be a shame to cover up all that work and money in a closed coffin.

For the family and friends left behind it's probably a good thing because they can still see their loved one right up to the last moment. For the people who doubt that the person is even in the coffin or that the right person is in, then it is definitely a good idea.

Glass coffins would probably be regarded as 'environmentally friendly' because they would not involve cutting down precious trees. Sand could be extracted from the sea in water processing plants to provide the 'ingredients' to make the glass. And it would make the funeral ceremony more personal and intimate.

Will glass coffins ever be a success? Who knows? But one thing's for certain – a glass coffin leaves no doubt and allows... 'the remains to be seen'.

Will glass coffins be a success? Maybe.

Fiona Deaton

Unlike many other Irish funerals, mine was on a bammy Irish morning. The line 'I am dead purely from an outside opinion' is ordered to be inscribed on my head stone. I had put that arrangement in place, when I became an octogenarian. But what lunatic decided on a glass coffin How is this the way I leave earth, it beggars belief but as new innovative funeral whether it is good or bad remains to be seen, My eulogy was carefully prepared by me, I got notice that death was six months away. Beginning the devil that I am I arranged for the 2nd last song to be 'your raise me up'. Yes the chosen location was Kingswood Cemetery in Tallaght the effluent location of D24 (emphasis on the four). So if any one has been at a funeral there you know the coffin goes down not up. The final song is 40 with the famous lyric, 'how long to sing this song'.

But I did not venture as far as a glass coffin nor would I have chosen. I am lying hear in the crematorium in a glass box like a hamster in a cage with everyone gawping at me. Now I am dead I have no say in the matter. In fairness, the dress I had chosen looks good through the glass, but due to heat of the day I can't see anything because of a tomb of condensation. This was meant to be my day, but I am not getting the full effect. It was meant to be all about me.

So as 40 is being played and they lower me down, the glass reacts with the burning fumes. Suddenly on the last verse 'How long to sing this song' the coffin and whatever the crematorium mechanism combusts. My body is catapulted back up to the crematorium altar and suddenly, life bolts through my body.

Put simply, I am back on earth again, living and breathing after three days of mourning has occurred. I had accepted my fate, duly died and now I am back again. In the words of the song I have been raised up or put simply back from the dead. So I am no longer a bag of bones my remains are alive and kicking for all those to be seen.

Everyone Gets What They Deserve

Gerard Byrne

It had been a busy morning for head nurse, Rita Lynch on Saint Peter's ward of Deacon's hospital. She had only recently started there, but already she was missing her old job. Trying to get use to new faces was one thing, but trying to dominate those new faces with her authority was a whole other ball park. She hated herself for even thinking of that Americanised saying in her head. It was tacky and unnecessary in Ireland. We had enough catchy sayings of our own without relying on some stupid American twaddle that most Irish people wouldn't know the meaning of, just that they heard it in a film some time ago.

Rita sipped at her latte and took another bite of her cream bun. One of three. All the same type. Puffed pastry filled with fresh cream and raspberry jam. This was the only place in the city that Rita had seen them for sale and thankfully it was near her new hospital. As she took another big bite, she noticed a few teenage girls sniggering and laughing from a far table. She couldn't be sure if they were laughing at her. She quickly caught sight of her face in a nearby reflective surface. There was fresh cream all over her nose and icing sugar surrounding her mouth, making it look like a house caught in the middle of a snow drift. Rita pulled some tissues from a silver plated dispenser that sat on the end of her table and wiped the offending items away. She couldn't help but get this strange urge to lick the cream off the tissue, but Rita decided it was probably less embarrassing not to do so.

The noise of the teenagers drowned off into the distance as Rita caught sight of a familiar face from her past. Not someone she ever wanted to meet again, but still haunted her memories to this day. It was Margaret Collins, a bully from Rita's years in Saint Agnes school for girls. That bitch had made her life hell all those years ago. The taunts about her weight. The cruel jibes about her appearance and the worst of all, calling Rita's sexuality into question at every occasion the bitch got an opportunity too. Now here Margaret was. Still looking as pretty as she did all those years ago. A big smile on her face and sitting with a guy who would have been on love island if he was thirty years younger. Life was most definitely not fair.

Rita's mother had always told her that it didn't matter what happened when we were all teenagers. Everyone got their just desserts in the long run. Rita had always known that was bollocks, but seeing this bitch looking as perfect as she did all those years ago was still a hard pill to swallow. Probably like a jagged little pill that moody one used to sing about. What was her name again?. Alanis Morrison or something like that.

As Rita watched her old nemesis laughing away with her hunky bit of man candy, all she could think about was all those times she suffered at the hands of Margaret and her gang of cronies. There was Dozy Donna. No one ever called her that to her face, except the other members of her gang. They called her Dozy because she passed out at a house party and couldn't remember having sex with three guys at the same time. Nowadays we'd call this rape, but back then it was considered just bad luck. Donna never seemed bothered by what happened and neither was anyone else. Rita kind of felt sorry for her now. She couldn't help but wonder where Donna was these days. Had the rape finally occurred to her and was she getting the help she probably needed?.

Rita placed her hot teaspoon to her hand as punishment for caring about Dozy Donna. The skin slightly burnt in the area and she was happy again to move on with her thoughts. Then there was Ashley. The slapper of the gang. All tits and arse. Bitch had a figure that would be considered fat these days by modern standards, but Rita would kill for it right now. Would have been better than the amount of flab she was left to carry around every day. She had tried to lose weight so many times, but to no avail. Rita had accepted ten years ago that she was never gonna be thin. Not in this lifetime and probably not the next either.

Ashley was well known for sleeping with other girl's boyfriends and then telling the whole school about their performance. Rita reckoned that a lot of her stories were bullshit or exaggerated. Especially when it came to penis size. There was too many three inches or eights, while very few or none in the average bracket. Working in a hospital had given Rita a lot of access to seeing men's appendages and she was of the opinion that a lot of fellas were around the five inch bracket. She had once told

her mother this and she was far from happy about her daughter examining stranger's penises. Or pianists as she put it. Either she didn't like saying the word, or she honestly couldn't pronounce it properly.

The last member of the gang was Judith. That bitch wasn't the thinnest either but no one once called her out on it. Seemed like double standards to Rita at the time. Yes she was thinner than Rita, but Judith was still packing in the food all all hours of the day. Rita had seen her once a couple of years back. She was still big, but now was sporting a shaved head and was walking arm in arm with a younger woman who was covered in tattoos. Rita couldn't be definite if Judith was now a lesbian, but the signs were all definitely there for all to see.

But none of this mattered right now as only one of Rita's tormentors where in front of her right now and all she could see clouding her thoughts was all the terrible things that Margaret had done to her over the five years of secondary school. Glue on the chairs. Jam in her school bag when Rita was on her period. She could remember putting her hand into the bag and all this raspberry jam came out on her fingers. The whole class laughed before Margaret threw a sanitary towel at her face, then the class laughed even louder. Then there was the time when Rita was sitting on the toilet with her knickers around her ankles and suddenly somebody pulled her legs under the door of the cubicle. She'd hit her head hard on the edge of the toilet as she fell, before finding herself out on the wet floor of the toilets. The whole gang stood around her and laughed. Rita's privates were on full view for all to see. Thankfully nobody had camera phones back then. Margaret had pointed at Rita's unkempt bush and joked about how small animals could get lost in there and then wondered if that's what had happened to the school gerbil.

Rita couldn't take it anymore and stood up with her cream buns and steaming hot latte and marched across the café towards an unsuspecting Margaret. Before even Rita knew what was happening, she had already poured the hot drink over her old arch enemy before shoving both cream buns into the woman's face. She stood back and admired her handiwork, "how do you like that one bitch face?"

Suddenly a strange scream emanated from Margaret. She didn't even try to wipe off the hot drink or the cream from the buns. She just hopped up and down on her chair and wailed like a banshee. Her handsome companion jumped to her defence while shouting at Rita, "what in god's name are you doing?"

"Getting my revenge on a school bully", Rita was starting to lose faith in her actions. Something didn't seem right, but she couldn't quite put her finger on it.

"I don't know what past you have with my wife", said the man as he wiped fresh cream of Margaret's face with some tissues, "but she isn't well. Hasn't been for many years. She's got early on dementia. She barely remembers me at times, so I doubt she remembers some grudge you two had from school, so kindly fuck off before I call the guards and get you done for assault"

Rita's face went white as she took a few steps back. This wasn't how it was supposed to go. She was supposed to be the hero of the hour. Taking down a bully after all these years should be a medal awarding moment. Not the hatred that was being thrown at her from many corners of the restaurant. It was then that Rita spotted the teenagers videoing her with their phones. This shit was gonna be all over the internet before the hour was out.

Rita rushed for the door. All the time her mother's old saying kept playing through her head, "everyone gets what they deserve in the end"

A Letter

David Walsh

A letter, so simple and white, so pure in tone and content. Abject horror wore the guise of normality. So slit the letter, peel the paper and read the ruin.

He vomited. And cracked another vodka, the cursed freedom of alcohol chain him to a path different than this ruin.

The woman knocked a rhythm on the door, the mental seduction slaughter reaching it's true pitch.

He held the young woman's progeny in his hand, her present and future ready to be rendered to nonexistence.

"Come in Sarah dear"

"Hi Liam, you've been a hard man to contact this last 2 weeks"

"Yes, when you knocked, the bang bang, I thought was the SEEDS"

"Can we call them by their true colours, they're no police, they're slave driver enforcers, why do you hide your true tone here? Why else do we lie together at dawn and dream of a brighter sun next year?"

"They caught Shane's morse code in the song, just 2 words - debt freedom"

"Then let's give them some more words, we can corrupt the carpet weaving machines with our encoded braille. We have the means to undo the fabric of ignorance and spread truth"

"Sarah, do you know the sum of my knowledge? Do you know the fabrics of my memory holding these stories tied loosely by the current of my mind? Each time I tell them, I share the meaning with the audience, each time, the current drops information that the public carries, and when the current comes back, I lose grip on my world, my history."

"Liam what are you saying"

"I know you're pregnant and so do they"

"Liam I don't know yet, I can abort, I cannot give my child the 500,000 debt I carry"

"A year ago, I would have agreed, but the weight of my mind doesn't hold the belief I once spread. You know I've travelled. I had a wife, I had a brother. I ran away. When the man known as Liam Hennessey took drugs and lost his mind, we arranged a swap."

"I'm pregnant. I'm fucking pregnant with your child. Tell me what is your real name Liam, What the fuck, who are you?"

"My name is Stephen O'Leary. I was an acolyte for the preservation of life, I was taught the history of our kind, how AI was used by a dictator created the 3 fold process of control - information, debt and food. Please listen baby, I need someone to know the weight of my conscience"

"Stephen, Stephen Stephen! Liam what is going on"

"They're coming soon, they tortured Shane. They know I'm a priest. As Stephen I wrote all the history, all the stories, the atrocity and the strategies, I wrote the art of our religion, it was an encoded prayer, it was a sacrifice I made without knowing. "

"Where we can send it to the carpets, in the QR codes we've developed"

"They caught me. They saw my words. They broke the code. I ran away. We cannot even preserve the ideas of our people's mind. They control us. For the last 32 years as Liam, who I now am, I've told these secrets in hushed whispers, I've shared the intricacies of how the AI forced us to buy food now and pay twice as much later, I shared how they sold our debt onto our babies. How the fabled internet is no more and how all printed and technological information is their brainwashing. The enslavement"

"Liam or Stephen I know, but I'm 9 weeks, we don't have time. Give me a future"

"This envelope is the future, it is a SEED letter and a gun with a round of bullets. Bang bang, you know the rest"

"Not Diarmuid. Please you'll be a mindless zombie. There is always hope - those are your words!"

“I fought and ran already. My wife was hung to a cross and flayed. I saw the video of the torture, the message of warning for blasphemy against our dictator. I cannot do it to you.”

“Liam listen to me. Listen hard. We must always fight. There is always hope. You told these words”

“Sarah the truth? I don’t remember what I wrote 30 years ago as Stephen. I cannot keep an account of the history I learn, each argument with a believer robs me more and more of my certainty. I lose my mind and brainwashing has occurred. I’m merely stubborn. I’ve had to invent stories to keep my propaganda alive. It is a cruel torturous existence. No man outside they system can break it. Only one within. I’ve used all my cunning and it’s spent. The envelope”

“Don’t do this Liam. Diarmuid is 24 years old, he’s got 4 children.”

“Yes, and he’ll have another 0. He’ll die this week or next year, his children already owe debt to the system. To get more food they’ll owe more. It’s over”,

“What do you suggest?”

“If I shoot the bullet through his head, they’ll feed me drugs, they’ll condition me with AI, rewrite the language of my brain, a state of happiness in servitude and wonder to the harsh farming lands of the fertile east. I’ll be fed and will worship the pat of my owners. Bang bang and you can have that child and keep sedition brewing”

The Art of Forgetting

Greg Fields

The first time never goes away. It lingers, scowling and uninvited, in the corner reaches of the psyche, resurrects itself without warning to parade through the frontal cortex, a dinner party guest that drunkenly wipes the table clear of dishes, glassware and the necessary food of the evening, sending whatever else is in front of it broken to the floor. The first time remains as it ever was. It never goes away.

With a single finger Flynn Murphy wiped the rim of his glass then sipped away at its contents. This would be the first of many such glasses tonight, that he knew. A strange bar in a new part of town, the product of an illusion that he might outrun his uninvited guest, at least for a night.

But it had not worked, this running away, this ridiculous attempt to gloss over memory and thought with new liquor in a new place. There was no way to tamp down the fevers that lay inside, that he carried with him wherever he might take them.

And so he sat this night, and heard it all again, the snapping bang of a gun fired too quickly, the product of which making its way into the chest of the young man standing at his counter waving a knife and threatening his own form of violence. In those tattered moments instinct had overridden logic. He knew that now. Probably knew it at the time.

“The money, old man. All of it. Empty the till,” and a few scattered profanities to emphasize the request. All of it words that bounced off Murphy’s ears like tiny pebbles. He reached for the till, as ordered. Reached for the compartment beneath it where he kept the small revolver, then came up shooting. A single bullet, placed well. That was all it took. The young man crumpled, but before he did so he looked at Murphy with an expression that sat now beside the residue of the moment’s sound. Surprise, mostly, that this old man should have a gun, and that he should use it on one such as him. It took a split-second for the pain of the bullet to register, then surprise gave way to anguish, the

recognition that this night – this life – had not gone as planned, and that it was all coming to an unsightly end.

“So he came at you with a knife,” explained the attending officer, “and you fired in self-defense. There’ll be no charges. Hell, there might even be a commendation for taking this trash off the street.”

And it was only later that Murphy learned who it was he had taken from this mortal plane. The boy had been fifteen, had apparently been sufficiently juiced on amphetamines to step outside himself and try something he had never tried before. A quick robbery, late at night. Some easy cash. What could go wrong?

Murphy finished the drink then gestured to the bartender, who wandered over. “Another. Pour a double if you can.”

“Tough night?”

“No tougher than most others.”

The bartender poured the drink, then placed it before Flynn Murphy. “If you’re looking to forget anything, this will help.”

Murphy took the drink, lifted it to his lips and nodded his thanks. “I appreciate the sentiment,” he said, “but some things just can’t be done.”

Weeks later Murphy could forget none of it. It was always there, as it was this night when he sat drinking at a dark bar surrounded by people he did not know. He could use the drink to try to stave it all off. And despite knowing that he could never succeed, he could try to push that uninvited guest back into his corner, the deep corner of a troubled, haunted mind, where it would lurk, and scowl, and murmur, never letting his host forget that it was there, and would be there forever more.

Bang Bang

Ciaran O'Melia

Bang Bang, was an iconic figure, always at the back of the bus, hanging out of the handrail on the old open platform, with a key in hand to shoot other travellers.

They say he did that to avoid paying his fare. I'm not sure about that, but the character of the city when he handed up his key, a bit of Dublin was lost.

When going to Synge Street school and cycling home in a hurry at lunchtime, the 19A bus I tried to keep up with, then I heard the sound I miss when in Dublin. It was Bang Bang, and he levelled his key at me and quickly fired "BANG BANG".

Then he moved on to be Lord Fontonay (?) and moved out to Killester to a nursing home. I do know he kept the key under his pillow.

If he ever had a Missus Bang Bang, she must have been persecuted by his demands for the schedule to have his dinner ready by the ETA of the 19A bus. I like to think she moved out to Killester; she missed the free fare and his wit.

Don't we all?

He was asked about the glass coffin. "I'd have no privacy then; my remains can be seen."