

# Inkslingers Blended Session

8<sup>th</sup> July 2023

The Prompt from The Bag Was:

“D’ja Know Wha’ I’m Goin’ ta Tell Ya”

And the Visual



## Rhythm Lost, Rhythm Regained

Greg Fields

When she was a young girl Rosie Carter loved to dance. Her small body would sway to the slightest hint of music – a bird’s song, or the tinkling of wind chimes on a summer’s evening. And when she heard the notes her body would respond, sometimes in spite of itself. Rosie had no choice but to follow, and her arms would rise and circle, her back would arch and her legs come alive in spirals and steps and swirls that emanated from her heart’s embrace of the sounds around her.

And there would be times when she needed not even a hint of a song to begin her dance. She might be with her mother at a supermarket, sniffing down an aisle of canned goods, when the urge would overwhelm her, and there in the clanking and chatter of a place of commerce, dance as if she were alone on a western beach, her movements echoing the clouds that drifted over her mind’s landscape.

Her parents found it all both delightful and embarrassing in turns. Rosie’s mother had too often been startled by the young girl’s spontaneity, and had more than once pulled her away in the public places where people might stop and stare. Still, she saw it all for what it was, and treasured her daughter’s innocence. Rosie’s father in particular marvelled at his daughter’s supple movements, but more at the joy that those movements inferred. For there was release in Rosie’s dance, an unburdening of care and worry and thought itself, an intuitive response to the unseen rhythms of an unknowable universe that in those moments only Rosie could hear. After a day’s toil on the docks, George Carter could look forward to his daughter’s welcoming hug, her tinkling laughter, and, on the most special of nights, the celebration of her dance.

When she was nine Rosie saw an advertisement for a dance studio where young girls could learn to do it all the right way, to learn the dances with names and particular steps. She thought of it a while, but when she brought the ad to her mother, Carla Carter dismissed it offhand. “Oh, Rosie, why would you want to do that? Dancing is free, little girl. No need to pay for it”, and neither ever mentioned it again.

Now, twenty-five years on, Rosie Carter came across a similar ad. “Silver Spring School of Dance – Feel the Freedom Of Movement, the Joy of It All.” For some reason it had hit her inbox. Rosie read the ad, then hit a quick delete. She leaned back in her chair and looked out the window across from her cubicle.

There was no privacy in this space, she thought. Nothing that marks off the individual. ‘We’re all just lab rats, and these cubicles are our maze. We chase among ourselves until we reach the other side.’

But then a siren wailed in from the street – a fire truck or an ambulance, she could not tell – and its lament did not sound at all like an alarm or a screech. Rosie closed her eyes and she saw birds looping above her, screaming in the joy of the day, bright spots of colour and song above an empty beach. For a moment, she felt the urge, the obsession, to rise from her chair and join them, to spread her arms and jump her legs and sing their song, whirling in the shared bliss of movement and light and life itself.

“Rosie.” Her editor’s flat tone brought her back to the moment. She opened her eyes to see him standing at the edge of her desk. She looked up at him blankly.

“This story needs a sharper lead. Takes too long to get to the heart of it. Kid gets shot in the first paragraph, and you don’t identify him until the fourth, or tell why the cop took him down until the fifth. Tighten it up, girl.”

“Okay, Jim,” she said softly. “Give me half an hour or so. I’ll have it back to you.”

Rosie pulled up the draft on her screen but she did not look at it right away. She heard a bird chirp outside the far window, and, for a few precious seconds, she closed her eyes again. There once more she danced, and felt the wash of the waters that might purify a soul in danger of growing old too soon.

## **Bill's Dad**

**Matthew Tubridy**

Bill's Dad has a flock of sheep,  
But one of them broke her leg,  
Quick Bill! Get on the Quad bike,  
Drive down the the field,  
Rescue the sheep!  
So he does and bring her back to the farmhouse on the back of the  
Quad bike,  
Bill gives the sheep warm milk,  
The sheep is called Trudy,  
Sheep sleeps on the sofa,  
The vet puts her leg in a cast,  
In 3 weeks' time the cast comes off,  
Bill brings Trudy back down to the flock,  
But now she's an outcast because she lived in the farmhouse for so long,  
She continues to get milk from Bill.

## The Lepper's Lap dance

Miguel A. Rivera, Jr.

It was a cool evening for San Juan and Madam Julia had her girls chomping at the bit to make some dough. Lace stockings, tight dresses, and push-up bras were the fashion along with a fair amount of makeup and seductive perfume to hide all flaws and draw in potential Johns. It was early and she did not expect much foot traffic until the end of rush hour, but a black S.U.V. pulled in front of the mansion, known only to a select clientele as "Mama's too-too". Out of that S.U.V. stepped out a young man in a pressed grey suit, the kind that didn't come on racks. He approached Julia.

"Good evening, Ma'am. My employer wishes to frequent your establishment and perhaps socialize with two to three of your young ladies."

Julia briefly wondered if this were some Cop trick. But she also recalled that all the usual bribes had been paid for the month in addition to her extensive collection of off-site videos featuring many prominent government leaders. Among them, The Governor. Her collection of films depicted him doing every un-Godly thing including a short film with chocolate sauce and a donkey. No, she instead figured this was some new rich fool who'd heard of her establishment amongst the elites and decided to "slum" it for a night.

Julia put on her best customer-friendly grin and responded. "Sure, darlin'! We run a tight ship and can make sure your gentleman-boss has the time of his life, so long as a few rules are followed starting with the one about capital.

The young man responded, "Money is no issue. I must however, warn you that my employer has a condition which while not contagious or dangerous in any way, may be shocking even to experienced professionals such as yourselves.

Julia was amused by this ominous warning. "Darlin', you had me at 'money's no issue', and I dare say we've seen it all from wee-wee's the size of thumbs to three legged midgets. Even had a China-man with two

penises once. Had to charge him double for two condoms so no, there's not a man on this earth that my girls can't handle.

The man in the grey suit smiled. "Excellent", he said, handing Julia a tight roll of hundred-dollar bills that told her whomever was in that black S.U.V. was a big shot she had to keep happy. She immediately summoned her two hottest, wildest girls and had them standing at attention. The door to the large car with the tinted windows, cracked open and out stepped a man some seven feet plus tall with an earpiece in his ear. Clearly a bodyguard. After him stepped out a second man. He was young and handsome. In a dark suit with full brown hair and chiselled face.

Ten minutes later after the girls had taken him upstairs one of them ran out screaming.

Julia reached under her dress for the derringer she kept strapped to her inner thigh but held off due to the lucrative nature of this early customer thus far. "What happened?", She said to Maggie.

Maggie, who was red faced and crying, stood there in her negligee speechless. Julia went to the room and what she saw was indeed something new. The young, handsome man sat in a chair while Sandy floated about a foot above his lap.

Julia stood puzzled and Maggie, completely undisturbed in the throes of passion, said "it's fucking huge, and.... invisible!"

Julia stood with her mouth agape, now being forced to take note of the fact that the lower half of the man's body could simply not be seen. He smiled as beads of sweat decorated his face and said;

"D'ja know what I'm going to tell ya?

## **True Love is Grace**

**Mary Oyediran**

Love is not rude  
hurling vicious curses  
Love is not crude,  
laced in verbal abuses.

Love doesn't harbour  
resentment, bitterness,  
harshness in rejection  
like spells, bewitched,  
Voltaire incantations.

Love hungers to forgive  
drowning all offences  
in seas of forgetfulness.

Love doesn't hiss out  
venom with vexation,  
It turns the other cheek  
returning evil with good.

Love doesn't stir hate,  
baked in evil intentions.  
Love bears all things,  
looking through grace,  
its mirror of mercy.

Love rejoices in truth,  
lifts banner of justice.  
setting ablaze every  
scale of injustice.

Love honours peace,  
not elevate evil wars.  
Love fills our heart with

warmth and serenity  
as we fall in love with  
humanity.

Love is easy, so simple  
like a smile with dimple  
Where there is love God dwells.  
Where there is no LOVE  
God cannot excel.  
Love is God!  
God is love !



## D'ja Know Wha'

Mark L'estrange

Paddy went to bed that night and found it very hard to go asleep he was worrying about all that had happened over the last number of weeks. When he finally fell asleep he was having a few funny dreams he dreamt that he was hanging from the plane beside the sea and a figure was pulling him in to give him some important information, when he was about to go in to the sea, he woke up with a shout.

Jenny asked. "Are you ok you gave me a fright." "Sorry I just had a funny dream like I was falling into the sea." "No problem once all is ok."

When he woke the next morning the police were at the door with the Super. "Morning Paddy, sorry to disturb you so early but I think you know what I am going to tell ya?" "No is everything ok?" "We went to Stephen's house this morning to check on him and he is nowhere to be seen and it looks like someone has forced their way into the house." "Oh no I will try and ring him now."

The phone rang a few times and then just cut off. "I am kicking myself now I should have told him to stay here last night." "Don't blame yourself if we get him back we need to move him from where he lives till this is all sorted out." The guards all left and said. "If you hear from him tell him to contact us straight away and we will look after him.

They were only gone a few minutes when Paddy's phone rang it was Stephen, he asked. "Are you on your own?" "Yes why are you ok?" "I was just about to go to bed last night and I heard lots of people outside my house, I went out the back and just kept running." "So you spun yourself out of trouble?" "Yes I took a leaf out of your book."

"The Super and the guards said contact them and they will place you in a safe house till this is all sorted out." "Sorry Paddy I don't know who to trust anymore, because after all how did they find out where I live, the Guards are the only ones that knew." "Your not suggesting that the Irish police are in on it too are you?" "Don't know what to think, you are the only one out of them all I can trust at the moment, can you please help?" Paddy thought for a minute and said. "You have got to

understand I am a guard now myself and I could get in a lot of trouble, give me a few minutes and I will ring someone.”

He phoned the girl he met in the superhero convention you might remember from the previous story and explained what was going on she said. “My dad would be very happy to help you in anyway after you saved his shop before I will ring and ask can your friend stay with him for a while.” “Thanks so much for this but no one can know I asked you.” “No problem I will call you back in five.” She called back and said “That’s fine.” Paddy gave Stephen the address.

Later that day he went to the Garda station to suss out what was going on he met the Super who he was good friends with at this stage he asked him. “How did they find out where Stephen lived.” “I was thinking the same thing, I wonder do we have someone in the force who is liaising with the crucks,” “Don’t know how will we find that out?” “I have my suspicions.”

“Keep your ear to the ground Paddy on this one.” “I might need you to give this person a interrogation spin to get the truth out of him.”

## **By the seashore**

**Deirdre Powell**

There's nothing like time spent by the seashore. I wander, barefoot, along the sand, wiggling my toes as I go, with the particles clinging to my feet and between my toes. I inch gently along the shore and pluck up the courage to eventually wander a safe distance into the water. The sea laps gently, to and fro, against my ankles. I take courage and wander a little deeper into the water. The clear, blue liquid wraps around my legs and I enjoy the exhilaration that I feel as I wander, aimlessly and without a care in the world, on this beautiful summer day.

There is a light breeze, a zephyr if you will, caressing the surface of the water and I feel the gentleness of the zephyr's touch on my face, as though some kind of ethereal being is reaching toward me. There is a gentle glare on the surface of the water, reflecting the sunshine like a mirror. Water is a good servant, but a bad master, and the sea has to be respected. I think of the shipwrecks that have taken place along this coast in former times and feel sadness for the loss of life of the sailors. Perhaps for the want of a lighthouse in an appropriate setting, there has been a disaster and loss of life. Thankfully, this type of loss is a more rare occurrence than in former times.

I wander back to the safety of the shoreline, the breeze gently ruffling my hair. And do you know what I am going to tell you – I feel like dancing!

## **Fifi**

**Matthew Tubridy**

Fifi is a dog,  
She likes to run around sometime,  
On the grass,  
She's a very small dog  
But she can walk a lot!  
She walked for 9km recently,  
She also likes sleeping,  
She curls up in a ball on my lap.

## **D'ja Know Wha' ...**

**Bernadette O'Reilly**

Like a spider weaves its web  
The lady weaves a web of lies  
Intricate patterns  
As she stands in a city centre doorway  
Watches people going about their business  
On this early morning street  
Later sitting on a park bench  
An old man tells her he likes when women wear  
Short red skirts and black tights  
After watching a film in a 70's cinema  
A Star Is Born  
This woman goes home  
D'ja know Wha' ...  
The lady pretends she has been working all day.

## Like Father, Like Daughter

Heloisa Prieto

(Excerpt from The Storyteller)

How to make up for the lost years of our unshared childhood?

At Ibirapuera park, Akin and I walked around the tall, g trees, sat on the roots of the giant bodhi tree, and took a nap under the warm shadow of an oak. Restored ourselves eating organic açai and bananas.

We visited the modern art museum, the Afro-Brazilian museum, the planetarium and took another nap by the shimmering lake. Had a delicious rice and beans meal for lunch, cycled around the park, watched the black swans, white ducks and so many birds by the lake, sat by the Japanese Pavilion and saw the Kendo students' open air practice. Smooth, silent fencing gestures made me wish I had learned the wisdom of the warrior's path.

When we sat by the children's playground and watched the kids play, I smiled at my dear brother and he said:

"Maria Dada, my dear sister! I have really enjoyed our day together!"

On the way back home, while driving, Akin wouldn't stop chatting about Lagos, Nigeria and all the family members he wanted to introduce to me. Instead of playing music, he hummed a couple of songs. I felt nurtured by the dream of days to come, by his presence, by a strong sense of familiarity beyond all plausible explanations. We were waiting at the traffic lights when the mobile rang. Nardo's angry face on the screen immediately shattered my happiness into pieces. My recent sense of balance was overwhelmed by my lifetime fear of losing my loved ones. Why was he calling me now?

"Where is Giulia?" he screamed. Red face, bulging eyes on my cell screen.

"I don't know, Dad!" I told him. "Akin and I haven't seen her lately. We had so much to do..."

"Oh, yes, I had forgotten! You are a Nigerian girl now..." he said in a very sarcastic voice. "I will call her, don't worry!" I told him.

“You should do that! Rodolfo passed by. Apparently your sister has fallen for a dog trainer who lives in the hoods. This is on you, Maria Dada. My Giulia would never, ever consider going to a peripheral district in her right mind... I want you to bring her back home! NOW!!”

Akin turned the GPS on. We knew Kadu lived near the school, it shouldn't be hard to find them. Besides, we could always call Mr. Wagner for instructions. I couldn't stop talking.

“The first time I saw Giulia getting drunk she was only ten years old. It happened during New Year's Eve. Nardo was throwing a huge party. I could always get away, reading some book in a corner. He wouldn't expect me to join his guests. But not his flesh and blood. Giulia has always been a very beautiful girl and Nardo loved showing her off. I don't think she felt comfortable. I saw her drinking from half empty glasses left around the house. Wine, whisky, Pinga, vodka, whatever she could find. Suddenly, she collapsed.

When her mother tried to wake her up, Giulia puked all over Nardo and the guests. Nardo screamed. He was so angry. He ran upstairs to change his shirt, without taking a minute to help his own child.

Somewhere inside, I felt so grateful for not being his biological daughter. What is a happy family anyway? At that moment, I was proud of me and Mom. We loved each other after all.

Anyway, I watched Cecilia, Giulia's mother, take her upstairs. I overheard Nardo telling her they would have a serious conversation later on.

I went upstairs to find Giulia in her bed, her hair still wet, large, frightened eyes.

“How do you feel, Sis?”

“I feel like puking again. My head hurts. I feel so stupid.”

I turned down the lights and held her. She seemed to relax. When she fell asleep I moved to my twin bed. Next morning, both of us came down to have breakfast with Nardo, by the pool. It was such a sunny day and I thought Nardo would let it go. But no. Giulia had to learn his ways. Like father, like daughter.

He handed her a glass of water and a pill.

“C’mon, take this, it will make you feel a lot better...”



## D'ja know Wha' I'm Goin' Ta Tell Ya

Angelina Kelly

Jacqueline took the LUAS into town. She hadn't been in the city for quite some time so, it was her intention to buy some new seasonal clothes, pay some bills, treat herself to lunch in the Kilkenny Design Shop Restaurant and take a walk in the park of St. Stephen's Green.

On the LUAS she sat in a seat by the window and angled her body away from the other passengers hoping that she gave the impression that she didn't want to engage in conversation.

All was going well until halfway along the journey when a female passenger embarked and sat beside her. The woman reeked of sweat and bad breath. Given the confined space Jacqueline shifted and moved slightly closer to the window. The woman touched her on the arm and in an animated voice with a Dublin accent said, "D'ja know wha' I'm goin' ta tell ya."

Of course, Jackie couldn't possibly have known so she tried to pull her arm away, but the woman wrapped her hand around Jackie's arm, squeezed it and asked, "Did ya hear me?"

Jackie sighed and politely replied, "Yes, dear. I heard. What's up?"

"Well, I go' up dis mornin' and when I went to the doorstep to get me milk a damn fox was sittin' there with one of the cartons cracked open, lappin' it all up."

"In the daylight, you mean?" Jackie enquired.

"Yeah. Sun shinin' 'n' all."

"I didn't think foxes came out in the day."

"Well. There it was. As close to me as you are now. Drinkin' me milk, brazen as ya like."

Jackie hadn't the slightest interest in this woman or her story. She was glad that her stop was next. Prising the woman's hand off her arm she stood up. "This is my stop. Lovely to meet you."

Yeah, righ'."

As she stepped off the tram onto the platform she breathed a sigh of relief. The woman waved out the window at her with a big beaming smile.

## **I'm Reluctant To Tell You This**

**Ciaran O'Melia**

"I'm reluctant to tell you this, as you might have a flashback." There were only two in the bar early in the day.

"I saw a serious thing yesterday evening. It was late in the day, I walked out past Dalkey head, a magical time to walk out there. I'm reluctant to tell you as I am sure you will not believe this."

"In fact, D'ja know wha' I'm going to tell Ya."

"I'm all ears. Fire away." His companion said

"As I said, I was up on Dalkey head, but don't get me wrong, I said it was a magical place, but there is nothing magical in what I going to tell ye."

"There was a woman, and she was in a slip. "He continued "I like this so far." His mate at the bar said.

"Nothing like that happened. She was going to dive into the water."

"Jesus, I'd hate that."

"Well, I don't know when a person---- ah, forget that."

"Just as she entered the water, it was magical I tell ye, a carbon minuter copy of her came about and held up her chin out of the water. It was unbelievable."

"I think you need another pint and a chaser."