

MUSINGS

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A Day to Remember



I

Ollie was quite young; in fact his eighth birthday was still some months away. But Ollie wasn't very successful at life, perhaps because his mother had died giving birth to him. His intellect wasn't quite on a par with those of his schoolmates; he wasn't very coordinated athletically, and so he was rarely picked for any of the teams; and his ability to read social cues left lots to be desired. So, mostly, he was ignored, sometimes he was shunned and occasionally he was made fun of.



II

His dad suffered greatly as he watched his child puzzle over this treatment. So, he got a brainwave. He decided to organize an "Ollie Day", a chance for his son to be the center of attention, just for one day, in the hope that it would break the mould and transform the situation.



III

He contacted all of the parents.
The mothers agreed to bake favorite treats...



the dads to organize
fun and games...



and the kids to bring
little gifts for Ollie.



IV

It was a rip-roaring success, though Ollie showed up wearing two different colored sneakers - a red one and a blue one. Everybody, even the children, managed to make Ollie the hero in every activity of the day. His heart almost burst with pride at the ecstasy of being special.





V

By evening time,
the little ones began to
drop like flies, falling asleep
in the impossible positions
that only kids can manage.
The parents carted them
off, one by one.

VI

Until finally
there was only Ollie,
fast asleep on a throw rug,
his face composed
in that angelic aspect
that only kids
can produce.

His father's heart, too,
was bursting
with joy and pride.

He carefully lifted his son
and carried him
upstairs to his bedroom.

He laid him gently on the bed,
and decided to not even
try to undress him,
but simply to cover him
with a blanket.

So, there he lay,
still wearing a baseball mitt...





still sporting
his different colored sneakers -
a red one and a blue one.

The father gazed
adoringly at him
before turning off the light
and quietly closing
the bedroom door.

He was deeply grateful
for what he now thought of
as the "Ollie-day Makers"
who had so lovingly
supported his boy.



VII

Meanwhile,
Ollie transitioned seamlessly
from the dreams of the day
to the dreams of the night.

Heroic fantasies
curled through his mind
like tendrils of paint
as you sprinkle
drops of red
or green
or blue
into a white base color
and stir it about
into spirals.

VIII

But what of the morrow?
Would he awaken to a life
of being, once more, ordinary
or isolated or shunned?

Would his intellect
and his body
and his social skills
return to their default position?

Ollie solved that problem very elegantly.

He graduated, during the night,
peacefully passing through the veil;
reaching out his hand -
the one without the baseball mitt -
to his mother who had come
to take him home.






IX

The little town
never witnessed such a funeral;
even the elderly housebound seniors
insisted on attending.
Teams of his schoolmates took turns
shouldering the little white coffin,
in which Ollie's body lay,
still wearing his baseball mitt
and his different colored sneakers -
a red one and a blue one.

A photograph of a garden path. On the left, a large, leafy tree with a thick trunk stands prominently. The path is paved and leads towards the background. On the right side of the path, there is a large, rounded, dark-colored bush. The background shows more trees and a bright, overcast sky. The overall scene is a peaceful garden setting.

X

Under a great sycamore tree,
some few yards away
from the graveside...



an old Cherokee medicine man,
in street clothes,
watched an eagle circling overhead.
He raised his hand in benediction
and intoned,
“Today, is a good day to die!”

Namasté,

Seán

Tír na nÓg
2016, Volume 7