



Remembering: “Petals of Hope”

Artistic responses to the Omagh Bomb

Conversations with Carole Kane and Malachi O’Doherty

Lorna Martin

Omagh

Who turned the volume down?
What slowed the movements of the town?
Who sent the flowers' lily fragrance in the air?
Who touched lives and stripped feelings bare?
Did you taste the acrid bitter aftershock?
And did you note how time stood still round three o'clock?
For how long will that young girl on the film cry, "Where's mum?"
And why did day turn dark despite the sun?
And in the weeks that followed did you find
That people here were careful to be kind?
They held each other closer than they had,
Protecting, guarding, shielding all from bad.
For when evil came to visit from outside
Flowers were placed as Omagh softly cried.

Then the spotlight of attention moved away
And dawn kept breaking each and every day.
People went back to their work and shops still traded.
A new and rather fragile peace pervaded.
The weakest sought their comfort in the strong.
They asked if we could ever right the wrong.
The left behind and wounded tried to live
And others learned to reach out and to give.
Time moves on, so many years have passed
But thoughts of loved ones linger, memories last.
Who will tell the young of hurt felt on that day?
Who will share with them the pain that can't be said?
The petals of the flowers placed every year,
Scented witnesses to those no longer here.



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