

TRATTO DA : Angela's Ashes di
FRANK McCOURT

I push the pram over to Malachy playing on the swings with Freddie Leibowitz. Malachy is trying to tell Freddie all about the way Setanta became Cuchulain. I tell him stop telling that story, it's my story. He won't stop. I push him and he cries, Waah, waah, I'll tell Mam. Freddie pushes me and everything turns dark in my head and I run at him with fists and knees and feet till he yells, Hey, stop, stop, and I won't because I can't, I don't know how, and if I stop Malachy will go on taking my story from me. Freddie pushes me away and runs off, yelling, Frankie tried to kill me. Frankie tried to kill me. I don't know what to do because I never tried to kill anyone before and now Malachy, on the swing, cries, Don't kill me, Frankie, and he looks so helpless I put my arms around him and help him off the swing. He hugs me. I won't tell your story anymore. I won't tell Freddie about Coo, Coo. I want to laugh but I can't because the twins are crying in the pram and it's dark in the playground and what's the use of trying to make funny faces and letting things fall off your head when they can't see you in the dark?

Spingo il passeggino fino alle altalene dove Malachy sta giocando con Freddie Leibowitz. Malachy cerca di raccontare a Freddie com'è che Setanta è diventato Cuchulain. Io gli dico: Piantala di raccontare quella storia, è mia, ma lui non vuole. Gli do una spinta e lui strilla Uaaa, uaaa, glielo dico a Mamma. Allora Freddie dà una spinta a me. Io vedo tutto nero e comincio a prenderlo a pugni calci e ginocchiate finché non grida: Ehi, ferma, ferma, ma io non mi fermo perché non ci riesco, non so com'è, e se mi fermo Malachy andrà avanti e mi ruberà la storia. Freddie mi dà un'altra spinta e scappa strillando: Frankie ha cercato di ammazzarmi! Frankie ha cercato di ammazzarmi! Io non so cosa fare perché finora non avevo mai cercato di ammazzare nessuno e adesso Malachy strilla dall'altalena: Frankie, non mi ammazzare, e ha un'aria così indifesa che io lo prendo e lo aiuto a scendere dall'altalena. Lui mi abbraccia. Non la racconto più la tua storia. Non gli racconto più a Freddie di Cuccù. A me viene da ridere ma non posso perché i gemelli stanno piangendo e ai giardinetti è buio e a che serve fare le smorfie e farsi cadere le cose dalla testa se poi al buio non riescono a vederti?

Traduzione di Claudia Valeria Letizia
(Adephi)

Then the strange thing happens. There's a man at the gate of the playground. He's calling me. Oh, God, it's the Italian. Hey, sonny, come 'ere. Hey, talkin' to ya. Come 'ere.

I go to him.

You the kid wid the little bruddas, right? Twins?

Yes, sir.

Heah. Gotta bag o' fruit. I don' give it to you I trow id out. Right? So, heah, take the bag. Ya got apples, oranges, bananas. Ya like bananas, right? I think ya like bananas, eh? Ha, ha. I know ya like the bananas. Heah, take the bag. Ya gotta nice mother there. Ya father? Well, ya know, he's got the problem, the Irish thing. Give them twins a banana. Shud 'em up. I hear 'em all the way cross the street.

Thank you, sir.

Jeez. Polite kid, eh? Where ja loin dat?

My father told me to say thanks, sir.

Your father? Oh, well.

Poi succede una cosa strana: davanti al cancello dei giardinetti c'è proprio un signore. Che mi sta chiamando. Oddio, è l'italiano. Uè, ragazzi', vieni qua. Parlo con te, capito? Vieni qua.

Vado da lui.

Tu sei il ragazzino coi due fratelli piccoli, no? I gemelli, no?

Sissignore.

Tie'. Tieni 'sta busta di frutta. Se non te la davo a te la buttavo. Capito? Allora... tie', piglia. Ci stanno mele, arance e banane. A te le banane ti piacciono, no? Sì sì, secondo me ti piacciono, e pure tanto, eh? Ah, ah. Io lo so, che ti piacciono. Tie', piglia 'sta busta. Tu c'hai una mamma brava. E tuo padre...? Ebbe', quello c'ha il problema, come tutti gli irlandesi. Dagli una banana, ai gemelli. Falli sta' zitti. Li sento fino dall'altro lato della strada.

Grazie, signore.

Gesù, tieni pure creanza. E chi te l'ha imparato, a dire grazie?

Mio padre, signore.

Tuo padre? Pensa un po'...

I asked Mam why they had no hair and she said their heads were shaved so that the lice would have no place to hide. Malachy said, What's a lice? and Mam said, Not lice. One of them is a louse. Grandma said, Will ye stop it! What kind o' talk is this? The boys whistled and laughed and trotted along as if they had shoes and Grandma told them, Stop that laughin' or 'tis droppin' an' breakin' that trunk ye'll be. They stopped the whistling and laughing and we followed them into a park with a tall pillar and a statue in the middle and grass so green it dazzled you.

Dad carried the twins, Mam carried a bag in one hand

and held Malachy's hand with the other. When she stopped every few minutes to catch her breath, Grandma said, Are you still smokin' them fags? Them fags will be the death of you. There's enough consumption in Limerick without people smokin' fags on top of it an' 'tis a rich man's foolishness.

Io domandai a Mamma perché non avessero i capelli e lei mi rispose che si erano rasati la testa di modo che i pidocchi non trovassero un posto per nascondersi. Che è il pidocco? chiese Malachy e Mamma rispose: Pidocchio, non pidocco. Ma la volete pianta? fece Nonna, che discorsi sono? I ragazzi fischiettarono, risero e continuarono a camminare svelti come se avessero le scarpe ai piedi ma Nonna gli fece: Piantatela di ride' sennò quel baule lo fate casca' e si rompe. Loro smisero di fischiettare e ridere e noi li seguimmo dentro un parco dove c'era una colonna alta e una statua al centro e l'erba così verde che abbagliava.

Papà portava i gemelli, Mamma portava una borsa da una parte e dall'altra teneva per mano Malachy. Ogni volta che si fermava per riprendere fiato Nonna le diceva: Ma che fumi ancora? Con quelle cicche finisce che crepi. A Limerick ci stanno già abbastanza tiscici senza bisogno delle sigarette, eppoi è 'na cretinata da ricchi.

FRANK MCCOURT
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There is a row of small houses on each side of the lane and Grandma lives in one of the small houses. Her kitchen has a shiny polished black iron range with a fire glowing in the grate. There is a table along the wall under the window and a press opposite with cups and saucers and vases. This press is always locked and she keeps the key in her purse because you're not supposed to use anything in there unless someone dies or returns from foreign parts or there's a visit by a priest.

There is a picture on the wall by the range of a man with long brown hair and sad eyes. He is pointing to his chest where there is a big heart with flames coming out of it. Mam tells us, That's the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and I want to know why the man's heart is on fire and why doesn't He throw water on it? Grandma says, Don't these children know anything about their religion? and Mam tells her it's different in America. Grandma says the Sacred Heart is everywhere and there's no excuse for that kind of ignorance.

Under the picture of the man with the burning heart there is a shelf with a red glass holding a flickering candle and next to it a small statue. Mam tells us, That's the Baby Jesus, the Infant of Prague, and if ye ever need anything pray to Him.

Malachy says, Mam, could I tell Him I'm hungry, and Mam puts her finger to her lips.

Grandma grumbles around the kitchen making tea and telling Mam to cut the loaf of bread and don't make the cuts too thick. Mam sits by the table with her breath coming hard and says she'll cut the bread in a minute. Dad takes the knife and starts slicing the bread and you can see Grandma doesn't like that. She frowns at him but says nothing even though he makes thick slices.

There aren't enough chairs for everyone so I sit on the stairs with my brothers to have bread and tea. Dad and Mam sit at the table and Grandma sits under the Sacred Heart with her mug of tea. She says, I don't know under God what I'm goin' to do with ye. There is no room in this house. There isn't room for even one of ye.

Malachy says, Ye, ye, and starts to giggle and I say, Ye, ye, and the twins say, Ye, ye, and we're laughing so hard we can hardly eat our bread.

Grandma glares at us. What are ye laughin' at? There's nothin' to laugh at in this house. Ye better behave yeerselves before I go over to ye.

She won't stop saying Ye, and now Malachy is helpless with laughter, spewing out his bread and tea, his face turning red.

Dad says, Malachy and the rest of you, stop it. But Malachy can't, he goes on laughing till Dad says, Come over here. He rolls up Malachy's sleeve and raises his hand to slap his arm.

Are you going to behave yourself?

Malachy's eyes fill with tears and he nods. I will, because Dad never raised his hand like that before. Dad says, Be a good boy and go sit with your brothers and he pulls down

That night Mam's sister, Aunt Aggie, came home from her job in the clothing factory. She was big like the MacNamara sisters, and she had flaming red hair. She wheeled a large bicycle into the little room behind the kitchen and came out to her supper. She was living in Grandma's because she had a fight with her husband, Pa Keating, who told her, when he had drink taken, You're a great fat cow, go home to your mother. That's what Grandma told Mam and that's why there was no room for us in Grandma's house. She had herself, Aunt Aggie, and her son Pat, who was my uncle and who was out selling newspapers.

Aunt Aggie complained when Grandma told her Mam would have to sleep with her that night. Grandma said, Oh, will you shut your gob. 'Tis only for one night an' that won't kill you an' if you don't like it you can go back to your husband where you belong anyway instead of runnin' home to me. Jesus, Mary an' Holy St. Joseph, look at this house—you an' Pat an' Angela and her clatter of Americans. Will I have any peace in the latter end of my life?

She spread coats and rags on the floor of the little back room and we slept there with the bicycle. Dad stayed on a chair in the kitchen, took us to the lavatory in the backyard when we needed it, and in the night hushed the twins when they cried from the cold.

In the morning, Aunt Aggie came for her bicycle telling us, Will ye mind yeerselves, will ye? Will ye get out of my way?

When she left, Malachy kept saying, Will ye mind yeerselves, will ye? Will ye get out of the way, will ye? and I