Far From Home

by Jennifer Carroll

A touch of spring

Winter sweeps into Dublin cold and wet sometime in November. The wind picks up, merciless, biting cheeks and stinging eyes. Rain lashes against the windows, chilling you all the way down to the bone. As the days shorten into December, the temperature drops and the wind and rain are laced with frost. Christmas remains green, but frigid. As the New Year emerges from the wet December winter, January greets with a dull and sleety grey. Clouds mask the sky for weeks on end, leaving a stain of charcoal grey across a cold, windy canvas.

I admit I struggle with the weather this time of year. Winter's palette is dark and monochromatic - even the grass seems more grey than green. At least at home there's the crisp, bright snow to bounce the sunshine off and brighten your day, but in Dublin, the sun becomes a near-forgotten memory, and the rain leaves you awash with melancholy.

However, as January slips through your fingers and February begins its march onward, something spectacular happens: spring peeks its head out from underneath the grey sheet of winter. It happens slowly, but one day you awaken to sun streaming in your window, and it takes you a moment to realize what's different. As your eyes soak in the golden haze bouncing off the cobblestones, your heart soars as you remember how beautiful this city is in the sun. You emerge from your cozy den and stretch your legs, your shoulders free from the weight of winter garments, your mind free from the weight of the endless cold. You turn your face upward, and the clarity in the azure sky clears the cobwebs from your imagination. Puffy, white, cotton-candy clouds bounce past in the sky, light and carefree. Daffodils shoot up through the grass while trees bud anew.

And as soon as spring emerges, my legs tell me to move. So I lace up my runners and explore the city I long forgot in the months preceding - a city with pristine parks, a lively canal, with bustling streets and a glistening river. As I round each corner the sun greets me and I squint against the sky, smiling through my burning lungs as I remember why I love Dublin. There's some strange alchemy in the golden streams of sunshine that transform the city from dark to light, from lonely to alive, from black and white to technicolour.

Of course, in a fortnight it will disappear. The rain will return and with it the blanket of grey across a drizzling sky. We won't see the sun again until nearly May I'd reckon, but it doesn't matter. These two weeks in February, when the fragrant flowers and sparkling skies fill my mind with a renewed sense of life, will sustain me for months. For I will remember that the sun is hiding behind the clouds, waiting patiently to emerge and carry my heart over and across the city, and I'll fall in love all over again.

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Kevin does a deal

As we reported last week in the *Cosmos*, Uxbridge businessman Kevin Cochran, founder of Dominion Lending Centres, walked into CBC's *Dragons' Den* this past Sunday night, hoping to strike an endorsement deal for The EnRICHed Academy, his financial literacy program for young people.

It worked. In the end, four of the five dragons agreed to endorse the Academy in return for a 3% royalty. And Kevin has already signed up one of them.

"Just because they shake your hands on the show doesn't mean the deal is done," he said. "But all of them seem sincerely interested in getting involved. The response to the program has been awesome. I'm very excited."

Happy Birthday, Ted!

Please join us on Saturday, February 23, to wish Ted Croxall a very happy 90th birthday.
2 pm - 5 pm at Trinity United Church.
Best wishes only please.

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VIEWPOINTS

How well do you know the highways and byways of Uxbridge Township? The first person each week to call into our office number, 905-852-1900, and correctly identify the location of our photo, will receive a prize; this week, it's two tickets for an Uxbridge Bruins playoff game. Last week's viewpoint (lower photo) was not guessed. Hint: look along one of the township's main roads. We'll have the answer to the photo next week. *Photo by Renee Leahy.*

GAME NIGHT WITH THE BRUINS
Support Uxbridge's Team!
Hockey Night in Uxbridge
7:45 p.m., Uxbridge Arena
Sports Entertainment At Its Best!
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Friday, Feb. 22
vs. Port Perry
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