

## **Dear Friends and Family.** (Introduction only partly given)

I shall present another aspect of Theresia's youth than the wonderful evocation Eileen has given.

As the father of the bride I have the duty "to give the bride away". I hate this expression, because it reminds of the times when brides were given away like slaves. So forget it! Besides she is old enough to take care of herself.

But I shall also have to give a speech. That's what the habits and the tradition prescribe: the bride's father must give a speech. So, OK for the speech.

I have given some thought to the matter and recalled that three years ago Theresia was the artistic director of Galloglass Theatre Company in Clonmel. At this time Galloglass gave an evening of three-act-plays called "A Prime Location", which retraced the eternal problem of how to hide unpleasant precedents in one's life. The first play was the Irish premiere of "Previous Relations" on the occasion of the bicentenary of Johann Nestroy at which I had actively participated since Theresia and I had done the translation of the play. The second variation of the theme was Sean O'Casey's "Bedtime Story" which was set at the begin of the 20th century and Miriam Gallagher had written specially for Galloglass "Kalahari Blues" which set the same topic into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Therefore I thought a parody of Nestroy's play could be a good affair. Particularly, since Nestroy had been a notorious prankster who had made numerous pasticcios from Wagner operas to Hebbel's play "Judith". I was save that he would not crawl out from his grave and curse me. He might even have liked the idea.

Of the two couples of the play, one is Francis, a wood merchant, who got rich and is married to Josephine, a young woman "from a good house" and the daughter of a professor. This could be fitted in, I thought, since David is a very clever and appreciated carpenter who knows how to get around with wood – just look around, he has built everything. The professor's daughter "from a good house" would be perfect for Theresia. But, Josephine is constantly complaining to her husband that she should never had left the house of her defunct father. Yes, he is dead, the professor! So, that won't do, since Theresia's professor-father is well alive. The proof: I am here.

So I had to think of something else. And I remembered an old song from Ireland "It's a long way to Tipperary, it's a long way to go." I decided to write a **"Ballad of the long and tortuous story how Theresia got to Tipperary"**. After each second strophe I ask all to join and sing, accompanied by the Clonmel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by guest conductor Elisabeth Attl:

***"It's a long way to Tipperary, it's a long way to go."***

# Ballad of the long and tortuous story how Theresia came to Tipperary

Dedicated to Theresia and David for their wedding, Brittas –  
21 august 2004

It is the father's privilege and duty  
To praise his daughter's beauty,  
Smartness, spirit, intelligence,  
Character, sweetness, deference.  
To praise ..... I did not come  
But I can tell you stories – but only some,  
Should you have a query  
How Theresia came to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

Born she was among America's brightest,  
In Princeton, of the universities highest.  
When she was one year old,  
She was a girl wild and bold.  
In a Boston restaurant she threw forks and knives  
The patrons were frightened for their lives.  
If you should still have a query  
We are very far from Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

By the time she was three years old  
Daddy in Paris of a job had gotten hold.  
With eighteen cases they took the boat  
To Europe the family did float.  
The idyllic times did not last:  
The parents' marriage soon went bust.  
Still, please do not worry  
We shall get to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

So brother Willi, Theresia and Dad  
In Orsay a house they had.  
Without their mom, they did not too much mind.  
The neighbours were all very kind.  
The house was a bit chaotic,  
At goulash parties the friends did frolic.  
Please, you must not worry  
The way is tortuous to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

But the jolly threesome could not last  
Soon it belonged to the past.  
Daddy brought in a beauty  
Marie Pierre came - it was not her duty -  
With kindness and not too bold  
She changed chaos to a household  
Please, do not worry

We shall get to Tipperary.  
***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

By the time she was eight  
She still had not taken weight.  
Because hamburgers were kept at bay  
Cookies, sweets, coke were taken away!  
The children grew up with many friends  
Did not get involved with gangs or bands.  
It's getting really scary.  
We are not close to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

By the time she was ten  
Of dancing she was a fan.  
Ballet, corporal expression  
Became her main obsession.  
In Gigi Caciuleanu's troupe  
She entered in a swoop.  
You must not get wary  
Theresia shall get to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

By the time she was fifteen  
To Austria she went, to Wien.  
My sister Friedl gave hospitality.  
With her she had great facility.  
To the Vienna Opera she went,  
Her newest artistic bend.  
Slow down! We must not hurry.  
Theresia shall get to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

By the time she reached majority  
School was not her priority.  
To take exams to finish high-school  
It took quite some persuasion.  
But her father was no fool:  
Verona's festival was the occasion.  
Aren't you getting wary?  
We are still not in Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

Back in Paris by the time she was twenty  
She was surrounded by admirers plenty.  
One took her to New York City

Where she met her fate. Oh pity!  
Still, dancing, singing she liked most  
To become an artist at any cost.  
Although in New York, don't get wary  
Theresa shall get to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

About opera her boyfriend did not care  
He was much more for lighter fare.  
The Julliard School she entered with a sway,  
But did not like it – to Mannes she went away.  
With two other girls an apartment she did rent,  
Worked as a server in an Italian restaurant.  
Now, you should not really worry  
Theresa shall soon get to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

One girl left; a room was free, this was too bad.  
A carpenter from Ireland moved to the flat  
Graduated from Dublin's Kings College  
The carpenter was a well of knowledge.  
But without using logic, math, philosophy  
He was the cause of the catastrophe.  
Now you should get merry  
Theresa is getting close to Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

Quite exactly seventeen years past  
We went to Italy again at last.  
In Pesaro a Rossini oldie was on.  
Theresa to a sand bank had swum  
And sulked for two hours long.  
I knew that something had gone wrong.  
Although we went to Wien, I did worry:  
Theresa might really get to Tipperary.

***It is a long way to Tipperary,  
It is a long way to go.***

Grandma's 80 years in Vienna we were to feat,  
Theresa and cousins Dorothy and Bess  
Gave a concert with great success.  
Theresa returned to New York in the heat.  
Six months later she came back.  
But o surprise, what the heck!  
Not to France or Austria, but to Ireland  
With a round belly she did land.  
Now you should all be really merry  
Theresa is nearly in Tipperary.

***It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.***

Near Fethard a house they found  
With ample garden and country ground,  
Cabbage, flours and two pigs,  
Salads, apples, but no figs.

The "Youth Hostel" did really thrive.  
In May Chloe did finally arrive.  
She was fair skinned like her mother,  
Two years later came Christophe, the brother.  
Catherine arrived much later.  
They are now settled, all is getting better.  
Hooray! The trip is over, today they marry.  
Theresa has settled in Tipperary!

***It was a long way to Tipperary,  
It was a long way to go.  
It was a long way to Tipperary,  
To the sweetest girl I know.***