

# The Truth will Prevail

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SO I FINISH WRITING this short story, I hear and read about another tragic loss of a young life in our county and community. Bully was always there, in the schools, the workplace and sadly at times in the home. Bullying has taken a new, dangerous, and sinister path. Faceless and nameless people hide behind screens and drive young intelligent quiet people to despair and sometimes tragically to submission. This is a crime, and it must STOP and those responsible brought to justice.

## **"The Truth will prevail"**

Joe Kelly was just back two weeks at school. Eight year old he and his brother Tom made their way home, a lovely evening in September the trees turning a lovely brown, picked blackberries and watched the rabbits running around in Murphy's field. Tom was excited; he got first place in the religion exam and couldn't wait to tell his mother the good news. Tom was twelve, four years older than Joe. Nora their sister was seventeen so there was a few years between the three of them. The sound of the anvil in Clarke's forge broke the silence the smell of the burning proof hung in the air, the cresting mill could be heard in the distance, people making provisions for man and beast to tide them over the winter months. Their dinner was ready when they arrived home. "Look what I got today," Tom said proudly holding up his award. "Pat Reilly wasn't too happy I got it and he tried to tear it up" "where would he leave it" he replied his father before him was a bully as well, it wasn't off the grass he licked it, good lad he continued. Keep to your and you will get places, "Education is not a load". "Where's dad?" Tom asked-

"digging the potatoes" she replied, "when ye finish your dinner ye will have to go down to the lower field and pick them. Nora will help when she comes home." Nora said she would come down to Brady's and pick plums, Tom said, very cute for an eight year old, picking and eating plums was a lot easier than picking potatoes. "The potatoes come first" his mother insisted, "ye can pick the plums on Saturday," with the dinner eaten the boys headed off to the lower field. "How did ye get on today?" their father asked when they arrived, "any slaps?" no, Tom replied. I came first at the religion exam got a certificate as well, he told him about Pat Reilly. "His father was the same," his dad replied, tried it with me but I hit him a "rap" and put him on his... he laughed..... rear his family, a very handy man did job for local farmers didn't always get paid right away. Money was scarce but when the cattle were sold Jack got paid. The potatoes were picked when Nora arrived. "You took your time" Tom said. "You must have met Mick Walsh on the way?" Mick and Nora were good friends. "I got a puncture coming from school you'll have to fix it Tom?" "Get Mick to fix it," he replied teasing her further. Their father was enjoying the "banter" between them. Nora was in her last year at the Convent and doing her Leaving Cert the following year. They arrived back to the house together. Jack's dinner was ready and when he finished he got out the repair kit and fixed the puncture on Nora's bicycle. "We have to go down to Brady's on Saturday" Joe announced "and pick plums." "I am working on Saturday" Nora said. She got casual work in Flynn's shop grocery and hardware and was delighted to get the bil

of pocket money. The next evening Joe was waiting when she came home his mother had jam jars washed and ready and Nora and himself walked the short distance to Brady's. The plum trees were loaded and it wasn't long until they had a white enamel bucket, filled to the brim, their mother was delighted and gave them two shillings each. The next morning Nora was up early looking forward to going to work and getting a few more shillings. As she arrived and put her bicycle in the shed little did she realise what lay in store. There was three teenagers in the Flynn family like their own. Two boys twins, Jim and Peter and Linda. The boys were fifteen and Linda seventeen her own age and in her class at school. The boys were nice but Linda was the complete opposite. She had very few friends and didn't like to see Nora working there. She wanted for nothing and her mother gave her everything she asked for and went into a "tantrum" if she didn't get her own way. Her mother usually gave into please her. She took great pleasure in throwing things around and watch Nora picking them up. Nora usually finished around 7 o'clock; Mrs Flynn called her into the kitchen. "I want to know what you were doing in my bedroom today?" Nora was stunned. "I was in the shop all day," she answered. "I wasn't next or near your bedroom." Linda said she saw you go into the room and pick up something she was watching from the stairs. I checked the bedroom and there is a valuable ring missing would you mind emptying your bag? The contents of Nora's bag were emptied on the table and there before Nora's unbelieving eyes a ring fell out. "I didn't put that in there. I never seen that before." She was now in

tears. "I know it was Linda who put it there, she doesn't want me here," she added among sobs. "This is serious Nora" Mrs Flynn continued. "I'll give you what I owe you, you are finished working here." Nora went to the shed and got her bicycle and in a flood of tears arrived back home. Her parents tried to comfort her. We are honest decent people Jack said and never took anything from anyone. The Kelly family went to mass as usual the following morning. Jack met Mrs Flynn outside the church. "Nora was accused in the wrong" he said firmly, but got no response, "your daughter put that ring in Nora's bag." "Come on Jack", his wife said it's a long road that doesn't have a turn and "The Truth will prevail." Nora found it hard to concentrate on her studies after what she had been through on. On Monday morning she cycled back to school as usual told her friends what was after happening to her. They all believed and supported her, this wasn't going down well with Linda and she was now on her own. Nora continued to struggle with her studies, the bad experience she had wouldn't go away. The teacher noticed it too; she was such a bright pupil. The principle called her into her office one day, "Is there something borrowing you Nora?" she asked. She broke down and told the whole story. "It doesn't surprise me" the principle said, "that Linda Flynn was a troublemaker from day one. Go home like a little girl she said and put this behind you we are all on your side". A big weight seemed to life off her shoulders as she headed for home. "I was doing a job for Pat Ryan today her father said when she arrived. He is looking for someone to work in his shop on Saturdays'. You can start tomorrow if you fell up to it? " This is great news, "I will," she said quickly giving her dad a big hug. Nora was delighted to be back working and started to pick up on her studies. Her bad experience was now well behind her and she was back to her old self again. The time quickly passed, and the

following June she was sitting her Leaving Cert, got very good results and as nursing was her chosen profession applied to different hospitals at home and abroad and in November got a call from a hospital in Manchester, went for an interview and was successful. She would start her training in January. Her first time away from home, a lot of tears were shed as she said goodbye to her parents and brothers. Homesick, she found it hard for a while but quickly made new friends, wrote regularly and came home for two weeks during the summer. Time quickly passes and after four years qualified as a nurse and continued working in the hospital five years later she married a Cork man. They had two children. When they grew up the family came home every year as Nora's parents were getting older. A caring person she did voluntary work for the homeless and the Salvation Army. On a cold frosty night she went into the hostel to help out. A number of people had come in for the night as she went down the corridor she noticed that a woman at the far end had breathing difficulties, as she held her hand to check her heartbeat she couldn't help notice the ring she was wearing, the same sort of ring that nearly destroyed her life many years earlier. This lady will have to go to hospital she told the person in charge, "her temperature is very high." I will make arrangements to have her admitted. She rang the hospital and in less than an hour an ambulance came and took her away to get medical attention. Nora was off for three days and when she came back did her usual rounds as usual and came as far as the lady she had helped in the hostel who seemed to be getting on well. It can't be, she said to herself when she read the name, Linda Flynn on her chart. The ring, suddenly it all seemed to come together. "How are you feeling today Linda," Nora asked when she regained her composure. "Much better Nora" she answered, "I recognised you at the hostel. Why are you doing

this after all that happened?" "It's my job to help people," Nora answered. "You don't feel bitter towards me" Linda asked. "Bitterness only destroys people," Nora replied. The two of them talked for a long time. Linda told Nora that she fell out with her mother, got in with bad company and finished up homeless. "Do you have contact with home?" Nora asked. "It's over twenty years since I left. I had no contact since." "I will get in contact with social services tomorrow and try and get you a place to stay. It gives me no pleasure to see you like this." Nora got her a room and five days later Linda was discharged from hospital. Nora visited her regularly and made sure she had everything she needed. "I am going back home next week Nora said and if you wish I will tell your mother we met and that you are all right." "I will write a letter and you can give it to her," Linda answered. "The most important thing for me to do is clear your name." Nora and her family arrived home the following week. She told her parents about meeting Linda and warned them not to tell anyone about her. The following day she went to Flynn's shop, she hadn't been there in thirty years. Mrs Flynn, now a grey haired old woman was behind the counter. "I don't know you," Mrs Flynn said when Nora called her by her name. "Nora Kelly, you remember me don't you?" "What do you want?" she asked coldly. "I met Linda" Nora replied "she gave me a letter to give to you." Nora watched her closely as she opened the envelope, put on her glasses and started reading it. Her face went pale as she read it, when she finished left it down on the counter. "O my God," she said in a low voice. "I am sorry, so sorry. You will never forgive me." "I forgive you," Nora replied. "I forgave Linda, I don't want revenge, as my mother said at the time it's a long road that doesn't have a turn and "The truth will prevail"". Nora walked back home with her head held high a great sense of relief came over her she forgave all who hurt her and took away her good name.