

Sunday shoes and no shoes the barefoot flyer!

Matt Mooney

On Sundays for mass he would wear his good shoes:
To be ready they were always polished on Saturdays;
With pride in each stride he went around by the road
But the shortcut he used take to his school Ballymana.
Scenting another hot Summer climbing over the walls,
In bare feet through the fields he made his way freely:
He skirted flotillas of furze in yellow blossoms ablaze;
On its bank he followed the flow of the lazy bog river.
Through beds of wild iris small black water hens play-
He would love to stay for the day to better his learning ;
In lush meadows the cowslips and buttercups bloomed
Though he kept to the path and didn't pick any of them.
The strong startled hare shot straight up from his lair,
Ears up he took off in the bright dew of the morning;
His race was for freedom, his peace was disturbed,
Now he lightly springs up on a stonewall of limestone;
Looking back in disdain at someone so docile and tame
He was away on his own out of view free and easy;
Crossing over the bridge the boy put on his old shoes
For to walk the last mile of the road to his classroom.

Matt Mooney was born in South Galway in 1943. His first collection, *Droving* (Listowel, Matt Mooney, 2003), was launched at Writers Week. He lives in Listowel, Co. Kerry.