



ROYAL DE LUXE

NANTES

LIMERICK / September 2014

Bloody Easter

In the recesses of my cell, I am cold; the English threw freezing water at me.
I am their prisoner and tomorrow surely I will be shot.
But I carry in me a mountain that is denser than granite.
A few days ago I was at Michael Collins's side,
one of the fiercest and most honest amongst us.
Today, I am nothing more than a stone thrown out to sea that the storm will wash
back up onto the sand.

Three days earlier, there was some conflict between the different revolutionary
factions regarding the uprising that was planned in the capital.
On top of that, we haven't received the 20 000 guns sent from Germany on an old
trawler that the captain has scuttled in order to avoid being seized by the English.

Despite all that, Padraic Pearce, Connoly, Tom Clarke and a few others went ahead
with the scheduled attack.

It was April 24th, 1916, in Dublin.

There were a little over eleven hundred of us against 16 000 very well armed men.

Once we had hoisted the Irish flag to the summit of the post office that we had
chosen as our headquarters, Pearce appeared on the steps.

The crowd wandered around without a care in the world and was surprised to hear
the announcement that Ireland was free and independent.

The words came out of his lungs strong and clear like notes of music.

I thought I could see piles of pianos covered in snow instead of buildings,
and from them black and white keys fell onto the pavements.

The first attack took place at 1pm: one hundred spearmen on horses ordered to
charge.

Our guns stopped them right there and forced the enemy to retreat.

I cannot begin to describe to you the following events that saw us, day after day,
raise our courage up and over the highest mountains.

We felt like giants uprooting England with the strength of our arms
and drowning it in a downpour of cathedrals.

The dust unsettled by English cannons destroys buildings.

They crumble like cliffs in the streets.
Firebombs thrown into houses burn all the furniture
and men crawl out like turtles, with flaming shells.
Some slash at each other with knives: English against Irish.
Some horses neigh and walk on three legs,
the fourth one severed by the buzz of machine guns.

On April 29th, 1916, our headquarters in the post office is still holding off 1 against 20.
The enemy is enraged and amidst this hell, civilians discover the round paving stones
of Dublin as they fall onto them face first.
At 3:45pm, it was decided to turn in our weapons.
For whatever happened, on the second day, although the English had thought they
would crush us in a matter of hours, we were convinced that the outcome of the
battle would be fatal.

To all the children of Ireland...
(The Grandmother gives back the letter)

This is a very sad and moving story about this country.
Things have changed, but the sun, present then,
will have fixed this uprising eternally in order to print it into the thick Irish grass,
that new horses graze on today
and ladybirds wander on the heads of new born babies at night.

© **Jean-Luc Courcoult, author / director of the street theatre company Royal de Luxe**