



Unrequited Love



By [Roger Keays](#), 11 October 2015

He sat outside the hostel looking a little forlorn, a large white wooden harp sitting at his feet. As he saw me he grew a little more enthusiastic.

"Ay, the fiddler" He said with a distinct Irish accent. "I saw you playing in the park. You want to jam for a while?"

I have to admit, I was curious. I'd never met a harpist.

"Yeh, okay" I shrugged, "Let me grab my guitar though, I'm done playing violin for today."

I slipped upstairs into the hostel and switched instruments, then jogged back down to join the harpist outside, who introduced himself as Liam. He was a big guy with a head of curly hair, although I detected a receding hairline. I placed him as older than me, though I was wrong. He smelt a bit of alcohol but was friendly enough.

He didn't seem to be interested in coming into the hostel. There must have be some reason why he just wanted to sit outside, but I just let him keep it to himself. It took us a while to get into tune with each other, and we talked a bit as we tuned my guitar to his harp.

"I was here 6 years ago. Does a girl own this hostel?" he asked, as though he was trying to figure out if he was at the same place or not.

"Yeh, her and her brother"

"What colour hair does she have?"

"Blonde I think." I remember thinking she was pretty fit, but I hadn't noticed her hair.

"Hmmm.." He seemed unsure it was the same person.

We were in tune, and Liam began playing a traditional Irish folk song. I listened for the harmonies and found 1-5-4-2 fit well so jammed along like this. Liam sang in a strong deep voice and I closed my eyes and enjoyed the simple harmonic melody, accompanying him with my four chord pattern.



After he was through with the song he placed the harp down and started to talk again. I took the harp and experimented with it while I answered more of his questions. He mostly seemed to be trying to reconstruct his memory of his previous visit to Croatia.

It wasn't until he had left to get his flight and I was alone that I realised he was there looking for the owner of the hostel.

She would probably make a good girlfriend ... I think.

We met a few hours later in the kitchen.

"I met someone who was quite interested in you this afternoon." I said, leaning back in the chair.

"Aaaah." She seemed to know who I was talking about. "The Irish guy?"

"Damn!" I wanted to tease her but she seemed to have been forewarned. "Did you meet him?"

"No, he spoke to my mum earlier." She explained. "I never know when he's going to turn up."

I was curious to know if they were ever lovers, although I doubted it.

"He's captivated by you. What did you do to him?"

"I don't know. He even came to visit me in America." She was recalling an uncomfortable memory. "He has no email or phone. I had no way of keeping in touch with him and then one day he turns up on my doorstep."

She paused.

"It would have been great if we were in love."

"... but you weren't" I finished for her. I felt her discomfort vicariously and shifted in my seat as I visualised him on her doorstep.

"We have so much in common. We used to play music together, he gave me his poetry, which is great because I also write a bit." She was trying to understand why she didn't love him, "but, but.... he was a problem. My flatmates started to complain, and he drank. It was terrible."

She paused again. I could tell the worst part was yet to come, and waited.

"I had to reject him." She eventually came clean.

Holy crap, that was exactly what had happened.

He had chased her for years, been rejected and was going through the whole thing again. Back for another emotional crucifixion. He had probably wasted 10 years of his life in love with one girl, who had made her decision about him 10 minutes after meeting him.

It reminded me of a girl I had a crush on when I was 22. She rejected me and I saw no other options. I thought she was the only girl for me. It was such a bad place to be.

What will it take for Liam to let go of his crush and find a girl who loves him as much as he loves her?

I get the feeling it won't happen. I get the feeling he will never let her go. I get the feeling he will instead find a girl **who loves him because he doesn't love her back.**

Ouch.

I'm just glad I made it through all that so long ago.

About Roger Keays



Roger Keays is an artist, an engineer, and a student of life. Since he left Australia in 2009, he has been living as a digital nomad in over 40 different countries around the world. Roger is addicted to surfing. His other interests are music, psychology, languages, and finding good food.