

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Autobiography, Biography, Memoir

Author: Liz McCue

THURSDAY'S CHILD, By LIZ McCUE

When I was poorly, my Mammy always said 'Elizabeth child, this is your path to walk. People can walk it with you, but they cannot walk it for you. Do your best in life and remember you have far to go, my child. Thursday's child has far to go' my Mammy often reminded me, and I certainly got a head start. I arrived in the World four weeks early, on the 10th March 1960, at almost midnight. I was a beautiful little Piscean, Born to Louise and Albert McCue. Those first weeks weren't easy. On the Thursday morning of the 10th March, my Mammy Louie was getting tummy pains throughout the day. Her Mother Lizzy was worried about her daughter. Will we thumb a lift to the Doctor, what do you think Louie? Lizzy asked quietly. There were still four weeks left before the birth. The baby was due in April. The pains were wracking my Mother's tummy. Louie, who had a trouble-free pregnancy, was worried Castleknock was the local Village three miles from their home. My parents and grandparents all lived together in the Lodge, in the Shadow of the Guinness owned Knockmaroon estate. The gate lodges were for the staff, which worked there. My grandfather Ned opened the gates to the Gentry, for their lavish parties. Nana Lizzy was the kitchen maid, in the big house. Anyway as Louie and her mother stood at the Lodge gate. With luck, their neighbour Mrs Grahme stopped and gave them a lift to Dr Nelson's surgery. After he examined Louie, He knew something wasn't right with this pregnancy, and Louie needed to go straight, to a hospital in Dublin. Thankfully Louie's sister Patricia got word they were at the Doctors, and her and the finance Davey turned up in the car, to collect them. They brought Louie to a hospital and informed my father Albert, who worked in a pub in Dublin. He managed to get there when the birth was over. I was tiny, at 4lb 4oz. I had started to turn blue. The Doctors diagnosed me with double pneumonia. I was rushed by ambulance to a Children's hospital and put on an incubator. I was put on a drip with antibiotics 24 hrs a day. Three weeks later they took me home to the Lodge. A born fighter from day one., If anyone can fight the challenge, Elizabeth would. I was a sickly child and always getting whatever was going around. The years passed When I reached four years old; I

attended the local convent, Mount Sackville. The sisters of Cluny I loved the nuns, and they were fond of me. My passion for writing and vivid imagination was ignited by these nuns. I loved entertaining the class. My favourite nun sister Brendan often got me to stand at the front. And read my essay. I got a holy picture and a gold star. My mammy loved it, when I came home with gold stars. English was my best subject. Sr Brendan always kept me behind after school, for extra lessons. I could read fluently. I always dreamt of joining the Missions in Peru, helping them to read and write. Only a dream. I was getting Kidney infections and on constant antibiotics. I had a kidney disease called Pyelonephritis, Reflux for short. It made urinating uncomfortable. The tears would flow down my cheeks. This pain was excruciating. Both my parents had trouble with the drink; they liked it too much. I detested alcohol. It caused much trouble in our home. Daddy went his own way at weekends. Mammy and her aunt Julia or Sissy as she was known, was my nana Lizzy's sister. She also loved drinking. They were a double act; I was their go-between. I kept them safe as they staggered home. 9.30 pm without fail. I always made sure they both had their belongings; otherwise, it would be a miserable week. Every Friday afternoon, I would rush home to change my clothes. Then follow them to the pub. Mammy always said don't wear your uniform up to the Village Elizabeth. Weekends were a nightmare for me. I could stay in the pub till 9 pm then I had to leave the premises and wait outside. In all weathers, praying hard my Mammy and aunt would be easy enough to manage. If the roads were slippery or snowy. Some nights it would rain. We had to walk Sis down the dark glen to her home. There had to be more to life. Surely my friends never had this kind of a weekend. I never mentioned my mothers drinking; I felt this was my secret. I believe in later years this experience made me drink. To dull the pain of never feeling worthy enough. I felt my father didn't love me. Dad died of colon cancer before we ever got to clear the air. When I reached 11 years old, my parents decided to separate. Dad stayed in Ireland. We jetted across to live in England, with mammy's sister Bridget, husband Ziggy and their six Children. That was worse for me I missed my grandparents terrible and disliked life and started hurting myself to numb the pain. I did not realize my kidneys were failing fast; this was making me ill. The toxins were mounting and making me feel unwell. After three failed transplants and spending many years on Kidney dialysis. I am waiting on my fourth successful kidney transplant. The one good

transplant was a great success lasting 13 wonderfully happy years I was free as a bird No confines of Kidney dialysis. I have great faith my gift of life will come. I have goals and dreams to write more books I aspire to inspire people. with my writing. The nurses and doctors call me their feisty renal Warrior. Always positive and happy. The dialysis team is like one big family. I got great healing from writing my memoir. It helped me feel worthy and very proud of the achievement. I am grateful to the Waterford Healing Arts Trust for believing I could complete the book and for publishing it for me. Thursday's child has come far; She still has far to go.