

# Solidarity Poem

By Valerie Bryce

We gather together, our hopes they are many  
For love and inclusion to embrace Letterkenny  
As we take to the street to announce loud and clear  
That our hearts remain open to all who live here.

Just as we emigrated for centuries past  
Fleeing poverty, genocide or because we were cast  
As second-class citizens by a ruling elite  
Who stripped us of rights to attempt our defeat.

To England, to Canada, Australia, the States  
To carve out a life, to have courage when fate  
Was robbed from our choosing, or we just wanted more  
So we set off in ships for those far, distant shores

And we've been setting off all these centuries since  
Sometimes to a welcome with no need to convince  
Those who would greet us of our need to survive  
And settle in peace to live out our lives.

But we've also met hatred, and we know it bone deep  
Some things can be healed but some things we keep  
And they rupture our psyche with such devastation  
The pain of it passes to the next generation.

I invite you, good people, to look left and right  
Take in who's beside you and see if you might  
Catch the eyes of a person you've not met till now  
And give them a nod or a wave or a bow.  
And you might want to pause here and take a wee while  
To see if that looking turns into a smile!

With all of your focus tune into the feeling  
That comes when connection transmutes into healing.

Tune into the energy that comes with the choice

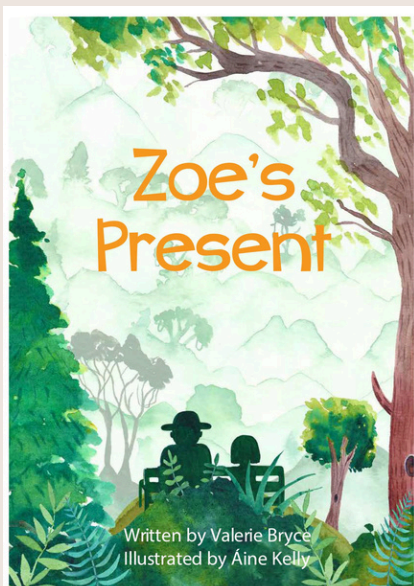
To stand side by side, to lift up your voice

To say loud and clear we will not be divided

We will learn from our past, we will gather united

We will never fall prey to the lies and the fear

Céad mile fáilte, we're different up here



Vallerie Bryce has recently released her first children's book *Zoe's Present*. More information on availability [here](#).