

THE EARTHENWARE POT

“Blessed Be E/y Man T/y Spares The Stones
And Cvrst Be Hey Y Who Moves My
Bones.”

Shakespeare’s Epitaph

“If you dig up an earthenware pot – it might
have been buried with a toad to protect against
storms.”

Cocooned in the quietness of the writers’ group,
gathered in the back room of the library, Sally
paused and stretched her arms and back. The
morning discussion was focused on plot design
and character building, but she was also
researching late medieval sayings.

Yesterday she had sorted all her writing into
colourful folders lining shelves within her back
room. Happily overlooking her ‘Italian Garden’
of potted eucalyptus trees, scarlet salvia and
multi- coloured geraniums, the red terracotta wall
always stirred her memories of Italy and Venice.
For the moment all her writing was restrained
in the one place. She envisaged her thoughts on
paper as the magna layers of a volcano- a
bubbling churning mass of ideas coalescing into
an anthology of short stories.

Every now and then the volcano would spew
forth a new concept; perhaps an old proverb or

celtic folklore warning. Like the magic of ley lines, these thoughts would ignite a burning flame to capture a fresh story on paper.

But before this morning's session at the library, Sally had been on a different "Quest." In the early morning haze, she had crept towards the rock walled corner of her garden.

The recent heatwave, with the consequent "Act And Leave" fire warning text, had prompted Sally to invest in bright blue children's swimming pools in which to store water and some valiant plants. The fire had been contained but not the 40 plus temperatures.

Sally inspected the soldierly row of bright red containers standing along the ivy parapet.

With every washing machine cycle she and Todd would pump water through a hose attached to the machine and fill the row of buckets. They had to work fast as the water surged out like a fireman's hose.

Sally would stand on the sloping hill and Todd would pass her filled buckets to share among the plants.

Her red dahlias and iris sometimes earned an extra drink with the promise of buds appearing. Strenuous as it was, her laughter would bubble out as she envisaged Mickey Mouse carrying water buckets in "The Sorcerer's Apprentice."

Over the last few nights the monotonous “Brr, Brr,” of a male cane toad had invaded the parapets of her sleep. With a song pitched at the level of a continuously running motor, he was obviously a hopeful prince lolling about in the blissful blue wading pools she had thoughtfully provided.

In the dark she had searched for a few days, narrowing the serenade to the hardest to reach pool behind her towering potted silky oak.

This morning at dawn, Sally had declared “Battle,” the call of Michael the Archangel.

Many manoeuvres of pots and rocks had led to a strategic and successful pursuit.

Two bulging eyes glared at her from the watery depths, but to no avail. With a lunge she had lifted the squirting lothario into the air, their eyes a standoff between them. Then he was gone, off to slumber in another realm.

Shoulders back, standing tall, Sally had celebrated with a pot of Gunpowder Green Tea. She loved to watch the tea leaves unfold like petals on a flower.

Fortified, she had then restored her garden to its former medieval effulgence, a haven for green tree frogs, lizards and their soul mates.

This afternoon and after more tea, Sally would attend to Toad.

She would not bury him in an earthenware

pot, as the whole town desperately needed rain and a good few storms.

Looking forward to the chorus from frogs and cicadas, she would hang some yarrow, the carpenter's herb, for their protection.

She would then enjoy perusing the notes from today's session in the library.

Mission accomplished.

