

A prophet is only despised in in his own country

I come from an Irish culture which fitted in with the dour Lancashire ways beautifully. As a child I experienced boozy family parties that ended up as great singsongs and opportunities for romantic adjustments of memory.

At the beginning of these parties my Auntie rose would be asked to give us a song. She would prove to be very bashful. "Oh no I cannot sing" she would say. "I am too old for that sort of thing. No. My voice is not good enough. I am not going to make a fool of myself"

About half way through the evening, after the lubrication of her uncertain vocal chords she would sing a romantic ballad like an angel. By the end of the evening it was hard to get her to shut up.

She was not lying as the festivities began. My Auntie Rose did not believe in her abilities
Her Prophetical voice was despised within the domain of her own heart.

"Tween two hillsides, both bleak and barren
Lies lovely little dirty Darren"

Dirty Darren. What a title for the home of so many wonderful people

People who don't like to blow their own trumpet

People who don't often want to make a fuss

People who when asked how are you generally reply

"I'm alright"

This small community is situated between the beautiful Lancashire Moors

It is full of history, with a golden memorial to the Boar War

It has a pub culture which in Covid, hired out blankets when folk were forced to drink outside

There are millionaires on its borders

And Victorian Parks that make London Gardens seem paltry imitations

But Darwen schools have to deal with low aspiration

Darwen folk do not make enough noise

The Prophetical voice despised within the domain of the town.

In your own home

You may not be able to cook like Delia Smith but you can cook

You may not be able to sing like Pavarotti but you can sing

You may not be able to run like Mo Farrow but you can get up out of your chair

You may not be able to paint like Picasso but you can paint

You may not be able to be able to use a computer like Bill Gates, but you can turn it on

You may not be able to play the organ like Michael Grime but you can make a tune

You may not be able to strike a pose like David Beckham, but the sight of you can bring joy

Belief in God means an attempt at belief in self

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Probably the greatest critic

The one who holds you back from taking the risk of life is you

Belief in God means an attempt at belief in self

Believe in yourself

Listen but recognise the true value of the voices

Believe in yourself

And it is amazing what you can do.