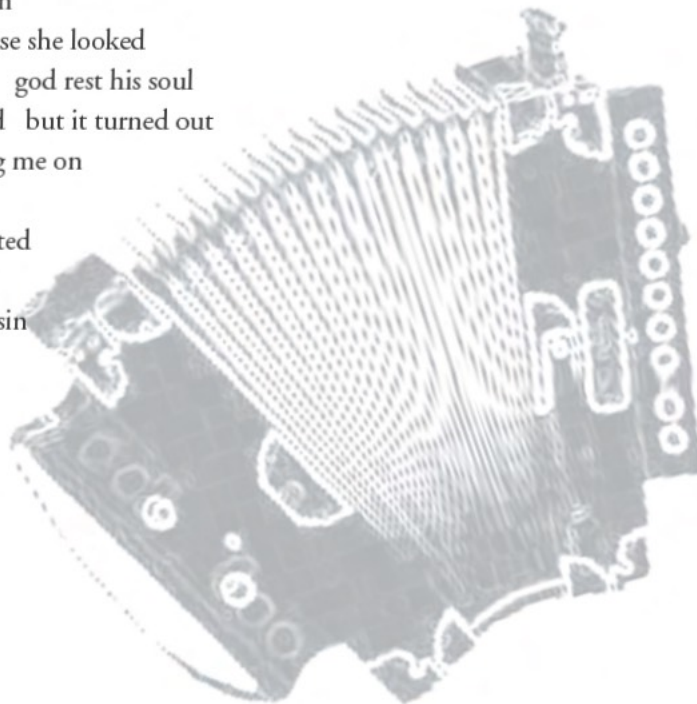


## *Pete McNulty's Cousin*

the McNulty Family were the big stars  
of Irish music in the fifties  
I remember seeing them perform  
at the Leitrim House in Rockaway  
Ma McNulty played the accordion  
but she could only play in one key  
so when the key changed she switched accordions  
Eileen McNulty couldn't sing at all  
but she never let that stop her  
Pete McNulty was the real focus  
everyone loved him thought he was great  
he was the handsomest song and dance man  
in the whole circuit  
I met a nurse recently who told me  
she was Pete's cousin  
I believed her because she looked  
something like him god rest his soul  
I was very impressed but it turned out  
she was only putting me on  
it depressed me  
because I really wanted  
her to be  
Pete McNulty's cousin

— Terence Winch

*Terence Winch, the son of Irish immigrants and a native of the Bronx, is the author of two volumes of poetry, Irish Musicians/American Friends (1985), which won the American Book Award, and The Great Indoors (1985) as well as one volume of short stories, Contenders (1989). He held a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in poetry in 1992, the same year he made Irish America magazine's list of "Top 100 Irish Americans." As a performer and composer, he has released three albums with the traditional Irish music band Celtic Thunder. He composed the song "When New York Was Irish" for their album The Light Of Other Days (Green Linnet, 1988).*



## *What I Hear*

My father's voice lost on the night  
of the dance. My mother sexy in red dress  
dancing on the sparks from his glance. Alone  
together in her pink smoke. While aunts and uncles,  
monsters with milky eyes, choked the skies.

In those days, everyone did last rites  
near Tremont Avenue. Guests rested  
in the parlor next to the saloon.  
And soon the waterfall in Bronx Park  
soothed our intoxicated hearts.

Near the Zoo I wandered through  
the dawn of St. Raymond's  
big gray rocks and remembered your songs,  
turntable spinning out those years  
of longing in your eyes and far away  
in Rockaway faint sounds of surf  
singing still in your ears  
salting our moony bodies  
in the wash and splash  
of the hot day, the radio  
crackling under that same sky  
and I swimming back  
to your open arms.

— Terence Winch



*Photocollage by John Cavanagh*

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