



KEVIN BARRY

They have taken him - a soldier of the people,
A boy in years, a man in fearless faith -
They have tried him with a mockery of justice,
And the sentence of his enemy is - death.

They have offered him the freedom of the traitor,
They have hurt him with the cruelty of hell,
But their tortures and their bribes were unavailing,
No tale of black dishonour would he tell.

The hour has come to test a true man's courage,
No craven fear he feels, no pang of shame,
For God is with him walking to the scaffold,
And faithful Ireland kneels to bless his name.

The deed is done; the tyrant's blow has fallen;
The brave young soldier's hard-fought fight is over,
The bell is tolled; the prayers are like a chorus -
And Kevin Barry lives for evermore.

Brian O'Higgins.