

Page Turner / By Peter McDermott

Introducing Tach the Hurler

Saniya Chughtai's favorite thing in life is "spending time telling stories with children."

And she's written a series of books, "The Adventures of Chee and Dae," for younger readers. There are five of those and one was translated into both Arabic and Urdu.

Her husband, Brendan McKittrick, came up with a suggestion: how about a children's book with a GAA theme? All three McKittrick brothers played for Fin-gallians, and their dad Seamus won All Ireland football honors, twice, in minor football.

After some research, particularly focused on hurling, Chughtai found inspiration in the words "hurling is an ancient warrior sport."

So that's the starting point for the legend of "Tach the Hurler." She told us a little about how the story pans out. "Living in an ancient tribe called The Wadi Tribe, is a wee little turtle, with the kindest of hearts called Tach. Tach loves Story Time with Saltur, the great old wise turtle, where he can disappear into the stories without any fear! Listening to Saltur tell stories whilst sitting in his hanging water hammock, is one of Tach's favourite things to do with his friends Turwa and Kaw. After all, nobody ever got hurt listening to a story, right?"

"Just when Saltur's story is getting interesting, Anya interrupts Story Time



Saniya Chughtai.

with a warning of dangers to come and Tach is accidentally swept up in the adventure of a lifetime! An exciting adventure where there are secret tunnels, magical butterflies, strange forests and the scariest of all, wolves. But most importantly he meets the last great warrior, a Cosanthor called Renba, the black

puma."

Aside from being a children's author, Chughtai is the CEO and founder of the Wadi Tribe, a philanthropist, serial entrepreneur, business consultant, interior architect and designer. She had appeared on "Showhouse" on RTÉ, for several seasons. She won the people's choice award in INDEX exhibition, Dubai, for the contemporary Majlis design. She has also ventured into film, making a short documentary titled "The Story of the Storyteller".

SANIYA CHUGHTAI

Date of Birth: Oct. 20

Place of birth: Karachi, Pakistan

Spouse: Brendan McKittrick

Children: Zain and Alizeh Chughtai

Residence: Dublin and Dubai

Published works: Six children's books: five books in the "The Adventure of Chee and Dae"; sixth is titled "Tach and the Cosanthor" (thewaditribe.com/product-tag/paperback-books).

What is your writing routine? Are there ideal conditions?

Once my imagination is sparked, the story plays in my mind like a movie and I can't wait to write it down. Ideally I love sitting in my office, which I call the "Enchanted Room" and I write away in peace and quiet, and of course with a cup of tea.

What advice do you have for aspiring writers?

If you have an idea for a book, just go



for it. Empty your head and give it to a really good editor..

Name three books that are memorable in terms of your reading pleasure.

I have always loved and still love Enid Blyton books; "Rich Dad Poor Dad" by Robert Kiyosaki; "Screw it, let's do it" by Richard Branson.

What book are you currently reading?

"Becoming Michelle"- Love it so far. I still read Enid Blyton. Reading "The Faraway Tree" for the millionth time!

Is there a book you wish you had written?

"The Faraway Tree" by Enid Blyton. I have read it so many times, sometimes it feels like a mystery!

Name a book that you were pleasantly surprised by.

"Losing my Virginity" by Richard Branson.

If you could meet one author, living or dead, who would it be?

I would love to meet Michelle Obama.

What book changed your life?

"Rich Dad Poor Dad" by Robert Kiyosaki.

What is your favorite spot in Ireland?

Monaghan and the Cliffs of Moher.

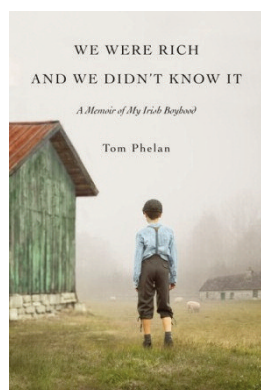
You're Irish if...

You will talk to any living creature and open up your heart and home over a cup of tea and a warm apple pie, served with custard and a generous portion of vanilla ice cream and fresh cream!

WE WERE RICH AND WE DIDN'T KNOW IT

A Memoir of My Irish Boyhood

by Tom Phelan



"This is a wonderful memoir....This is the real thing."—*Newsday*

"Phelan's memoir is exceptional... [He] translates for us a rural world that has disappeared."—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

"At a time when we have so much and are satisfied with none of it, the story of *We Were Rich and We Didn't Know It* is one of grace and beauty."—*For the Love of Books*

Tom Phelan's *We Were Rich and We Didn't Know It* is a heartfelt account of growing up in Co. Laois in the 1940s and 50s. Tom spent his formative years working with his father as he sought to wrest a livelihood from a farm that was often wet, muddy, and back-breaking. It was a time before rural electrification, the telephone, and indoor plumbing; a time when the main modes of travel were bicycle and animal cart; a time when small farmers struggled to survive; a time when the Church exerted enormous control over Ireland.

Published by Gallery Books

Available in hardcover, ebook, large type, and audiobook

The Irish Echo Quiz Answers

1. New Mexico
2. "King Lear"
3. Nuala O'Faolain
4. Shirley Jones
5. Fermanagh
6. Mozart
7. Augusta National Golf Club
8. Grover Cleveland
9. 37.777
10. AIG.

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