

The True Story of *Zombie* by The Cranberries



The Cranberries' late singer Dolores O'Riordan.

Dolores O'Riordan died the day before re-recording the band's classic 1994 hit - but why was the song so important?

The death of **The Cranberries** singer **Dolores O'Riordan** aged 46 shocked the world. The Irish singer was in London for a recording session when she passed away suddenly at a hotel in the capital's Park Lane on 15 January 2018.

O'Riordan was in England to collaborate with a Los Angeles metal band **Bad Wolves** on a cover of the Cranberries song **Zombie**.

But why has this 1994 composition resonated with people around the world? And why has it become the singer's epitaph?

Zombie originally featured on The Cranberries' second album **No Need To Argue** in October 1994, but was issued as a single the month before.

The lyrics begin: "Another head hangs lowly / Child is slowly taken / And the violence, caused such silence / Who are we mistaken?"

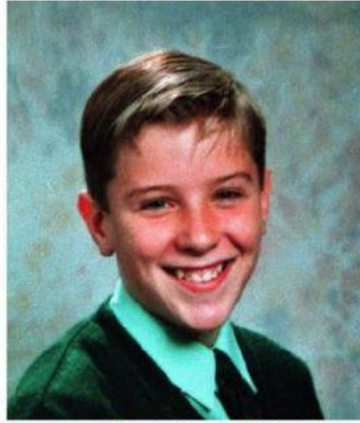
At the time the song was written, the "Troubles" in Northern Ireland were at their height. The IRA continued their terror campaign against the British government's involvement and presence in Northern Ireland and attacks on the British mainland were commonplace.

20 March 1993 was a Saturday - the busiest shopping day of the week and a time when lots of children were out buying Mother's Day cards and presents to give that Sunday.

In the North Western town of Warrington, Cheshire, the IRA had planted bombs in cast iron dustbins: one outside the local Boots and McDonalds and the other outside the nearby Argos. The terrorists phoned Merseyside police just before midday with a coded warning that there was a bomb outside a Boots - but they didn't say which town.

When one bomb exploded in Warrington 25 minutes later, panicked crowds ran directly into the path of the second explosion.

Three-year-old **Johnathan Ball** died at the scene, while 12-year-old **Tim Parry** was seriously injured. He died five days later after his life support was switched off. 54 other people suffered injuries.



The Warrington IRA bomb victims Johnathan Ball (left) and Tim Parry.

Hailing from Limerick in South Ireland, The Cranberries were on tour in the UK in March 1993, supporting the release of their debut LP that same month entitled **Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?**

Zombie was a direct response from the Irish musicians to the horror of Warrington and all the other atrocities that had taken place, pleading: "Another mother's breaking / Heart is taking over / When the violence causes silence / We must be mistaken."



Flowers left at the location of the Warrington bomb attack in March 1993.

Following the death of Dolores O'Riordan, Tim Parry's father, Colin, paid tribute to the singer after hearing that *Zombie* was about the incident that claimed his son.

Taking to Twitter, he wrote: "I'm saddened to hear of the death of Dolores O'Riordan at just 46. Her wonderful band recorded a moving song after the Warrington bomb in memory of two innocent victims, Johnathan Ball and my son Tim. RIP Dolores".

Parry explained how he only came to hear about the meaning of then song after her passing, telling BBC's *Good Morning Ulster* show: "Only yesterday did I discover that her group, or she herself, had composed the song in memory of the event in Warrington."

He added: "I was completely unaware what it was about. My wife came home from the police centre where she worked yesterday and told me the news.

"I got the song up on my laptop, watched the band singing, saw Dolores and listened to the words. The words are both majestic and also very real."



Wendy and Colin Parry lay flowers at the memorial stone on Bridge Street, in Warrington on the 25th anniversary of the bombing in 1988. Picture: Peter Byrne/PA Archive/PA Images

He added: The event at Warrington, like the many events that happened all over Ireland and Great Britain, affected families in a very real way and many people have become immune to the pain and suffering that so many people experienced during that armed campaign."

To read the words written by an Irish band in such compelling way was very, very powerful."

I likened it to the enormous amount of mail expressing huge sympathy that we received in the days, weeks and months following our loss."

Parry now works with his wife Wendy on the *Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Foundation For Peace* in helping survivors of terrorism.

Number the events in chronological order.

- ☐ Dolores O'Riordan died.
- ☐ The terrorists phoned Merseyside police to warn them of a bomb outside a Boots.
- ☐ Dolores O'Riordan went to London.
- ☐ *Zombie* was released.
- ☐ Tim Parry listened to *Zombie*.
- ☐ Three-year-old Johnathan Ball died.
- ☐ Northern Ireland was going through The Troubles.
- ☐ Children were buying Mother's Day cards and presents.
- ☐ The Parry couple started working in helping survivors of terrorism.
- ☐ The IRA planted bombs in two locations of Warrington.
- ☐ One bomb exploded in Warrington.
- ☐ Twelve-year-old Tim Parry died.
- ☐ *Everybody Else Is Doing It, So Why Can't We?* was released.
- ☐ Tim Parry's father, Colin, paid tribute to deceased Dolores O'Riordan.
- ☐ Wendy Parry told her husband about Dolores' death.