

## For Florence with Love

Forty years ago today the world became a better, brighter and more reassuring place.  
As, Florence, you came into our profession with your wisdom, care and grace.

You had always shown character and personality and an aptitude for the job.  
You were destined for a career in nursing and it has been a journey filled with love.

You qualified with flying colours as a midwife at the ripe old age of twenty three.  
You completed your training in London then went to Brighton by the sea.

But you missed your village on the Antrim coast and were called to serve at home.  
In the Royal Jubilee until work in the community called and the country you would roam.

Checking in on mothers, providing calm and giving comfort, guidance and advice.  
They would have been lost without you and for your support would have paid any price.

You were there during difficult labours and in the lead up to the birth.  
To wipe brows and provide reassurance and remind your patients of their worth.

You supplied them all with the after care and attention that every new mum needs.  
And watched with interest as the children you delivered grew from tiny seeds.

You got married to Len in 1984 and a farmer's wife you would become.  
A midwife and caregiver in field and barn with animals, as well as in the district homes.

You raised a family of your own and were blessed with two girls and a son.  
Some wonder where you had the time, but sure, you made it look easy to everyone.

And now you are a grandmother of four and a keen gardener and the crocheter of gowns.  
You made your granddaughters christening robe and now your name has reached other towns.

And you are getting more and more requests for your needlework and the delicacy of every stitch.  
Each one followed from a pattern and worn by babies whose lives you continue to enrich.

You have decided to say goodbye to your job and replace one needle for another.  
You're hanging up your uniform and waving a fond farewell to all your mothers.

We can't believe the day has come where we have to let our stalwart Nurse Macauley go.  
It has been an honour and a privilege and you are loved more than you will ever know.

We wish you well in your retirement and hope that you get to rest now you have escaped.  
You are a reminder to the world both past and present that just like heroes on TV...nurses also wear capes.

*By Fionnuala Cassidy*

