



30 DE MARÇO DE 2022

POESIA AO MEIO DIA



WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-1939)

REMORSE FOR INTEMPERATE SPEECH

I RANTED TO THE KNAVE AND FOOL,
BUT OUTGREW THAT SCHOOL,
WOULD TRANSFORM THE PART,
FIT AUDIENCE FOUND, BUT CANNOT RULE
MY FANATIC HEART.

I SOUGHT MY BETTERS: THOUGH IN EACH
FINE MANNERS, LIBERAL SPEECH,
TURN HATRED INTO SPORT,
NOTHING SAID OR DONE CAN REACH
MY FANATIC HEART.

OUT OF IRELAND HAVE WE COME.
GREAT HATRED, LITTLE ROOM,
MAIMED US AT THE START.
I CARRY FROM MY MOTHER'S WOMB
A FANATIC HEART.



FAYE BOLAND

ECHOES

I COME FROM A SMALL SEASIDE TOWN
WHERE NARROW ROADS CRISS-CROSS MOUNTAINS
AND THE WIND IS A TUNE PLAYED ON THE BRANCHES OF ASH.

A PLACE THAT SMELLS OF SEAWEED, FERNS AND GERMAN COLOGNE,
A HIVE HUMMING WITH ACCENTS ALL SUMMER LONG.
WHERE THE LOCALS DRINK GUINNESS AND CURSE WINTER WEATHER

IN ECHOING BARS WHERE STORIES BLOOM.
I COME FROM A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE STOP TO CHAT
AND CHILDREN ARE SAFE TO WALK ALONE

YET CAN'T WAIT TO LEAVE BY THEIR TEENS;
YOUTHS WHO WORK HARD TO GET GOOD JOBS ELSEWHERE –
SOMETIMES I SEE THEIR NAMES IN THE PAPER.

MY TOWN HAS BEEN PAINTED A THOUSAND TIMES,
ITS DAYLIGHT SOFT AS THE BREAD FROM MY MOTHER'S OVEN,
AS THE BRUSH OF FLANNELETTE SHEETS MY FATHER TUCKED IN EACH NIGHT.

I COME FROM A PLACE WHERE I BURIED MY PETS,
FOUND INITIALS OF PEOPLE WHO LIVED THERE BEFORE ME
CARVED INTO TREE TRUNKS LIKE OGHAM IN STONE.

I COME FROM A TOWN WHOSE WAVES ROLL SLOWLY
ONTO THE SHELTERED SHORE OF THE BAY.
ITS LURE PULLS LIKE THE WATER'S CURRENT
WHERE THE HERON WAITS FOR A GLIMMER OF SILVER.



HILARY TROUP

IRISHNESS 2022: A STATE OF BECOMING

IT'S LIKE THIS, I SAID IN TEACHER TONES,
BENT OVER THE WATER WITH FINGER OUTSTRETCHED,
READY TO DRAW THE BORDERS OF MY LAND.
BUT THEY DISSOLVE, THEY RIPPLE, EDGING ENDLESSLY OUTWARDS,
OUT OF MY GRASP – THAT CONSTANT QUEST FOR A NEW DEFINITION,
THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF AN ARTICLE 51.
ONE HUNDRED YEARS ON, NO LONGER CONFINED TO RHYMED-OFF COUNTIES,
THEIR COLOURS AND CREED RECORDED IN ASSURED STROKES OF INK.
REPLACED WITH A NEW DREAM OF TWISTING REFLECTIONS,
OUR AISLING POEM REBORN, GENDER-NEUTRAL THIS TIME –
WE PERCH ON EUROPE'S EDGE, ABLY CATCHING ITS LIGHT,
AND SEESAW BETWEEN CONTINENTS, WILY AND BECKONING,
OR IN CAMOUFLAGED TERMS, BOTH PERSISTENT AND POISED.
A PRIDE WITHOUT NATIONALISM – NO LONGER SOAKED IN TEA AND IN TURF,
THOSE RAISED EYEBROWS AND LONESOME DARK-NIGHT LAMENTS –
NOW WILL-O'-THE-WISPS OF THE PAST IN THIS PRESENT.
BUT SHADOWS BRING PATHOS AND HISTORY – PERSPECTIVE,
FREE NOW FROM LOCKDOWNS AND LIFE IN GENUFLECTION,
A PEOPLE SELF-AWARE, SELF-REFLECTING, BOUND TOGETHER,
A NEW IRISHNESS OF THE MANY SMOTHERING THE ISLAND OF THE FEW,
THE ANCIENT STARTER, FED, FERMENTING – A FLEDGLING FORGING ANEW.
FOR OUR COUNTRY'S FAMILY TREE HAS FOREIGN-BORN AND SEEDED,
GROWING EVERGREEN AND GREATER NOW, ROOTED IN OUR SOIL,
THAT NEW BATTLEFIELD OF SPORTS AND ARTS – HIGHER ASPIRATIONS,
BUT STILL QUICK TO LAUGH AND QUIP – A GENEROUS SEASONING OF WIT,
FLAVOURING THE QUESTION-MARK SPACE OF WHAT IS A PEOPLE,
THAT CRACK WE COLOUR IN – BETWEEN OLD LAND AND SKY.
AND A BLANK PAGE SITS PATIENTLY ON TIMELESS SHELBOURNE MAHOGANY,
TO BE IRISH – THE BREATHING BEAUTY OF AN ADJECTIVE IN FLUX,
THE PURE POTENTIAL OF A PAGE FOREVER TO BE WRITTEN.



EILEEN CASEY

AS WE SOW, SO SHALL WE REAP

MY PARENTS WALKED A MIDDLE WAY; THEIR VIA MEDIA;
PURSUED A COMMON CAUSE. FAMILY. A NATION'S BRACE
IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH.

I COME FROM IRELAND'S SILK ROAD; A CROSSROADS
CONNECTING NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST. MY MIDLANDS
GREETING GOES; "HOWYA". NORTHERNERS EXCLAIM
"HOW'S ABOUT YE". DUBLINERS ASK, "WHAT'S THE STORY RORY?"
SOUTHERNERS SAY, "ALRIGHT BOY!"
VOICES FROM LANDS NEAR AND FAR ENRICH OUR LIVES.
IN THIS NETWORK OF DIFFERENCE I HOLD ONTO
MY CÚPLA FOCAIL TOO. MOTHER TONGUE.
A CHILD'S PURSE FULL OF USELESS THINGS*
ENCHANTMENT. MUSIC. RUSHES
GATHERED ON ST BRIDGET'S DAY.

BOG LANDSCAPE, GENERATIONS DEEP IN MY BLOODLINE
MINGLES WITH HUGUENOT ANCESTORS FLEEING
PERSECUTION. HERE, THEY FOUND THEIR FOOTING; BROUGHT
LINEN-MAKING AND THEY PRINTED JOURNALS; A LITERARY
HERITAGE. STONEMASONS, FATHER'S PEOPLE,
BUILT OUR MIDLANDS' TOWN, BRICK UPON SOLID BRICK.
MOTHER CAME FROM FARMING STOCK.
HER LIGHT BLUE EYES BROUGHT WESTERN SKIES
ABOVE GALWAY, CITY OF THE TRIBES.
SEA RHYTHMS IN HER VOICE WALK ME STILL,
ALL ALONG THE CLADDAGH, WHERE SWANS, PURE AS POETRY,
BRIGHTEN EVEN DARKEST DAYS. SHE SANG OF ATLANTIC
VOYAGES.
SO MANY OF HER BLOODLINE SAILED THOSE TURBULENT WAVES.
SCATTERED TO THE FOUR WINDS; IRISH SEEDS GREENING
FAR-AWAY FIELDS. THEIR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN
MADE IT BACK. REPLENISHED OUR CULTURAL STORE.
WE ARE A LIGHTHOUSE FOR IMMIGRANTS.
IRISH MEN AND WOMEN FOUGHT AND DIED FOR IRELAND.
SUFFERED FAMINE AND WARS. DISAGREEMENTS. SPLITS.
SPILT BLOOD. VIOLENCE. STARVATIONS OF THE SOUL.
WHAT INJURES OTHERS, HARMS OUR NATION FAMILY.
THE WORLD SHRINKS OR EXPANDS DEPENDING
ON THE PRISM OF OUR VISION; WHETHER WE CREATE
UNEASE, UNREST OR A HEALING SPACE THAT WELCOMES ALL.

WHEN WE OPEN HEARTS AND MINDS; WHEN WE GATHER
ABUNDANT HARVESTS, RIPENED BY THE WARMTH
OF HUMAN KINDNESS; OUR NATION BLOOMS.



AMY CLOHESSY

HOME

I CRAVE HOME.
THE PEOPLE THERE ARE MINE
THE COLD FRESH AIR FILLING MY LUNGS
THE RAIN ON MY SKIN
THE HELLO HOW ARE YOUS
THE SUN NOT BEING TAKEN FOR GRANTED
THE FAMILIES SO BIG YOU'RE NEVER ALONE
THE TRADITIONS AND SUSPICIONS
THE WEATHER IT'S FINE
THE LOCALS AND THEIR WAYS
THE SENSE OF BELONGING
THE PEOPLE KNOWING YOUR BUSINESS AS IF SOMEBODY CARES
THE TEA AND CHATS
THE PUBS AND THE ATMOSPHERE
THE LAUGHS AND THE CRIES THAT ARE SHARED
THE WAY YOU KNOW YOUR WAY WITHOUT GOOGLE MAPS
THE WAY NOT EVERY PERSON YOU SEE IS A STRANGER
THE GREEN OH THE GREEN EVERYWHERE
THE PRIDE FOR A PARISH
THE MANY MANY ACCENTS IN ONE SMALL ISLAND
THE WAY YOU'LL BE MISSED
THE REAL LOVE FOR THE COUNTRY
THE BIG BREAKFASTS
THE HAIR OF THE DOG
THE FIELDS AND MORE FIELDS
THE SCHOOL FRIENDS
THE CRAZY AUNTIES
THE FEW CANS
THE HARMLESS GIVING OUT
THE 99 CONES
THE STORIES OF THE PAST
THE ABANDONED HOUSES
THE OVER THE TOP CELEBRATIONS

THE I'LL JUST POP OVER
THE CRAIC AGUS CEOL
THE HAM SANDWICHES WITH TAYTOS
THE SIP OF A PINT WITH YOUR DAD
THE RIDICULOUS RUMOURS
THE JERSEYS
THE LAUGHS WITH COUSINS
THE JAMBONS
THE CITY SHOPPING TRIPS
THE LAID BACK UNCLES
THE SNEER
THE FUSS OF YOUR GRANDMOTHER
THE NEIGHBOUR THAT KNOWS YOUR NAME
THE 12 HOUR NURSING SHIFTS
THE GRAND STRETCH IN THE EVENING
THE SILLY TIFFS WITH THE MOTHER
THE COMFORT OF YOUR PARENTS' HOUSE
THE BACK ROADS
THE SHITTY NIGHT CLUBS
THE CALLS NOT PLANNED AROUND TIME DIFFERENCE
THE USUAL ORDER AT THE LOCAL CHIPPER
THE SUPPORT FOR LOCAL CHARITIES
THE PRIVATE SIBLING JOKES
THE NOT HAVING TO EXPLAIN YOU'RE IRISH
THE NICKNAMES
THE SPINS INTO TOWN
THE LIST COULD GO ON
THE CRAVE FOR HOME.



BRIAN KIRK

KINGDOM

MY FATHER CUT THE HEDGES, PLANTED BEDS, STORED FUEL UP FOR THE
WINTER MONTHS,
BUILT FIRES IN CHILLY WAITING ROOMS. HE DIDN'T SAY A LOT, BUT WHEN HE
SPOKE
YOU LISTENED IF YOU KNEW WHAT WAS GOOD FOR YOU. WE ARRIVED ONE
BY ONE, FULL
OF PROMISE, POOR BUT WELL TURNED OUT, FED BUT ALWAYS HUNGRY FOR A
TASTE
OF SOMETHING MORE. WE DIDN'T LICK IT OFF THE GROUND. DESPITE THE
WELL-KEPT
BORDERS OF HIS WORLD, HE INDULGED A DREAM OF OTHER WAYS OF LIVING,
AND DAILY
BOUGHT A TICKET TO A LIFE ON THE FAR SIDE OF RESPECTABILITY. HORSES
AND THE FOOTBALL
POOLS PROMISED A WAY OF GETTING BY, BUT WINNING ONLY CAME IN
SMALL AMOUNTS
AT LENGTHY INTERVALS, SO HE PUT HIS SHOULDER TO THE WHEEL, GAVE UP
THE DRINK,
CUT BACK THE FAGS, WAS FRUGAL IN EVERY WAY, WORKED EVERY DAY SO
THAT HIS CHILDREN
HAD THE CHANCE HE WAS DENIED, DETERMINED THAT HIS LIFE WOULD HAVE
SOME MEANING
BY CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR US. HE BECAME AN ARCHETYPE OF
SORTS, A POSTER BOY
FOR CHURCH AND STATE UNITED, A MAN ONLY DE VALERA COULD HAVE
DREAMED.
BUT WE GREW UP AND LET HIM DOWN. WE CRAVED DIFFERENT THINGS, OUR
CHILDHOODS SPENT
GAZING OUT BEYOND THE HEDGES THAT HE TRIMMED, DREAMING ANOTHER
KIND OF LIFE
OUTSIDE THE FORTRESS THAT HE BUILT FROM DUTY, FAITH, AND LOVE. THE
FOUNDATIONS
WERE UNSTABLE, THE THINGS HE THOUGHT WOULD LAST FOREVER SOON
WOULD CRACK:
WORK AND ORDER COULDN'T BEAR THE WEIGHT. HIS KINGDOM DIDN'T LAST.
NO KINGDOM DOES



ANDREW DEACON

LUCAN GEOMETRY

AT WORK, THEY'VE NEVER HEARD OF KANDAHAR,
BUT THEN THEY'VE NEVER HEARD OF ADAMSTOWN,
WHERE OMAR PARKS AND ROLLS THE WINDOW DOWN
AND VIEWS THE EDGE OF DUBLIN FROM HIS CAR.
OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE, THE LONG, STRAIGHT CONCRETE BAND
OF PATH, THE ROAD AND – PARALLEL TO THAT –
THE RAILWAY, THE CANAL: ALL STRAIGHT AND FLAT.
TURN LEFT FOR DUBLIN, RIGHT FOR IRELAND.
FIVE-YEAR-OLD FATIMA WAVES HER PLASTIC BAT,
CRIES “CRICKET, DADDY!”, BOWLS HER TENNIS BALL,
FOLLOWS ITS EDGED PARABOLA, ITS FALL
IN THE WATER, SHRIEKS WITH JOY, “HOWZAT!”
GRINNING, EXULTANT IN HER TARTAN SKIRT,
SHE KISSES THE SHAMROCKS ON HER TINY SHIRT.

