



24 DE NOVEMBRO DE 2021

POESIA AO MEIO DIA



WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-1939)

EASTER 1916

I HAVE MET THEM AT CLOSE OF DAY
COMING WITH VIVID FACES
FROM COUNTER OR DESK AMONG GREY
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HOUSES.
I HAVE PASSED WITH A NOD OF THE HEAD
OR POLITE MEANINGLESS WORDS,
OR HAVE LINGERED AWHILE AND SAID
POLITE MEANINGLESS WORDS,
AND THOUGHT BEFORE I HAD DONE
OF A MOCKING TALE OR A GIBE
TO PLEASE A COMPANION
AROUND THE FIRE AT THE CLUB,
BEING CERTAIN THAT THEY AND I
BUT LIVED WHERE MOTLEY IS WORN:
ALL CHANGED, CHANGED UTTERLY:
A TERRIBLE BEAUTY IS BORN.

THAT WOMAN'S DAYS WERE SPENT
IN IGNORANT GOOD-WILL,
HER NIGHTS IN ARGUMENT
UNTIL HER VOICE GREW SHRILL.
WHAT VOICE MORE SWEET THAN HERS
WHEN, YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL,
SHE RODE TO HARRIERS?
THIS MAN HAD KEPT A SCHOOL
AND RODE OUR WINGÈD HORSE;
THIS OTHER HIS HELPER AND FRIEND
WAS COMING INTO HIS FORCE;
HE MIGHT HAVE WON FAME IN THE END,
SO SENSITIVE HIS NATURE SEEMED,
SO DARING AND SWEET HIS THOUGHT.
THIS OTHER MAN I HAD DREAMED
A DRUNKEN, VAINGLORIOUS LOU.
HE HAD DONE MOST BITTER WRONG
TO SOME WHO ARE NEAR MY HEART,
YET I NUMBER HIM IN THE SONG;
HE, TOO, HAS RESIGNED HIS PART
IN THE CASUAL COMEDY;
HE, TOO, HAS BEEN CHANGED IN HIS TURN,
TRANSFORMED UTTERLY:
A TERRIBLE BEAUTY IS BORN.

HEARTS WITH ONE PURPOSE ALONE
THROUGH SUMMER AND WINTER SEEM
ENCHANTED TO A STONE
TO TROUBLE THE LIVING STREAM.
THE HORSE THAT COMES FROM THE ROAD,
THE RIDER, THE BIRDS THAT RANGE
FROM CLOUD TO TUMBLING CLOUD,
MINUTE BY MINUTE THEY CHANGE;
A SHADOW OF CLOUD ON THE STREAM
CHANGES MINUTE BY MINUTE;
A HORSE-HOOF SLIDES ON THE BRIM,
AND A HORSE PLASHES WITHIN IT;
THE LONG-LEGGED MOOR-HENS DIVE,
AND HENS TO MOOR-COCKS CALL;
MINUTE BY MINUTE THEY LIVE;
THE STONE'S IN THE MIDST OF ALL.

TOO LONG A SACRIFICE
CAN MAKE A STONE OF THE HEART.
O WHEN MAY IT SUFFICE?
THAT IS HEAVEN'S PART, OUR PART
TO MURMUR NAME UPON NAME,
AS A MOTHER NAMES HER CHILD
WHEN SLEEP AT LAST HAS COME
ON LIMBS THAT HAD RUN WILD.
WHAT IS IT BUT NIGHTFALL?
NO, NO, NOT NIGHT BUT DEATH;
WAS IT NEEDLESS DEATH AFTER ALL?
FOR ENGLAND MAY KEEP FAITH
FOR ALL THAT IS DONE AND SAID.
WE KNOW THEIR DREAM; ENOUGH
TO KNOW THEY DREAMED AND ARE DEAD;
AND WHAT IF EXCESS OF LOVE
BEWILDERED THEM TILL THEY DIED?
I WRITE IT OUT IN A VERSE —
MACDONAGH AND MACBRIDE
AND CONNOLLY AND PEARSE
NOW AND IN TIME TO BE,
WHEREVER GREEN IS WORN,
ARE CHANGED, CHANGED UTTERLY:
A TERRIBLE BEAUTY IS BORN.



PATRICK KAVANAGH (1904-1967)

A CHRISTMAS CHILDHOOD

ONE SIDE OF THE POTATO-PITS WAS WHITE WITH FROST –
HOW WONDERFUL THAT WAS, HOW WONDERFUL!
AND WHEN WE PUT OUR EARS TO THE PALING-POST
THE MUSIC THAT CAME OUT WAS MAGICAL.

THE LIGHT BETWEEN THE RICKS OF HAY AND STRAW
WAS A HOLE IN HEAVEN'S GABLE. AN APPLE TREE
WITH ITS DECEMBER-GLINTING FRUIT WE SAW –
O YOU, EVE, WERE THE WORLD THAT TEMPTED ME

TO EAT THE KNOWLEDGE THAT GREW IN CLAY
AND DEATH THE GERM WITHIN IT! NOW AND THEN
I CAN REMEMBER SOMETHING OF THE GAY
GARDEN THAT WAS CHILDHOOD'S. AGAIN

THE TRACKS OF CATTLE TO A DRINKING-PLACE,
A GREEN STONE LYING SIDEWAYS IN A DITCH,
OR ANY COMMON SIGHT, THE TRANSFIGURED FACE
OF A BEAUTY THAT THE WORLD DID NOT TOUCH.

II

MY FATHER PLAYED THE MELODION
OUTSIDE AT OUR GATE;
THERE WERE STARS IN THE MORNING EAST
AND THEY DANCED TO HIS MUSIC.

ACROSS THE WILD BOGS HIS MELODION CALLED
TO LENNONS AND CALLANS.
AS I PULLED ON MY TROUSERS IN A HURRY
I KNEW SOME STRANGE THING HAD HAPPENED.

OUTSIDE IN THE COW-HOUSE MY MOTHER
MADE THE MUSIC OF MILKING;
THE LIGHT OF HER STABLE-LAMP WAS A STAR
AND THE FROST OF BETHLEHEM MADE IT TWINKLE.

A WATER-HEN SCREECHED IN THE BOG,
MASS-GOING FEET
CRUNCHED THE WAFER-ICE ON THE POT-HOLES,
SOMEBODY WISTFULLY TWISTED THE BELLOWS WHEEL.

MY CHILD POET PICKED OUT THE LETTERS
ON THE GREY STONE,
IN SILVER THE WONDER OF A CHRISTMAS TOWNLAND,
THE WINKING GLITTER OF A FROSTY DAWN.

CASSIOPEIA WAS OVER
CASSIDY'S HANGING HILL,
I LOOKED AND THREE WHIN BUSHES RODE ACROSS
THE HORIZON — THE THREE WISE KINGS.

AND OLD MAN PASSING SAID:
'CAN'T HE MAKE IT TALK –
THE MELODION.' I HID IN THE DOORWAY
AND TIGHTENED THE BELT OF MY BOX-PLEATED COAT.

I NICKED SIX NICKS ON THE DOOR-POST
WITH MY PENKNIFE'S BIG BLADE –
THERE WAS A LITTLE ONE FOR CUTTING TOBACCO.
AND I WAS SIX CHRISTMASES OF AGE.

MY FATHER PLAYED THE MELODION,
MY MOTHER MILKED THE COWS,
AND I HAD A PRAYER LIKE A WHITE ROSE PINNED
ON THE VIRGIN MARY'S BLOUSE.



PAULA MEEHAN

THE STATUE OF THE VIRGIN AT GRANARD SPEAKS

IT CAN BE BITTER HERE AT TIMES LIKE THIS,
NOVEMBER WIND SWEEPING ACROSS THE BORDER.
ITS SEEDS OF ICE WOULD CUT YOU TO THE QUICK.
THE WHOLE TOWN TUCKED UP SAFE AND
DREAMING,
EVEN WILD THINGS GONE TO EARTH, AND I
STUCK UP HERE IN THIS GROTTA, WITHOUT AS
MUCH AS
STAR OR PLANET TO EASE MY VIGIL.

THE HOWLING WON'T LET UP. TREES
CAVORT IN AGONY AS IF THEY WOULD BE FREE
AND TAKE OFF — GHOST VOYAGERS
ON THE WIND THAT CARRIES INTIMATIONS
OF GARRISON TOWNS, WALLED CITIES, GHETTO
LANES
WHERE MEN HUNT EACH OTHER AND INVOKE
THE VARIOUS NAMES OF GOD AS BLESSING
ON THEIR DEATH TACTICS, THEIR NIGHT
MANOEUVRES.
CLOSER TO HOME THE WIND SAILS OVER
DYING LAKES. I HEAR FISH DROWNING.
I TASTE THE STAGNANT WATER MINGLED
WITH TURF SMOKE FROM OUTLYING FARMS.

THEY CALL ME MARY — BLESSED, HOLY, VIRGIN.
THEY FIT ME TO A MYTH OF A MAN CRUCIFIED:
THE SCOURGING AND THE FALLING, AND THE
FALLING AGAIN,
THE THORNY CROWN, THE HAMMER BLOW OF IRON
INTO WRIST AND ANKLE, THE SACRED BLEEDING
HEART.
THEY NAME ME MOTHER OF ALL THIS GRIEF
THOUGH MATED TO NO MORTAL MAN.
THEY KNEEL BEFORE ME AND THEIR PRAYERS
FLY UP LIKE SPARKS FROM A BONFIRE
THAT BLAZE A MOMENT, THEN WINK OUT.

IT CAN BE LOVELY HERE AT TIMES. SPRINGTIME,
EARLY SUMMER. GIRLS IN COMMUNION FROCKS
PALE RIVALS TO THE RIOT IN THE HEDGEROWS
OF COW PARSLEY AND HAW BLOSSOM, THE
PERFUME
FROM EVERY RUSHY ACRE THAT'S LEFT FOR HAY
WHEN THE LIGHT SWINGS LONGER WITH THE SUN'S
PUSH NORTH.

OR THE GRACE OF A MIDSUMMER WEDDING
WHEN THE EARTH HERSELF CALLS OUT FOR
COUPLING
AND I WOULD BREAK LOOSE OF MY STONY
ROBES,
PURE BLUE, PURE WHITE, AS IF THEY HAD
ROBBED
A CHILD'S SKY FOR THEIR COLOUR. MY BEING
CRIES OUT TO BE INCARNATE, INCARNATE,
MACULATE AND TOUSLED IN A HONEYED BED.

EVEN AN AUTUMN BURIAL CAN WORK ITS
OWN PAGEANTRY.
THE HEDGES HEAVY WITH THE BURDEN OF
FRUITING
CRAB, SLOE, BERRY, HIP; CLOUDS SCUD EAST
PEAR SCENTED, WINDFALLS SECRET IN LONG
ORCHARD GRASSES, AND SOME OLD SOUL IS
LOWERED
TO HIS KIN. DEATH IS JUST ANOTHER
HARVEST
SCRIPTED TO THE SEASON'S PLAY.

BUT ON THIS ALL SOULS' NIGHT THERE IS
NO RESPITE FROM THE KEENING OF THE
WIND.
I WOULD NOT BE AMAZED IF EVERY CORPSE
CAME RISEN
FROM THE GRAVEYARD TO JOIN IN
EXALTATION WITH THE GALE,
A CACOPHONY OF BONE IMPLORING SKY FOR
JUDGEMENT
AND RELEASE FROM BEING THE CONSCIENCE
OF THE TOWN.

ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS I REMEMBER THE CHILD
WHO CAME WITH FIFTEEN SUMMERS TO HER
NAME,
AND SHE LAY DOWN ALONE AT MY FEET
WITHOUT MIDWIFE OR DOCTOR OR FRIEND TO
HOLD HER HAND
AND SHE PUSHED HER SECRET OUT INTO THE
NIGHT,
FAR FROM THE TOWN TUCKED UP IN LITTLE
SCANDALS,



BARGAINS STRUCK, WORDS BROKEN, PRAYERS,
PROMISES,
AND THOUGH SHE CRIED OUT TO ME IN EXTREMIS
I DID NOT MOVE,
I DIDN'T LIFT A FINGER TO HELP HER,
I DIDN'T INTERCEDE WITH HEAVEN,
NOR WHISPER THE CHARMED WORD IN GOD'S EAR.

ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS I NUMBER THE DAYS TO THE
SOLSTICE
AND THE TURN BACK TO THE LIGHT.
O SUN,
CENTRE OF OUR FOOLISH DANCE,
BURNING HEART OF STONE,
MOLTEN MOTHER OF US ALL,
HEAR ME AND HAVE PITY.



SEAMUS HEANEY (1939-2013)

WHEN ALL THE OTHERS WERE AWAY AT MASS

WHEN ALL THE OTHERS WERE AWAY AT MASS
I WAS ALL HERS AS WE PEELED POTATOES.
THEY BROKE THE SILENCE, LET FALL ONE BY ONE
LIKE SOLDER WEeping OFF THE SOLDERING IRON:
COLD COMFORTS SET BETWEEN US, THINGS TO
SHARE
GLEAMING IN A BUCKET OF CLEAN WATER.
AND AGAIN LET FALL. LITTLE PLEASANT SPLASHES
FROM EACH OTHER'S WORK WOULD BRING US TO
OUR SENSES.

SO WHILE THE PARISH PRIEST AT HER BEDSIDE
WENT HAMMER AND TONGS AT THE PRAYERS FOR
THE DYING
AND SOME WERE RESPONDING AND SOME CRYING
I REMEMBERED HER HEAD BENT TOWARDS MY
HEAD,
HER BREATH IN MINE, OUR FLUENT DIPPING
KNIVES-
NEVER CLOSER THE WHOLE REST OF OUR LIVES.



PAUL DURCAN

MAKING LOVE OUTSIDE ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN

WHEN I WAS A BOY, MYSELF AND MY GIRL
USED BICYCLE UP TO THE PHOENIX PARK;
OUTSIDE THE GATES WE USED LIE IN THE GRASS
MAKING LOVE OUTSIDE ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN.

OFTEN I WONDERED WHAT DE VALERA WOULD
HAVE THOUGHT
INSIDE IN HIS IVORY TOWER
IF HE KNEW THAT WE WERE IN HIS GREEN, GREEN
GRASS
MAKING LOVE OUTSIDE ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN.

BECAUSE THE ODD THING WAS – OH HOW ODD IT
WAS –
WE BOTH REVERED IRISH PATRIOTS
AND WE DREAMED OUR DREAMS OF A GREEN,
GREEN FLAG
MAKING LOVE OUTSIDE ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN.

BUT EVEN HAD OUR NAMES BEEN DIARMAID AND
GRÁINNE
WE DOUBTED DE VALERA'S APPROVAL
FOR A POET'S SON AND A JUDGE'S DAUGHTER
MAKING LOVE OUTSIDE ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN.

I SEE HIM NOW IN THE HEAT-HAZE OF THE DAY
BLINDLY STALKING US DOWN;
AND, LEVELLING AN ANCIENT RIFLE, HE SAYS,
“STOP
MAKING LOVE OUTSIDE ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN”



EAVAN BOLAND (1944-2020)

QUARANTINE

IN THE WORST HOUR OF THE WORST SEASON
OF THE WORST YEAR OF A WHOLE PEOPLE
A MAN SET OUT FROM THE WORKHOUSE WITH
HIS WIFE.
HE WAS WALKING — THEY WERE BOTH WALKING
— NORTH.

SHE WAS SICK WITH FAMINE FEVER AND COULD
NOT KEEP UP.

HE LIFTED HER AND PUT HER ON HIS BACK.
HE WALKED LIKE THAT WEST AND WEST AND
NORTH.
UNTIL AT NIGHTFALL UNDER FREEZING STARS
THEY ARRIVED.

IN THE MORNING THEY WERE BOTH FOUND DEAD.
OF COLD. OF HUNGER. OF THE TOXINS OF A
WHOLE HISTORY.
BUT HER FEET WERE HELD AGAINST HIS
BREASTBONE.
THE LAST HEAT OF HIS FLESH WAS HIS LAST GIFT
TO HER.

LET NO LOVE POEM EVER COME TO THIS
THRESHOLD.

THERE IS NO PLACE HERE FOR THE INEXACT
PRAISE OF THE EASY GRACES AND SENSUALITY
OF THE BODY.
THERE IS ONLY TIME FOR THIS MERCILESS
INVENTORY:

THEIR DEATH TOGETHER IN THE WINTER OF 1847.
ALSO WHAT THEY SUFFERED. HOW THEY
LIVED.
AND WHAT THERE IS BETWEEN A MAN AND
WOMAN.
AND IN WHICH DARKNESS IT CAN BEST BE
PROVED.

