

# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

POEMS IN IRISH BY

Caitríona Ní Chléirchín

TRANSLATED BY

Peter Fallon

## Clár

'Bíonn Laethanta Ann . . .'	<i>leathanach</i>	14
Droim Searc		16
Coigeal na mBan Sí		18
Béchuil		20
Clapsholas i nGort na Móna		22
Tar Liom, a Ghrá		24
Cogarnach		26
Spealadóireacht		28
Muirleannán		30
Bean Róin		32
Loch Thulaigh		34
Scaradh na gCompánach		36
Cealg		38
Muinice		40
Cluain na hEorna		44
Nuair a Fhágann Tú Mé		46
Amharc Orm		48
Cuimhne		50
Chuaigh Mé do Do Lorg		52
Cogar, Cogar, a Stór		54
Nóiméad ar Maidin		56
Taom		58
Cianghrá		60
Fírinne		62
Meán Lae, ag Uaigh an Chaomhánaigh		64
Eiscimigh		66
Capall Bán		68
Fómhar		
CRAOBH LIATH		70
GEALACH NA GCOINLEACH		70
Trasnú na Teorann		
TOST		72
TEORAINN		74
MOILL		76
TRASNÚ NA TEORANN		78

## Contents

'There are Days that I Feel . . .'	<i>page</i>	15
Drumshark (The Ridge of Love)		17
Reed Mace, Cat's Tail		19
Damselfly		21
Duskus, Gortmoney		23
Come Away with Me, Darling		25
The Talk of the Town		27
Mowing (with Scythe)		29
My Man of the Sea		31
Selkie		33
Tully Lough		35
The Parting of the Ways		37
Sting		39
Torc		41
Barley Aftergrass		45
When You Go From Me		47
Look at Me		49
Remembering		51
I Went Out to Find You		53
Shh. Whisper, My Love		55
A Moment, One Morning		57
Swell		59
Long-distance Love		61
The Whole Truth		63
In the Middle of the Day		65
The Inuit		67
The Old Grey Mare		69
Harvest		
CREEVLEA (GREY BRANCH OR BOUGH)		71
HARVET MOON		71
Border Crossing		
SEALED LIPS, NE'ER A WORD		73
BORDER (THE LIMIT)		75
HOLD UP		77
BORDER CROSSING		79

DROICHEAD THUAMA 80  
DROIM MÓR 82

*Focal Buíochais* 84

TOOMEBRIDGE (AN ANNIVERSARY) 81  
DROMORE 83

*Acknowledgements* 85

## *Béchuil*

An samhradh gur éag tú  
chonaic mé romham  
san aer ag eitilt  
béchuil ghormghlas

i ndraíocht an tráthnóna  
sa ghrian  
i bhfaiche Choláiste na Tríonóide.

Dhá phéire sciathán caol  
agus í ar fos  
anois spréite amach  
colainn fhada mar a bheadh snáthaid mhór  
ag cleitearnach.

Sa mhachnamh dom, bhraith mé  
gur tusa a bhí ann  
i do theachtaire ón saol eile.

## *Damselfly*

That summer you died  
I saw before me  
a damselfly — aquamarine —  
on the playing fields of Trinity,

in afternoon sun  
a spell cast,  
parallel pairs of threadlike  
wings now at rest,

a long body as straight  
as a knitter's  
needle;  
then flutters and flitters,

and it gave me to think  
of a herald,  
that you were one sent  
from the other world.

## *Loch Thulaigh*

Gháir an chorr réisc,  
scréach an ghé fhiáin  
ón chrannóg i lár an locha.  
Fearthainn an tsamhraidh  
ag titim go mall  
ar Mac Cionnaith  
ina chaisleán uaigneach ar bhruach an locha,  
faoi léan ag caoineadh  
a mhná is a chlainne,  
thíos faoin choipeadh cúir.

Níl fágtha aige ach fead na feadóige,  
meigeall an mhionnáin aeir,  
scréach ón ghé fhiáin  
is plubarnach na gcearc uisce,  
an duibhéan ag faoileáil thart air,  
deora a chinn á dtaoscadh i Loch an Bhróin aige.

## *Tully Lough*

The crane's *krank*,  
the wild goose scrake,  
from beyond a *crannóg*  
in mid-lake.  
Summer rain  
spits on McKenna,  
desolate chief in a fortified home,  
withered by grief  
for his wife and their care,  
a household under froth and foam.

Nothing left to him now  
but the plover's *too-lee*,  
the snipe's *sccaap*,  
the moorhen's gurgley  
and that wild goose scrake,  
cormorants circling over above him,  
a torrent of tears  
spluttering in to Sorrow Lake.

## *Chuaigh Mé do Do Lorg*

Chuaigh mé do do lorg  
i nDoire na gCosán,  
i nDoire Shaileach,  
i nDoire Chaoch  
is i nDoire na Sealg.

Chuaigh mé do do lorg  
ó Thír na Néill go Baile Oisín,  
ón Droichead Gorm, go hInis Dhubh Linn,  
i nDomhnach idir Dhá Mhóin.

I bhfís san oíche,  
chonaic mé an bhrídeach sí  
is Mac Cionnaith ar a chapall bán  
ag teacht fána déin go Caisleán Ghlas Locha.

Chonaic mé taibhsí uaigneacha faoi ocras  
ag tógáil balla, aimsir an drochshaoil.  
Chuaigh mé suas ar an Lios Buí,  
go Cor na Craoibhe, go Cor a' Chrainn —

ach amharc ní raibh  
ort féin, a stór.

## *I Went Out to Find You*

I went out to find you  
in Derrygassan,  
in Derryshillagh,  
in Derryhee  
and in Dernashallog.

I went out to find you,  
all the way from Ternaneill,  
from the Blue Bridge to Ballyoisin,  
to Inishdevlin,  
in Donagh and the two bogs between.

That night I was seeing  
things. I saw the fairy  
bride, and Chief McKenna astride  
his grey coming for her  
at Castle Leslie.

I saw hungry ghosts  
wandering alone,  
erecting a wall in the bad times.  
I went above to Lisboy,  
to Coracrin and Cornacrieve —

but there was no sign of you,  
no sign, my love.