

Ailbhe Ní Ghearbhuigh

THE COAST ROAD



Gallery Books

Poems in Irish

Bac Seirce *page* 12
Suanchaint 14
Sealbhú 16
Ceathrúintí na nÉan 18
Beachaire 24
X 26
Cneá 28
Bóin Dé 30
Bóin Dé 32
Siúrtheanga 34
Filleadh ón Antartach 36
Sárú Teorann 38
Deochadh Dorais 40
Tuathal 42
Bhís dom Thiomáint Cois Farraise 44
In Inmhe Fir 46
Labhraíonn Fear Feasa 48
Scéala ón Oirthear 50
Meafair 52
Conriocht 54
Tuairisc ón nGealt-teach Iargúlta
 Laistiar den Ré 56
Laethanta lagmhisnigh 58
Rianta 60
Deireadh na Feide 62
Mac Leanna 64
Áiféilín 66
Foláireamh 68
Ionsaí na Bé 70
Ar Cíos 74
Moirt Seirce 76
Cró na Snáthaide 78
Lorgaíomar Thú Mí Lúnasa 80
Cara Éagmaise 82
Tom Waits i dTrá Lí 84
Grasse Matinée 86
Fear an Cheamara i nGrá 88
Filleadh ar an gCathair 90

Poems in English

The Love Bind *translated by David Wheatley page* 13
Sleeptalk *Peter Sirr* 15
Possession *Billy Ramsell* 17
Bird Quatrains *Alan Gillis* 19
Bee-keeper *Michelle O'Sullivan* 25
X *Vona Groarke* 27
Wound *David Wheatley* 29
Ladybird *Justin Quinn* 31
Ladybird *Justin Quinn* 33
Sister Mystery *Medbh McGuckian* 35
Return from Antarctica *Billy Ramsell* 37
Border Crossing *David Wheatley* 39
A Parting Kiss *Peter Fallon* 41
Anticlockwise *Michelle O'Sullivan* 43
The Coast Road *Peter Fallon* 45
Becoming a Man *John McAuliffe* 47
Mindfulness *Vona Groarke* 49
Lighthouse Story *Billy Ramsell* 51
Metaphors *David Wheatley* 53
A Wereing *Tom French* 55
Report from the Madhouse Behind
 the Moon *John McAuliffe* 57
Despondent Days *Peter Fallon* 59
Stains *Medbh McGuckian* 61
Last Blast *Billy Ramsell* 63
Groggy Grá *John McAuliffe* 65
Some Slight Regret *Peter Fallon* 67
Warning *Paul Muldoon* 69
Fairy Attack *David Wheatley* 71
Rented *Alan Gillis* 75
Love Lees *David Wheatley* 77
Eye of the Needle *Michael Coady* 79
A Summer Search *Peter Fallon* 81
Absent Friend *Alan Gillis* 83
Tom Waits Comes to Tralee *John McAuliffe* 85
Grasse Matinée *Alan Gillis* 87
The Cameraman in Love *Michelle O'Sullivan* 89
Back to the City *Justin Quinn* 91

Rosualt 92
Dán do Thadhg 94
Suanchaint 96
Irrintzina 98
Maolteanga 100
Babel 102
Nithe Ceilte 106
St Nick's 108
Emigrante 110
Manach Eile agus a Chat 112
Geimhriú 114

Walrus *Tom French* 93
Poem for Tadhg *Justin Quinn* 95
Morning Song *Vona Groarke* 97
Irrintzina *Peter Sirr / Billy Ramsell* 99
Stammer-language *Michelle O'Sullivan* 101
Babel *Peter Sirr* 103
Missing the Point *Medbh McGuckian* 107
St Nick's Jazz Club *Vona Groarke* 109
Emigrant *Paul Muldoon* 111
Another Monk and his Cat *Alan Gillis* 113
Wintering *Billy Ramsell* 115

Acknowledgements 117
Index of Translators 118

AILBHE NÍ GHEARBHUIGH

Bac Seirce

Ar chneas mín do ghéag
scríobhas focail
chiotacha,
bhacacha.

Chuardaíos an bhrí
id shúile,
id bhriatharthost.

Níor thuigeas faic.

Ná níor thuigeas,
nuair a thosnaigh
an tochas
dom ghreannadh,
gur fhriotal é —
balbhtheanga.

Sar i bhfad bhí gríos
ar fud mo choirp,
beodhearg is crosta;

is mise ag stánadh ortsa,
a ghrá, go leamhliteartha;

ach i ngorm do shúl,
chonac focail ar marbhsnámh.

I ndiaidh d'imeachta
d'aimsíos an buafhocal.

DAVID WHEATLEY

The Love Bind

On the smooth skin
of your limbs I wrote
halting and left-
handed words.

I looked in your eyes
for the meaning
in your tomsilence.

Nada

And when the itch
began
chafing
still didn't get
that it was a language —
a dumbtongue.

Before long there were
fiercehot and angry
ants in my pants

and I stared
at you and you
were vacant and bored

and I watched words swimdrown
in the blue of your eyes

and the word I was looking for
came to me as you
swanned out the door.

AILBHE NÍ GHEARBHUIGH

Suanchaint

Bhís ag caint aréir
a deir tú liom
is bíogaim.

Camchuart eile
tugtha agat
ar ríocht an fho-chomhfheasa.

Púcaí an éada
ag monabhar
is ag tnáitheadh ar a chéile,

sochraidí
is tubaistí
is míle uafás eile.

Feithidí an oilc
ag dordán
in ainriail na hoíche . . .

Corruair,
nuair is mise an bhean sí
ag fógairt sceimhle ar fud an tí,

dúisimid beirt
ar steillchrith,
an t-aer farainn íogair.

PETER SIRR

Sleeptalk

You were talking
in your sleep again
you tell me.

Yet again I yanked you
down into the depths
of my unconscious:

jealous pookas
murmuring and
wearing each other down,

funerals, disasters
and a thousand
other terrors.

The insects of evil
droning
in the misrule of night . . .

The odd time
when I'm the banshee
terrorizing the house

we both wake up
shaking all over, a strange
constraint in the air . . .

AILBHE NÍ GHEARBHUIGH

Sealbhú

Bhí na colúir ann romham;
seilbh acu ar leac na fuinneoige
is ar gháitéir an tí.

Dhúisídís ar maidin mé lena ndúrdáil,
a gcuid súl á ruachan
lastall den gcuirtín.

Chaithinn iad a ruaigeadh.
Admhaím gur thug cleatar giorraisc a sciathán
sásamh dorcha dom.

Maidin amháin ní colmán a bhí romham
ach fiolar,
a chrága ar an gcófra tarraiceán.

B'éigean uisce coisricthe — buidéal de —
a chaitheamh ina threo
chun é a dhíbirt.

Músclaím.
Tá brat cleití sa chlós.
Tá corracú i gcónaí im chluas.

BILLY RAMSELL

Possession

There they were, the pigeons,
in possession of the window sill,
of all the house's gutters.

Their cooing brings me to every morning,
their rust-red eyes
beyond the curtain.

They've got to go,
though I admit the snapping chatter of their wings
brings a black satisfaction.

One morning was pigeonless
but instead an eagle's talons
gripped the dresser.

It took holy water —
an entire bottle cast in its direction —
to banish it.

I'm awake.
The yard boasts a cloak of feathers.
There's cooing always in my ears.