

**A Pilgrim in County Clare**  
*for Gaal*

The suck and sigh of generations  
lie beneath my feet:  
there is no god here, only faith  
as secretive as standing stones.

I remember a holy well  
spangled with wet cobwebs,  
jeweled with moss, remote and small —  
still pure after a thousand years.

In the mists that rise each dusk  
the undulating larks descend,  
chitter in the gloaming —  
unmindful of the darkening bog.

In the evening: cuckoos call  
across the rocks that bloom  
with fuchsia, fern, and maidenhair,  
the sweet wet gleam of blackberries.

Before returning home, I dreamed  
I fell from the cliffs at Doolin.  
Someone grabbed my ankle:  
a man who pulled me up

Anonymous. Even thanking him,  
I could not see his face.  
And so I hugged him.  
*What made me whole again?*

The rains that lace the Burren,  
the smoke of peat fires,  
and the smell of bacon  
exploding in its fat.

The gorse-covered bogs of late August,  
the perfume of new hay,  
the sky beyond Slieve Elva,  
milk pails in twos on stone fences.

— *Gabriele Glang*