

For Christy Brown

Saint rogues are these, the spiritual cynics  
in a Dublin pub, a bedroom for seven, feet  
next to heads, stolen covers, the sagging  
mattress, & all that weight.

Oh roll, roll brawling sisters. Brothers toss  
your angst, your laughter, your will  
through gossip streets, the narrow doors,  
the eyes opening.

Not enough coal. Porridge again?  
Da lost his temper, his job. Ma's stashing  
cash for a wheelchair, for Christy.

Let's drink another round.

I'm frenzy painting, holding the line,  
a brush between toes, a world out of confines,  
my body, this body of wrenched muscles,  
controlled spasms  
yet able to dream.

Desire is my face, my mouth & my mind,  
the miracle & punishment, but I  
am no freak, no poet, quite, only  
a man, like most, attempting some freedom.

A typewriter might help, a room, enough  
space to bring home, shape the landscape of flesh,  
of hands against this cramped backdrop-----

Buildings, buildings-----

Love, here is the life  
amid war shadows, factories, amid want  
as painful bliss.

Love, here is the life living simply

& not so simply

(spin the bottle)

to be shared as a jig

(I've scotch in me pocket)

& a wheelchair of wings

## Mother & Child

Wheels & tracks, baby  
don't worry, I ain't gonna  
let you be taken. Hush-a-bye.  
Hush-a-bye. Sleep now, that's right.  
I got a couple hundred dollars  
& in this knapsack you're pretty  
much hid just in case, you know,  
that welfare lady's put out some  
warrant. O.K.  
We're hitching a ride & will hop  
the next train soon. 3 A.M.  
I think it's early enough:  
the whole station still groggy.  
Thank god, it's rainin', good  
warm muggy dust of diesel...  
Makes me wanna doze too.  
Come on, hon, don't wake up.  
Here's your old tick tock clock,  
just like a heart, & I'm right  
with ya, rockin' soft & close.  
La la la. You see, I have to  
sing quiet, 'cause they're takin'  
our ticket & hey, lettin' us board.  
Nobody suspects. Want your bottle?  
Look at those lights, the whole  
city a Christmas tree blinkin'  
"so long" as we plunge,  
express cargo, into the  
*Clickety-clack clickety-clack*  
of this safe moving dark

## The Men

slept with  
& little sleep there  
really & love there  
somewhere for the wrong  
the right reasons & reasons the voices  
of many different spirits...

you've given  
the earth my body back to me says this one  
given the country rooftop high in my veins  
the veins in excelsis sky landscape roots  
to remember to remember...

christ says another whose arms are these  
now in somebody's some body's not mine

not so pure says a third you mustn't be  
have a drink little bird bird here  
a little blue pretty quiet quiet baby let  
yourself be be ready self for gospel strains  
night trains a wilderness city fill up

fill up empty out empty in in  
innocence cynicism sin sin  
religion in in time passing  
passing time time up in up  
in hurry slow oh  
shut up & come

come kiss me  
come kiss me

(available as mp3, never printed)