

Faoi Ghlas

Tá sí faoi ghlas ann fós, sa teach tréigthe,
cé go bhfuil aigéin idir í agus an teach
a d'fhág sí ina diaidh.

I mbrat uaine a cuid cniotála, samhlaíonn sí
sraitheanna, ciseal glasa péinte
ag scamhadh ón mballa sa teach inar chaith sí —

— inar chas sí eochair, blianta
ó shin, an teach atá fós ag fanacht uirthi,
ag amharc amach thar an bhfarraige mhór.

Tá an eochair ar shlabhra aici, crochta óna muineál
agus filleann sí ann, scaití, nuair
a mhothaíonn sí cloíte. Lámh léi

ar eochair an tslabhra, dúnann sí a súile agus samhlaíonn
sí an teach úd cois cladaigh, an dath céanna
lena cuid olla cniotála, na ballaí gorm-ghlas,

teach tógtha ón uisce, teach tógtha as uisce
agus an radharc ann:
citeal ag crónán, gal scaipthe, scaoilte

ó fhuinneog an pharlúis, na toir i mbladhm,
tinte ag scaipeadh ar an aiteann
agus éan ceoil a máthair ag portaireacht ina chliabhán,

ach cuireann na smaointe sin ceangal ar a cliabhrach
agus filleann sí arís ar a seomra néata, ar lá néata
eile sa teach

altranais, teanga na mbanaltraí dearmadta aici,
seachas please agus please agus please,
tá sí cinnte de nach dtuigeann siad cumha

ná tonnta ná glas. Timpeall a muiníl,
ualach an eochair do doras a shamhlaíonn sí
faoi ghlas fós, ach ní aontaíonn an eochair sin

leis an nglas níos mó tá an chomhla dá hinsí i ngan fhios di
an tinteán líonta le broсна préacháin
fós, fáisceann sí an chniotáil chuig a croí

ansin baineann sí dá dealgáin í, á roiseadh go mall arís,
arís, na línte scaoilte ina ceann agus ina gceann
snáth roiste: gorm-ghlas gorm-ghlas gorm-ghlas

gorm-ghlas gorm-ghlas gorm-ghlas amhail cuilithíní
cois cladaigh nó roiseanna farraige móire. Sracann sí
go dtí go bhfuil sí féin faoi

ghlas le snáth á chlúdach ó mhúineál go hucht.
Ansin, ceanglaíonn sí snaidhm úr, snaidhm docht,
ardaíonn sí na dealgáin agus tosaíonn sí arís.

Under Lock and Green

She is locked there still, in the empty house,
despite the ocean between her and this house,
the one she left behind her.

In the green sweep of her knitting she imagines
layers, green layers of paint
a wall peeling in the house where she spent –

– where she turned a key, years
ago, before, the house that is still waiting for her
gazing over a vast ocean.

She wears the key on a chain that hangs at her throat
and she returns there, sometimes, when
she feels weak. With one hand

over that chained key, she closes her eyes and daydreams
that house by the beach, the same colour
as her wool, the walls blue-green,

a house from water, a house of water
and the view there:
a fretting kettle, its steam loose, leaving

through the parlour window, where the furze is aflame,
fires swelling through the gorse,
and her mother's songbird chirping in its cage,

but thoughts like these bind her chest too tightly
so she lets go, and returns to this neat little room, this neat little day
another in this home

this home for the elderly where she forgot the nurses' words years ago
except *please* and *please* and *please*, and she's certain
that they understand neither *cumha*

nor *tonnta* nor the *glas* at her throat,
the weight of a key for a door she imagines
still locked, but the key won't slot

into her remembered lock the door has fallen from its hinges in her absence
the hearth fills with the kindling of crows

still, she nestles her knitting in near her heart

then lifts it from the needles, unravels it slowly again,
again, the lines released one by one
unravelling, the thread: blue-green blue-green blue-green

blue-green blue-green blue-green like little ripples
scribbling on the shore or immense ripping oceans. She tears
until she is under

lock and green again, with wool covering her neck and chest.
Then, a breath, and then, she ties a new knot,
lifts the needles and begins again.

Faoi Ghlas le Doireann Ní Ghríofa