

my eyes on the four white ribs  
of the sky, listening to the low  
roll of surf say “jour,” “jour,”  
and sometimes “tousjours” to the shore.

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### AT BRIDGET'S WELL

The deep door of the sea  
slams shut against the shore;  
everything the body knows.  
And my wife counts off  
the counties—Leitrim, Long-  
ford, Roscommon, Galway,  
Clare—the way the God-ridden  
Irish count off beads.  
But she's no fool of wisdom.  
Neither Irish, nor Catholic,  
nor stunned by centuries  
of Virgin-worship or plastic  
flasks tipped with waters  
of miracle. Pure tourist.  
Hard traveller.

That day,  
more than fifty years ago,  
when my Sister married God,  
she gave up all she had.  
It wasn't much, I used  
to think. But I was wrong.  
It was everything. Now,  
in these narrow, too-sunlit  
lanes thorny with gorse,  
bruise-bright with fuchsias,

I want that Ireland of iron  
winds, and peat fires  
hissing like my small, grey  
tabby, and poems like Yeats's,  
raised up from fields of stone.