

## Waugh's Ireland

It has overgrown Burke and Sheridan,  
Left them as green and lonely as Goldsmith's  
Village, where the windows are all that's left  
Of history, broken and blind, empty.  
Soft voices quarrel inside a cottage.  
You inhale the mist and loose ambition,  
Glad to be on the Fortunate Island.  
Whatever wars rage, they aren't yours.  
Should enemies drop out of the gray sky  
May they be off to the dark north before  
You even know they've come.

There: a northern

Country that never freezes, warmed the blood  
Of Norse invaders as Scotland never  
Could; and leaves you feeling overgrown  
With moss, awash in fern, sinking in turf,  
Taking root like a Celtic Orpheus  
Who survives, convoluting the legend  
Into a tale of an Englishman who  
Wandered off during World War II, a fake  
Passport sending him to a land where spies  
May fall asleep. The only Gestapo  
Agent known to kill himself overseas  
Hanged himself in Dublin, leaving behind  
A four word message: "They can't be trusted."  
But they can, and the war-novel-ending  
Gets it right: you move west, you dream east,  
Becoming more of an unflagged man each  
Mile, nearing the Atlantic, not sinking,  
But deracinated, uprooted, blessed  
By not even the ghost of a flag, just  
Whatever banner you raise in your heart,  
Whatever anthem you sing to yourself,  
Dreaming of a paronymph to sing with,  
Dreaming of the other Blessed Isles.

LAWRENCE DUGAN