

The Ha'Penny Bridge, Dublin

Cyril Dabydeen

White crown-like arches mark the bridge
across the Liffey, this famous river--
echoes of Joyce's *Ulysses*, as I'm here now
sitting close to the sculpture of two women
who are pensive-looking, or just poised,
handbags by their sides, as others hurry by
over the bridge while I watch and wait

Or it's my being dismayed, though
not for those walking along to *Dublin Woollen Mills*,
from the crossway & my having just come
from St Michan's Church & seeing the 800-year-old mummy,
or hearing about Wolfe, drawn-and-quartered,
such suffering: Ireland's turbulent century ahead--
I calmly say to myself

But the women in stone seem far from it now,
with a terrible beauty their own I yet have in mind--
my being here in Dublin, because of journeys
we must undertake, or at whose behest
while we continue in more than stone--
facing up to what's yet to come--
in places we only expect to be in, for a while.
(*Aug. 14, 2003*)