

# E A M O N G R E N N A N

# Orison

A morning washed to gleamy skin and bone, to the vapoury  
radiance left by  
Rain, to such absolutes as my own shadow burnt on treebark  
and hedgeleaf and  
Living its other life there while I walk this present, provisional  
body towards  
The vanishing point, peering backwards to see a small fleet of  
ducks muckraking  
On the grass verge—for earthworms, I guess, whose thirst has  
brought them out

To savour the aftermath of last night's downpour, blind blood-  
coloured bodies  
Sliding through raptures of damp, through such palpable slow  
ecstasies of drip  
And slobber, the smells of freshened earth their paradise as the  
ducks peck and  
Swallow the morning's manna—a gift they give thanks for in an  
anthem of quacks  
As they waddle a swamp of sunlight, totally for the moment and  
at home in it.

## *Distraction*

I'm trying to get a line of Leopardi right when a flock of starlings  
startles—  
Mobbing a marsh hawk, staying up-sky of him, folding round  
him their net  
Of black silk till he shrugs them off on a downdraft, the whole  
flock closing  
Like a broken concertina in leaves where they become invisible,  
only throats  
Crowding the air with clamour. Meanwhile the hawk is  
elsewhere—hawkbrain  
Beating to another music: in the great blue hush of space, he  
pays attention to  
The air itself—its live feathertongued lightrush bearing him up,  
his droll wingbeats  
Opening and closing it like breath. Invisible loonybells, the star-  
lings go on  
Chattering their janglelife in branches, telling me how my own  
head won't  
Let go its appetite, is an old knife on stone: bitten blade, band-  
aged handle.

## *Text, Illuminated*

Upended like that under a canopy of leaves turned amber,  
ochre, gold vermilion,  
The belly of the dead deer by the roadside is moonwhite. And  
the dead racoon  
Curls up it seems in sleep—paws to closed face, waiting for the  
crows into whose guts  
It will go eyes first, so not to behold its own undoing. If you  
gazed from a great height  
What an enormous gorgeous scar you'd see—this whole north-  
east a slow, south-moving

Conflagration of such lively shades, an altar of gold, amber,  
burgundy, avocado, all ablaze—

[illegible]

## Slipstream

When the hare turned the other cheek and I could see that the  
eye of oiled onyx  
I expected was in fact an eye of milky topaz, its blind gaze  
taking in me and all  
Those mixed emotions I was wrapped in as he was swaddled in  
the wet morning,

I decided it was time to go, so I went, holding to that moment  
and the matter  
Of it—a quick glance only, but from over there, from the side I  
knew nothing of  
Where the perfect seeing creature was a conflagration, a self  
sweetly finished and

In full spate. So what I imagine now is the small space your  
body fills, displacing  
Air that still carries—like the form the hare leaves after it in  
grass—our mark, despite  
The spate of time that plunges as a plane plunges dead ahead  
through cloudlight

Over the Alps, the indifference of their chill sublimities putting  
us, justly, in our place.

# *What Was in the Wind This Morning*

Whisper of wind in the grass, among leaves of the ash: *Settle down,*  
It says, *there's lots more where this came from.* So can it be we're just  
A clinker of dust, a swirl-whirling rock-dervish, a series of lucky  
breaks

Or unlucky happenstances? Somewhere in the unimaginable  
meadow  
Of spacetime, out there in the stoneblind airless dark, a herd of  
miles-wide  
Skyhigh rocks gallop like circus horses round and round and round

In crazy circles—their manes of fire, their eyes gouged out at  
birth. No one  
Cracks the whip, though gravity keeps them in decent line till  
one of them  
Salmon-senses the real absence and makes a run for it and leaves  
the rest

To our imagining: the coming shadow of the odd chance of it, it  
happening.