

The Leveret

for my grandson

This is your first night in Carrigskeewaun.
 The Owennadornaun is so full of rain
 You arrived in Paddy Morrison's tractor,
 A bumpy approach in your father's arms
 To the cottage where, all of one year ago,
 You were conceived, a fire-seed in the hearth.
 Did you hear the wind in the fluffy chimney?
 Do you hear the wind tonight, and the rain
 And a shore bird calling from the mussel reefs?
 Tomorrow I'll introduce you to the sea,
 Little hoplite. Have you been missing it?
 I'll park your chariot by the otters' rock
 And carry you over seaweed to the sea.
 There's a tufted duck on David's lake
 With her sootfall of hatchlings, pompoms
 A day old and already learning to dive.
 We may meet the stoat near the erratic
 Boulder, a shrew in his mouth, or the merlin
 Meadow-pipit-hunting. But don't be afraid.
 The leveret breakfasts under the fuchsia
 Every morning, and we shall be watching.
 I have picked wild flowers for you, scabious
 And centaury in a jam-jar of water
 That will bend and magnify the daylight.
 This is your first night in Carrigskeewaun.