

*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.