

THREE POEMS



Eamon Grennan

AMPUTATION

Was it the sudden height and speed of things, the dizzying
spin of them, wind catching words up, carrying them away?
Sight of the child in the rear-view mirror? Hiding-places
razed or forfeited? Fear of crockery drumming the wall
and the livingroom window in bits? Husband or wife
on fire in a Buddhist rage? Or could it have been the pale
fast-forward photographs of some shuffled-into future—
ardour snuffed out by what the days do, nights passing
in a silence broken only by sighs or, preserve us, snores?
Maybe pain, simple as itself, was enough. Whatever it was,
it put the knife between one warm shuddering and another
of the join where talus and fibula used to articulate each other
with a foot to stand on, making Late Songs for Anklebone &
Flute.

MY DEAR, DON'T TURN

Go back, then, behind the great stone vault
and stand in the thickened silence of cattails
where you'll hear island, lagoon, cathedral,
hear the reed warbler's two notes in eternity.

When these become your blood, your blood
one with the spry carousel of water,
you'll hear the grass parting behind you
and togethering again in a whisper, and hear

a solid familiar footstep you want to turn to,
to step into the same stream once and take
the face you think it is with you, but know
I'll unravel before your eyes like smoke, be

a perturbation of air only, a vanishing dazzle.

THE HEART OF IT

So then, for a season, you settle in to the middle
of the body, its whims and roundabouts,
zigzag whispers, the sound the heart makes
brushing your ear, grandfather clock in slippers
shuffling across a worn carpet. No one else
here, clock in an empty room: what satellite
is dishing the message back from what space
busy with onrush and wreckage, between what stars?
Unimaginable chill, but in it the pulses start
that snag their echoes here and set us ticking
as if we were our own invention. But say
this box of tricks could be connected, spliced
to something, and see what healing follows.