

# kitty bredin

by desmond o'grady

Both aware of it  
we put no words  
nor rash act on it.

Especially you —  
part of my straight start  
in Arthur's sitting room with blue

wallpaper and stuffed birds  
on the table in their flower  
glass bower

size of a high hat.  
Haughty as a model gilly, flat  
witted as a wrinkle, I tried to stuff

light into each feathered eye,  
flowers into each winged fly -  
bitten blossom while

you looked on from behind  
your chewed, cocked fag-holder —  
clouty in brown tweed. Older,

knowing Father  
before Mother, you saw  
me as a grown-up, a glass dobber

More than any other  
you watched my growth, like a tumour,  
whorl its bole. Later —

over that one —  
we killed our time drinking Eamon  
Gleeson's black pints. No change! I

think one fight in all  
we've had between us —  
and that a natural need for crisis.

Otherwise fastidiously  
wherewithals, we side  
off lefty lefty.

Since then — whether the far  
side of thin whistles and banjos,  
the time spent watching what goes;

or the image at alien airports waiting,  
waiting at bars nor a brass farthing  
to drink your name;

or sleeping it off  
on the bench of some station  
and never a train getting in —

it's all the same fierce fire  
for the pair of us  
banked down in our common ash;

the same old raw  
wound won't knit  
and both of us surviving it.

You well see — beyond the mouth  
of it, as from the other  
side of our mad minds' mirror,

under the skin and the rogue  
ninny nights in Gillogue —  
the dark serpentine

thing, like a poisoned vein,  
heading straight for the target area.  
You've got its measure.

We're all from the same scrapiron shop,  
and it's a regular downhill run  
to the final, full, stop.