



when you get someplace new,
learn to read the landscape like an alphabet

éireann lorsung

arrived Dublin 11 August
2023, jetlagged cab from
airport seeing the signs
in Irish, first time since
when, my early twenties?,
immensely moving, surprising
myself how moved I was to
be here

coming from outside,
entering migration once
again, how could I learn to
be, in an uneasy way, easy
here?

I began to walk daily,
continuing the practice of
walking and looking begun
several landscapes ago

in this way—the slow,
everyday way of moving
through a place repeatedly
on foot, with my eyes and
ears open—I hoped to learn
what it meant to be *here*

the texts and photographs
here were composed as I
walked, mostly in the
neighborhoods of Dublin 8

I transcribe
the plants, animals,
humans, buildings, road
and pavement traffic,
smells, sights, sounds
and so forth
as I move

there are almost a hundred
notes in my phone now,
from which the fragments
here are taken

I am
participating
in a long tradition
of walkers in this city

of walkers everywhere
who look, who write

also a long tradition
of immigrants, we who learn
to be where we are
by paying attention
to how the places
we end up in spell
themselves through
their smallest parts.



better not to think about what you can afford
as you walk the streets of Dublin 8 because you
cannot afford anything

painters in a cottage on St Albans road /
in the windows narrow panels of blue glass
with stars at their corners / the new owners
decimate the lavender hedge

whistlefizzing blackbirds and the imam, the
green post box, the rushhum of traffic,
staccato of the crossing signal

holly and roses

bank of spun sugar clouds in the east beyond
the white stucco sides of buildings printed
with the shadow of red clay chimney pots

blue latex glove a spangle
false cherry tree a real
estate agent's sign
dandelion pink oxalis flower
a group of children walking
home from school a 122 bus
to Ashington a pale pink
cyclamen a mahonia bush with
its fruits the pale green
color of unripe mangoes or

honeydew melon flesh and
with a frost blush to the
fruit many headed jonquil
with egg-yolk flowers a
hydrangea in full leaf and
an arabesque of forget-me-
nots two huge pots of bulb
flowers daffodil wild garlic
huge red tulips false orange



workers from Bloomfield
garage going into and out
of the Spar / the extra
bread racks standing outside
the Spar / the worker from
the Spar sitting on the
concrete base of the fence
down the road from the Spar
having his cigarette break
on his phone / young woman
in a skin-tight bright
blue outfit talking into
her phone / man in shorts
on a racing bike / a gray
Ford that almost doesn't
want to stop for me as I
cross Washington Street /
man in awful coat outside
café sighing / a peach
pit / a worker in a yellow
sweatshirt razoring caulk
off a window frame in a
front yard / a scattering
of crabapple petals on the
ground new-leaf roses'
red foliage a snail shell
white with calcium / a pale
yellow front door and pale
orange quince flowers / yet
more dog shit / a woman on
the phone in front of a
gravel front yard / bicycle
with two flat tires a scarf
caught in a bicycle rack /
a taxi parked in the bike
Lane outside the mosque /
a yellow light just as I
arrive at the crossing

the camellias are done
and the plum trees are
in brown and red leaf
the pigeons are courting
and in the afternoon
the students sprawl on
the flat surfaces of the
university the heather is
in full bloom pedestrians
enjoy the 14-degree weather

and lightly then rain comes
across the city stippling
the lock and the water
after the lock



Sleepers in tents along the
canal, and a fluorescent
orange jacket lying as if it
is a person near the bridge



iris blades leaping from the edge of the canal and dandelions dotting the greensward and the coots paddling in the water as Volkswagens and Audis and Hondas and Hyundai and Mercedes and BMWs and Fiats stand in line to wait for another red light

new nettles and mud puddles
and the cygnet has lost his
all-brown plumage and gone
mottled

morning on Bloomfield Avenue
and in the lee of St Kevin's
Church apartments a person
curled to sleep whom
at first I thought might
have been dead

in the gardens of the
€800.000 houses a beautiful
array of hyacinth and
jonquils and daffodilss
and scilla and tulips and
cyclamen and geum

grey aphids clustered
on the underside of
chartreuse ivy shoots
two bluetits on a wire



proud redbrick and
the seal of empire
on them / Long Live
The and it's blown
off the face of it

the drycleaners and
the undertakers,
hearse rolling out
in cold weather its
windows frosted as
though the corpse
can breathe

on the public bus
we speak in any
language we like /
the bicycle courier
goes past in a hurry
/ false eyelashes
a velour tracksuit
tan swiped along
the angle of her
nose sparkle of an
earring black vinyl
zipvest

fall right through
a rusted manhole
cover so you might
/ then the one
holding a paper
cup in the air,
sparechangeplease



let we who have no garden and you who have no bed
not forget each other when we have a garden and a bed



number of

Dublin 8
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