1992

At Bridget's Well

Robert Dana

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.4202

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.
my eyes on the four white ribs
of the sky, listening to the low
roll of surf say "jour," "jour,"
and sometimes "toujours" to the shore.


**AT BRIDGET’S WELL**

The deep door of the sea
slams shut against the shore;
everything the body knows.
And my wife counts off
the counties—Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Galway, Clare—the way the God-ridden Irish count off beads.
But she’s no fool of wisdom.
Neither Irish, nor Catholic, nor stunned by centuries
of Virgin-worship or plastic flasks tipped with waters
of miracle. Pure tourist.
Hard traveller.

That day,
more than fifty years ago,
when my Sister married God,
she gave up all she had.
It wasn’t much, I used
to think. But I was wrong.
It was everything. Now,
in these narrow, too-sunlit
lanes thorny with gorse,
bruise-bright with fuchsias,
I want that Ireland of iron
winds, and peat fires
hissing like my small, grey
tabby, and poems like Yeats's,
raised up from fields of stone.