

Leaving Belfast (1979)

The tide has turned,
And now there is no refusing
The rush back to the sea,
And thence homeward.
My home and more:
A familiar point of departure
For some new journey
Beyond the short horizons
Framed by my native hills.
Where will I alight,
And who will I love,
When next I am sea mist
Borne by the wind
And drifting far from home?

Above Linn Run

I renew the boyhood pact once more,
For the intellect and secret heart concur
That someday I steal to these woods
Never to look back, or wonder what has become
Of the discordant life I leave behind.

Traces

Dark blues and greens
Loamy browns and blacks
The shifting mists of Donegal
The Atlantic sweeping in at Downhill

Laughter of youth
Mountain stream murmur
Love well-remembered
Enmeshed under wild rhododendron

'A soul in wonder' --
Van Morrison late one night,
And this longing surges up,
Breaching Maginot defenses
Embedded clear-eyed years ago.
So many traces of the heart,
Despite oneself, left behind.
They call in turn, but to what end?
Do companion memories reach out
From other abandoned pasts?
And for what? Surely not recall –
Perhaps libation of tribute, or even penitence,
To traces left behind that call all the same
From sand and sea, mountain and mist.

God's Curve

We are here on Earth to fart around, and don't let anybody tell you any different.

Kurt Vonnegut

Fifty years on,
After much farting about,
I've come to think
That in life, unlike school,
Passing grades are sufficient
And harder to earn
Than it seemed at the start –
Hardly ever disbursed
For simply showing up.

Druid Dreams

For love of a woman
I came to this desert;
For love of a woman,
And now a child, I stay.
Nor do I begrudge it,
For here they've given me
By far the greatest share
Of the happiness I've known.

Yet still I dream by night and day
Of rhododendron-bordered streams
Where dappled indifferent sunlight
Spills down through canopies of green
To find and dance upon the gurgling
Waters below while, above, the murmuring
Breeze confers with leaf and limb.