

Carmel Gold

IRISH GRANDMOTHER

The Duchess of the Bog
fired Gaelic bullets
into my ancestral oak.
Misery's babble, a ring
of sawdust around my child feet.
Always between us,
the stare and twist
of words
that pressed
lungs into throat,
filled my head
with a smoking gun.
I wore the rags of her spleen,
the spit and phlegm
of wasted screams,
the hiss
of obsession
that mistook me for some ghost
from the past.

In the end she joined the lunatic fringe,
heartsick immigrants,
dispossessed patriots whose aged eyelids
were engraved with longing
for the old country.
Forgotten, the cold, silence of poverty.
Forgotten, the legacy of war
that turned her own childhood
into a passage grave.