

**Classic Poetry Series**

**Eamon Grennan**

**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2004

**Publisher:**

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

## Cat Scat

I am watching Cleo listening, our cat  
listening to Mozart's Magic Flute. What  
can she be hearing? What  
can the air carry into her ears like that,  
her ears swivelling like radio dishes that  
are tuned to all the noise of the world, flat  
and sharp, high and low, a scramble of this and that  
she can decode like nobody's business, acrobat  
of random airs as she is? Although of course a bat  
is better at it, sifting out of its acoustic habitat  
the sound of the very shape of things automat-  
ically-- and on the wing, at that. The Magic Flute! What  
a joy it is, I feel, and wonder (to the end this little scat)  
doe , or can, the cat.

Eamon Grennan

## **Cold Morning**

Through an accidental crack in the curtain  
I can see the eight o'clock light change from  
charcoal to a faint gassy blue, inventing things

in the morning that has a thick skin of ice on it  
as the water tank has, so nothing flows, all is bone,  
telling its tale of how hard the night had to be

for any heart caught out in it, just flesh and blood  
no match for the mindless chill that's settled in,  
a great stone bird, its wings stretched stiff

from the tip of Letter Hill to the cobbled bay, its gaze  
glacial, its hook-and-scrabble claws fast clamped  
on every window, its petrifying breath a cage

in which all the warmth we were is shivering.

Eamon Grennan

## **On A Cape May Warbler Who Flew Against My Window**

She's stopped in her southern tracks  
Brought haply to this hard knock  
When she shoots from the tall spruce  
And snaps her neck on the glass.

From the fall grass I gather her  
And give her to my silent children  
Who give her a decent burial  
Under the dogwood in the garden.

They lay their gifs in the grave:  
Matches, a clothes-peg, a coin;  
Fire paper for her, sprinkle her  
With water, fold earth over her.

She is out of her element forever  
Who was air's high-spirited daughter;  
What guardian wings can I conjure  
Over my own young, their migrations?

The children retreat indoors.  
Shadows flicker in the tall spruce.  
Small birds flicker like shadows--  
Ghosts come nest in my branches.

Eamon Grennan

## One Morning

Looking for distinctive stones, I found the dead otter  
rotting by the tideline, and carried all day the scent of this savage  
valediction. That headlong high sound the oystercatcher makes  
came echoing through the rocky cove  
where a cormorant was feeding and submarining in the bay  
and a heron rose off a boulder where he'd been invisible,  
drifted a little, stood again -- a hieroglyph  
or just longevity reflecting on itself  
between the sky clouding over and the lightly ruffled water.

This was the morning after your dream of dying, of being held  
and told it didn't matter. A butterfly went jinking over  
the wave-silky stones, and where I turned  
to go up the road again, a couple in a blue camper sat  
smoking their cigarettes over their breakfast coffee (blue  
scent of smoke, the thick dark smell of fresh coffee)  
and talking in quiet voices, first one then the other answering,  
their radio telling the daily news behind them. It was warm.  
All seemed at peace. I could feel the sun coming off the water.

Eamon Grennan

## Song

At her Junior High School graduation,  
she sings alone  
in front of the lot of us--

her voice soprano, surprising,  
almost a woman's. It is  
the Our Father in French,

the new language  
making her strange, out there,  
fully fledged and

ready for anything. Sitting  
together -- her separated  
mother and father -- we can

hear the racket of traffic  
shaking the main streets  
of Jersey City as she sings

Deliver us from evil,  
and I wonder can she see me  
in the dark here, years

from belief, on the edge  
of tears. It doesn't matter. She  
doesn't miss a beat, keeps

in time, in tune, while into  
our common silence I whisper,  
Sing, love, sing your heart out!

Eamon Grennan