

Harvest

When he could no longer stand his stepfather's fists

He left for Galway, a hiring fair, a gruff farmer

With a field of turnips to be dug.

His letter to his friend was short

And full of desperation.

“Don't tell my mother where I am.”

She found him standing in a muddy field,

Braced against the cold, gnawing a turnip

That did nothing for the hunger in him.

For the rest of his life he remembered

The taste of raw turnips,

The farmer who owed him ten shillings,

His mother coming through the fields

To bring him home.