

## All Our Lonely Ghosts

Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin & Ciarán O'Rourke

It was last night that a woman went a calling  
To unmarked graves, heart silent as a tomb  
Remembering how they told her she had fallen  
Because of who she'd carried in her womb  
Because of who they'd taken from her off to Tuam.

Oh, my lost child, I have come to find you  
No prayer for you, for I no longer pray  
Oh, I've been long, long mourning for you  
And now I stand upon your grave  
Where you lie cold among 800 little babes.

Now they say that these scandals are all over  
So clean the slate and close the book of names  
They clench their fists and keep their faces sombre  
And sleep at night, at ease with their refrain,  
Those muttered words of "Never again".

But I've been thinking and I've been walking  
On Dublin streets past all those darkened doorways  
See bodies slumped, hear voices round me talking  
Of hostel rooms, a blanket and spare change  
Ah, the bare bleak day breaks on them where they lay.

Last week I saw another rambling mother  
Her child in hand a-turning through the streets  
No oul nun's home for her, no Christian Brother  
Only cold, open sky and tired tramping feet  
Small hope to spare that soon they might walk free.

Now there's a boy sat at another grave  
He must be brave now that his father is gone  
His Da he tried to find another way  
But the landlord came to sing eviction songs  
Ah the rope was strong, he didn't suffer long.

No mass graves in our new Ireland, no more  
No hidden tombs or crosses etched in bone  
The bodies scatter all around us on street corners  
And hang in lonely rooms of desolated homes  
No company for these ghosts, they fly alone.