

# My Name is Frank Ledwidge

I knew her parents didn't like me.  
Not good enough, they said.  
She was torn  
and tore away from me:  
walked out with a lout from over the border  
the same place as herself.  
Disembowelled;  
dragging my entrails after me  
unleashed in an instant; my fists  
on man or dog or half open door.  
My blood boiled like the Boyne weir  
before it was lost in a fathomless pool.  
I longed for the deep pool in my head  
as I stood on the parapet

The volunteers marched  
to the top of the hill and down again  
pretending their shovels were guns  
I listened to that northerner; MacNeill  
and the posh Anglophile Redmond; the musicians and poets:  
all talk and no action.

Dunsany would preserve me for his posterity  
and I ran away to his Inniskillings  
who sent me off to Turkey.  
I heard they shot the poets  
And heard my brother calling  
again and again; 'Why? Why?  
*The shame you brought on us!*'

I had abandoned her  
as I did my country.  
The traitor who went over the line:  
I sold my soul to the Devil:  
I put the bullet in Thomas McDonagh.

***Pauric Dolan***