

From Ghost Voices:

A Famine Sequence

by Flann O'Connor

Threnody

I am the famished one: *no manna from the iron skies*
 I am the one in fever: *no one comes near*
 I am the proud one: *gathering nettles at night*
 I am the homeless one: *finding shelter in ditches.*
 I am the lost one: *shouting in the bog at night.*
 I am the despairing one: *dumbstruck.*
 I am the dying one: *bones brittle as small bird's*
 I am the dead one: *burning in lime.*



Monuments

Roads that go from nowhere
 to nowhere;
 piers where no boats moor;
 bridges where no water
 rushes;
 walls without purpose
 inscriptions or names.
Follies.



Epitaph

Deep in ditches
 under bushes and trees,
 in abandoned beaches,
 in pits for paupers,
 we lie everywhere
 without names or crosses.
 Once perhaps
 when the wind drops
 its whispers
 as the birds lapse
 into silence
 might you hear us.
Listen do you hear us?
Hear us, hear us.

