

## Why My Grandmother Could Never Escape Ireland

She slept above the creamery, her dreams  
rising into the neck of Dublin's bottle  
until she herself slowly separated  
out of the thin milk of a dead mother.  
She told me her father did not drink  
though the chill of iron tankards ruled his hand  
as he doled out love, cheating his daughter  
by a farthing's weight for every quart,  
ladling on the beatings like a man  
dumping the spoils into a stone gutter.  
Once he shattered her eardrum, then left  
for Liverpool. She, unaccountably, followed,  
the harsh buzz of his constant fault-finding  
planted permanently inside her skull,  
badgering her across a greased Atlantic.

--Richard Broderick (for Evelyn Case Hassard)