

# Two Poems

by [Oisín Breen](#) (May 2020)



Brennendes Gehöft (Burning Homestead), Emil Nolde, Undated

## Kindling

Iolanthe,  
It was a terrible thing  
for you to forgive,  
I know.

Iolanthe,  
I remember it well.

Iolanthe,  
Your death bed,  
The one from of years ago,  
We used it for fire wood.

## Hymn to a Rocking Horse

I am marked,  
Ashen-faced and timeless,  
In bitter bloom,  
Rotten, and voluptuous,  
My decaying lips hungry for the innocent and young.

I am marked,  
By the antediluvian sin,  
And have a tryst endured,  
Twinned with a macabre god,  
Unable to stop rewriting him to age.

I am marked,  
By exhaustion,  
And bloodied gums,  
Having bit into all the low lying fruits,  
And found them full of thorns.

## *II*

I am crucified,  
Nailed to wooden folly,  
Under the sign of the calendar,  
And I have seen enough of constant change.

My legs,  
Eroded,  
Are at best stumps,  
And so I drag my battered knees,  
My necrotic standard on shoulder slung,  
Across the tundra cold and grey.

I am in mourning,  
For hibiscus flowers,  
That I used to pluck,

In memorandum,  
Beguiled and moribund.

### *III*

Time there was,  
That I rang out arias, stacked up symphonies, glad handled  
poesies, rip-roared at full tilt through trade-wind, rail-  
road, tall ship, gothic-bridged, steel girder, plastic gilt  
earth.

That I knew the warm slapped, quilted thighs, kind eyes,  
fierce and unpardoned nature of youth, as lover, not fattened  
leech and lech.

That the fury was glorious and within, not spent foisting my  
sagged skin on the rose-hips of the young.

That I had a care beyond dirge, disease, vice, and a honey  
lacquered ultimate decay.

And yet,  
Though I do mine own self rebuke,  
Though I invoke darkness for the flower of wronged youth,  
Comfort does remain.

Live too long, then you too will preach of Maenad,  
You too will preach of siren song and the limber, ecstatic,  
life giving young.  
You too will chant for pity and for alms,  
By school-yard gates,  
Waiting for the setting of the sun.

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Oisín Breen is a 34 year-old poet, part time academic in narratological complexity, and a financial journalist. Dublin born and bred, Breen spent the last decade living in Edinburgh, after a rip-roaring period that took in, amongst other things, the Middle East; a stint in a bizarre one-donkey town with excellent wine; and a total inability to properly fit a door onto a mountain. His debut [collection](#), *Flowers, all Sorts in Blossom, Figs, Berries, and Fruits, Forgotten* was released this year by Hybrid press in Edinburgh ([hybriddreich.co.uk](http://hybriddreich.co.uk)).

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