

DOIRE CHOLM CILLE

Dennis Corcoran

I stood on the wall,
 looking out,
 looking down,
 over the Bogside and Creggan,
 the Brandywell – the “sean talamh” of old ...

It was a wonderfully cool, fresh, sunny morning ...

Behind me was an old stone church,
 from 1300 AD, someone had said,
 its beautiful gardens
 set in stark relief
 against the dark gray backdrop of stone all around ...

For all its beauty, this was a hard land ...

A bit farther along,
 just a door or two,
 was a tower ...
 cameras and listening devices,
 the eyes and ears of a monster, encaged in steel,
 glaring down on its wanton prey,
 blood-drenched fangs focused in threatening gaze.

You didn't need to know more than that,
 than what you saw,
 to know ...
 that all the power of a conquering state
 had been brought to bear on those who lived beneath.

 Their every movement, every word
 every whisper,
 recorded forever,
 lest any of them dare utter ... that single, forbidden word ...
Freedom.

All knowing, in the instant that they dared,
 thundering boots would shatter their doors ...
 rifle butts beat them to the floor ...
 their few, meager belongings broken, scattered ...
 and their men-folk “lifted”,
 many, maybe, ne'er to return.