

A Window in South Anne Street, 1983

There are outsiders, always.

Eavan Boland, "Outside History."

We drift away from flower sellers on the corner,
bunching early tulips, daffodils.

She is confident beneath an auburn fringe,
billowing navy skirt and blouse,

a battered briefcase swinging her along.
We pause at this or that shop window

chat about poetry, the high musical
lilt now calling her to America,

Adrienne Rich, Marilyn Hacker.
At an antique jeweller she is gay and light,

pointing to a rose gold ring,
its translucent peridot, delighting

in what is found and worn again,
from histories not our own.

'We don't really know our history,'
she says, urging me to step back

from the lessons in my head,
to rummage, then retrieve

within the hidden fault-lines.
Now twice the age she was then,

I wear a peridot wreathed in pearl.
It calls me to that morning,

and later, to the solitary probing
at old weights, to find a history

for our names, if such a thing exists.

Mary O'Donnell

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Unha ventá en South Anne Street, 1983

Hai forasteiros, sempre.

Eavan Boland, “Outside History”.

Arredámonos dos vendedores de flores da esquina
que cinguen ramos de tulipáns e narcisos temperáns.

Séntese segura baixo o seu floco caoba,
ondeando a saia e a blusa mariñas,

randeada por un vello maletín.
Paramos neste ou naqueloutro escaparate

conversamos sobre poesía, a melodía elevada
lévaa agora ata América,

Adrienne Rich, Marilyn Hacker.
Nunha xoiería de anticuario está feliz e luminosa,

senalando un anel de ouro rosa,
o seu peridoto translúcido, deleitándose

no que se atopa e se pon unha vez máis
e provén de historias que non nos pertencen.

“Non coñecemos certamente a nosa historia”,
di ela, apremándome a tomar distancia

das leccións imbuídas na cabeza,
para remexer, logo recuperar

dentro das liñas de falla agochadas.
Agora que dobro a idade que ela tiña daquela

luzo un peridoto circundado de perlas.
Lévame a esa mañá,

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e despois, á pescuda solitaria
nos vellos lastres, procurando unha historia

para os nosos nomes, se é que existe.

Galician translation by Claudia Castro