

Tethered Nomad

Mona Lynch

They will not be towing me away from here. Where the walls are thin and
the neighbour near.

Where neither Gaelic nor Shelta is spoken. My pony could not survive in
my kerchief garden, but I have my dog and my memories.

Using wheels from prams, we'd make go-karts and fly down the hills,
ignoring the cuts and bruises. My father brought us road bowling
out to Waterloo on Sundays after mass. I loved the shouting,
the betting, the lofting, the grassy sops marking the road.

I miss the sound of rain on the roof of the wagon, the buzz of a sulky race
on a good, coloured colt, the pull of the road and the wind on my face.

He taught us how to hunt, with a whippet – the best dog for catching
rabbits, a lurcher for hares, sometimes he would cross
a greyhound with a saluki and get the best dog of all,
the Arabian Saluki.

The butchers paid us for the rabbits, but in the end, Kerry was the best
place for travellers to make a living. Picking periwinkles on
Banna beach when the tide was out, filling buckets with
holes to drain, paid €120 per hundredweight.

Tin smiths we tinkers were by trade, who needs tin now.

I am filed under “settled”.