**The Songs On My Way**

i

London, a city of scraps where

I crossed cobbled lanes that sparkled with glass

meandered through alleys graffitied and carved

traversed the underpass through puddles of piss

messed in warehouses brimming with shifts

where I plundered remnants of nylon and gingham,

all *Blowing in the Wind.*

I rode the route master through city villages

Hackney, Kilburn, Tottenham, Brixton

I danced at The Ritzy, Ronnie Scots, The Dominion,

clambered, tired into late night black taxi cabs

I kissed under Lime trees dripping sticky sap

At Camden Town, I stepped over lain out tramps

*Big City, Bright Lights, Groovy People*

ii

In Dublin I got the DART to Tara St

where the Liffey slinks and drains into the sea

I worked in squares of red faded grandeur,

I laughed at the wit bowled through Amien street

Tossed by the bards on every feckin corner.

I *Climbed every Mountain* in the garden of Wicklow

And twirled with delight on Katy Gollagher

iii

I walked across the green counties of Ireland

To Cavan, where birdsong spattered forest lakes

The local mafia ruled with staged whispers

More intransigent than the Catholic faith

Autumn fired flames through the trees and bogs

Strings and bows cracked tradition in pubs

And I sang from the *Shores of Loch Gowna*

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iv

I came to Galway, the city of tribes,

Atlantic waves, skylight scribes.

I sat at the bird strewn *Dock on the Bay*

thronged with people in the alleyways

A green woman on a box keeps absolutely still

A penny on her plate and she will

Recite transitory songs in the salty sea spray.