



*"Hope" is the thing with feathers*

EMILY DICKINSON

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -  
And sore must be the storm -  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -  
And on the strangest Sea -  
Yet, never, in Extremity,  
It asked a crumb - of Me.

From *The Poems Of Emily Dickinson*,  
The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Copyright © 1951

**In celebration of Poetry Day 2016, *Soul Food* is intended for distribution throughout hospitals and healthcare settings in Ireland. The poetry is a selection from the Poems for Patience series in Galway University Hospitals and edited by Colette Bryce.**

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# Soul Food

MENU OF POEMS 2016

In celebration of Poetry Day Ireland

28 April 2016



## *Lying in Wait for Happiness*

YEHUDA AMICHAÏ

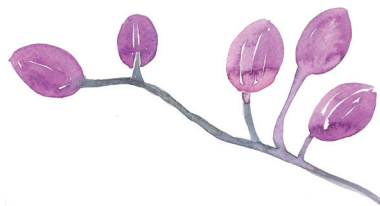
Translated by Glenda Abramson & Tudor Parfitt

On the broad steps leading down to the Western Wall  
A beautiful woman came up to me: You don't remember me,  
I'm Shoshana in Hebrew. Something else in other languages.  
All is vanity.

Thus she spoke at twilight standing between the destroyed  
And the built, between the light and the dark.  
Black birds and white birds changed places  
With the great rhythm of breathing.  
The flash of tourists' cameras lit my memory too:  
What are you doing here between the promised and the forgotten,  
Between the hoped for and the imagined?  
What are you doing here lying in wait for happiness  
With your lovely face a tourist advertisement from God  
And your soul rent and torn like mine?

She answered me: My soul is rent and torn like yours  
But it is beautiful because of that  
Like fine lace.

*From Poems of Jerusalem and Love Poems,*  
The Sheep Meadow Press, 1981



# Soul Food

## MENU OF POEMS 2016

*People often turn to poetry at times of illness, loss or recovery, even people who have little time for it in their day-to-day lives. Poetry seems to help, by filling our minds with unexpected images, by inviting us into a reflective space where words can offer some spiritual sustenance. Poetry – I'll even dare to say – can reach the parts that food cannot! We offer this menu of poems to you, on Poetry Day Ireland, for nourishment of another sort. We hope you enjoy them.*

COLETTE BRYCE, EDITOR

## *From the Irish*

IAN DUHIG

According to Dineen, a Gael unsurpassed  
in lexicographical enterprise, the Irish  
for moon means 'the white circle in a slice  
of half-boiled potato or turnip'. A star  
is the mark on the forehead of a beast  
and the sun is the bottom of a lake, or well.

Well, if I say to you your face  
is like a slice of half-boiled turnip,  
your hair is the colour of a lake's bottom  
and at the centre of each of your eyes  
is the mark of the beast, it is because  
I want to love you properly, according to Dineen.

'From the Irish' by kind permission of the author

## *Theory Of Memory*

LOUISE GLÜCK

Long, long ago, before I was a tormented artist, afflicted with longing yet  
incapable of forming durable attachments, long before this, I was a glorious  
ruler uniting all of a divided country — so I was told by the fortune-teller  
who examined my palm. Great things, she said, are ahead of you, or perhaps  
behind you; it is difficult to be sure. And yet, she added, what is the difference?  
Right now you are a child holding hands with a fortune-teller. All the  
rest is hypothesis and dream.

*From Faithful and Virtuous Night, Carcanet, 2014*

