

The Demolished Exorcism Room

It was a long winding walk uphill
to the old two-story homestead.

From the ungated pillars of the laneway
the crooked finger of the chimney

pointed through the collapsed roof
fringed by a crewcut of slates

and with the sky canvassing it
the darkened cave of the hearth

greeted me like a night-harbour
when I opened the front door

and walked through the hall wall
that was no longer there

and went over to the bricked-up door
of the good-room and looked in –

through the dislodged masonry –
at the sealed-up interior,

at the bricked-up window
that had opened once again

when the old oak toppled
onto the back of the house

and my grandfather knew
the days of peace were over

because whatever the priest had forced
through the brick-sized hole

and sealed into the good-room,
had escaped, and even though

the priest was long dead
when the oak fell, Granda said

that wouldn't stop it
from finding him

because the door he'd closed
was now open

and couldn't be closed again.