

◆ GERALDINE CLARKSON ◆

Postscript

I escape through the chinks of the small hours
to write you a note. Whiskey stills.
Next-door are fighting, the boiler is raling
and yet cold like death. The songbirds

are calling before I'm in bed. You couldn't abide
me to stay up like this. And now it's the norm,
I confess. I'm writing as, yes, I remember the date,
every month, I remember the time, and you

falling, your hair freshly-set, and you asking
blessed water be rubbed on the rib
that you snapped (oh so simply, with scarcely a whisper);
the power of Lourdes preferred to the doctors' devices.

The vexing is over, cold shoulders,
the throwing across of the shawl of shirred silence.
I believe you are happy, your spirit persists,
singing out between Galway and here.

Just wondering how everything was in the end—
the nurses said it was sudden—
I didn't leave you your rosary. I didn't say 'bye'.
My mother, my other. I send my love always.

Your daughter is signing goodbye.