

RAGLAN ROAD

[Patrick Kavanagh]

ON RAGLAN ROAD ON AN AUTUMN DAY I MET HER FIRST AND KNEW
THAT HER DARK HAIR WOULD WEAVE A SNARE THAT I MIGHT ONE DAY RUE;
I SAW THE DANGER, YET I WALKED ALONG THE ENCHANTED WAY,
AND I SAID, LET GRIEF BE A FALLEN LEAF AT THE DAWNING OF THE DAY.

ON GRAFTON STREET IN NOVEMBER WE TRIPPED LIGHTLY ALONG THE LEDGE
OF THE DEEP RAVINE WHERE CAN BE SEEN
THE WORTH OF PASSION'S PLEDGE,
THE QUEEN OF HEARTS STILL MAKING TARTS AND I NOT MAKING HAY -
O I LOVED TOO MUCH AND BY SUCH AND SUCH
IS HAPPINESS THROWN AWAY.

I GAVE HER GIFTS OF THE MIND - I GAVE HER THE SECRET SIGN
THAT'S KNOWN TO THE ARTISTS WHO HAVE KNOWN
THE TRUE GODS OF SOUND AND STONE
AND WORD AND TINT. I DID NOT STINT
FOR I GAVE HER POEMS TO SAY.
WITH HER OWN NAME THERE AND HER OWN DARK HAIR
LIKE CLOUDS OVER FIELDS OF MAY

ON A QUIET STREET WHERE OLD GHOSTS MEET
I SEE HER WALKING NOW
AWAY FROM ME SO HURRIEDLY
MY REASON MUST ALLOW
THAT I HAD WOODED NOT AS I SHOULD
A CREATURE MADE OF CLAY -
WHEN THE ANGEL WOOS THE CLAY HE'D LOSE
HIS WINGS AT THE DAWN OF DAY.