

## Helpers

You promised me, and you said a lie to me,  
...You promised me a thing that is not possible,  
that you would give me gloves of the skin of a fish;  
that you would give me shoes of the skin of a bird;  
and a suit of the dearest silk in Ireland.

(“Donal Óg”, translated by Lady Gregory)

There are things you’ve never worn: the suit  
that stitches rows of dragon’s teeth—seedlings—  
the gloves made of the skin of a fish  
that walked from Lough Corrib, only apparent  
in western isle moonlight, the shoes made  
from the skin of a child’s favourite piglet  
that gave itself freely. That must be the meaning  
of submission. A chest pocket square  
of crocodile tears betrayed them. The suit,  
the gloves, the shoes, confer at night—Bremen voices  
in the cupboard out in the hall that has no visible  
door. When will we be worn for the good fight?  
The battle’s already here. We are a good armoury.  
An army of little men will spring out of the ground.