

To An Artist

I was an island girl
With wild hair on my shoulders
And a gale on my tongue
That broke the swell as we sailed.
With my hand in my granny's,
She named the streets of her youth,
When she had known the beauty of a city.
I could still feel the sway of the boat
As we wandered the halls of a glorious adventure.
She stopped.

The fine lines of her smile
Mirrored the fine lines of your art;
Both crafted with love.
Delicate beauty,
The colour of heather, not peat;
The silver of spoons, not mackerel.
Standing with your graceful ladies,
She squeezed my hand and said,
"Now that is an artist."

I was a granite student
With too little time to learn
And too much love for painting.
I opened a page to your graceful ladies
And thought of simpler times.
So when your flowers burned that year,
In the heat of a summer night,
Our faces turned to the ash.
And with fire in our hearts we said,
"When we mourn for our heritage,
Now that is an artist."

I will be an old lady,
Fearless,
With a gale on my tongue
That will break the swell as I sail.
I will paint with gnarled hands
And use familiar colours;
The silver of my hair and the purple of heather.
Wandering through the halls of adventure,
I will stand with your graceful ladies one last time
And I will say,
"Now that is an artist."

