

STATUES OF JANUARY

When the bronze man moves out of his bronzed statue
and wheels his painted pedestal into a bank off Grafton

When the man in the long white dress with white face
waving his hands, offering a lolly, his last one
when he steps down from his cardboard stand
when he sags into a telephone booth
vanished to make a phone call

I see your dark skin under white paint
and passersby don't want your candy

When the man in suit, briefcase and hat for change
tie mid-air, blown by hairspray, an invisible wind
walks through the crowd after standing still for hours
under the sky, gray, biding with rain

A rare moment –
gray is lovely
like that woman's gray stockings
and shiny gray shoes

I have bittersweet chocolate in my pocket
as I lean on a lamppost and listen
to the sad cries of your tinwhistle
I saw you play fiddle beside that old Chinese woman
who sits every day in that alley
playing that little accordion

The jingling boxes of change for Haiti
alike to a trudge of feet mark time
The whistful whistle of violin and flute
visit the hills of distant seashores
from before you were born

The homeless man sits between lines of people
who wait to receive paper gold out of holes in the wall
No one looks at him
Where does he look

I saw Yeats at lunch over tomato soup and sodabread
only he was an imposter, much less mad and mystic
I formed you! he yelled
though I could have sworn his lips did not move