

Two Poems by Padraig Daly

A DREAM OF WINGS

1.

He came along the road
In the late evening
When curtains were drawn.

Into every house he put a folded butterfly,
Leaving them to hide
In attics and under stairs

To appear once
Like the grace of certainty,
Flutter beautifully and go.

2.

A butterfly flew across my mind
When all was dark,
Lighting every space it filled.

It stayed seconds and was gone,
But now my darkness is bright
With the dream of its wings.

3.

The butterfly has folded up its wings
And hangs on the ledge,
Absolutely still.

Even the soft breeze through the window
Does not disturb it;

When it wakes
It will carry a silence into the street.

4.

All that time in the darkness
Glorious colour floods its wings;

But uselessly;
Unless the chrysalis falls apart

And releases it to the rapturous air.

PRAYER

We gather at the river's edge;
One by one in the darkness
We place our flames on the water.

We watch them drift,
Fragile, flickering,
Out to the unsleeping ocean.

We fear at first that they will sink;
But the water carries them past every hazard
As if it loved them.