

## The John Muir Way

*Oisín Breen*

Even when we walk where hammers once rang,  
Even in the old towns where stone sank to wring out steam,

Coal, where now there is snow,  
Coal, where now there is sorrow,

Alloa; Dunmore; Bellsdyke; Glensburgh;

All along the way,  
Coal, all along the way,

Grangemouth; Bo'Ness; and Blackness,

You are with me all along the way,  
Even as we rest, having cleaned the snow  
From the remnants of a felled tree,  
Sitting, eating egg and cress sandwiches,  
Almost frozen by the bitter chill.

You are with me all along the way,  
As we hint to each other of our growing affection,  
And I am grateful, even though the squalls will not abate,  
And the heat we share, is the last on Earth,  
And time, unseen, comes to a halt.

Irish poet, academic, and financial journalist, **Oisín Breen**'s debut, 'Flowers, all sorts in blossom ...' was released March 2020. Breen is widely published, including in *About Place*, *Northern Gravy*, *The Blue Nib*, *Books Ireland*, the *Seattle Star*, *La Piccioletta Barca*, the *Bosphorus Review of Books*, *In Parentheses*, and the *Madrigal*.