

Keegan | Foster

Fremdsprachentexte | Englisch

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Foster

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For Ita Marcus
and in memory of David Marcus

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Early on a Sunday, after first Mass in Clonegal, my father, instead of taking me home, drives deep into Wexford towards the coast where my mother's people came from. It is
 5 a hot day, bright, with patches of shade and greenish, sudden light along the road. We pass through the village of Shillelagh where my father lost our red Shorthorn in a game of forty-five, and on past the mart in Carnew where the man who won the heifer sold her shortly afterwards. My father
 10 throws his hat on the passenger seat, winds down the window, and smokes. I shake the plaits out of my hair and lie flat on the back seat, looking up through the rear window. In places there's a bare, blue sky. In places the blue is chalked over with clouds, but mostly it is a heady mixture
 15 of sky and trees scratched over by ESB wires across which, every now and then, small, brownish flocks of vanishing birds race.

2 **mass**: Messe. | **Clonegal**: Dorf im Südosten Irlands (Grafschaft Carlow). | 3 **Wexford**: Hauptstadt der gleichnamigen Grafschaft im Südosten Irlands. | 5 **patches of shade**: schattige Stellen (*patch*: Fleck). | 7 **Shillelagh**: Dorf im Südosten Irlands (Grafschaft Wicklow). | **Shorthorn**: Shorthorn-Rind. | 8 **forty-five**: irisches Kartenspiel. | **mart**: Markt. | **Carnew**: Dorf im Südosten Irlands (Grafschaft Wicklow). | 9 **heifer**: Färse (junge Kuh). | 10 **to wind down**: herunterkurbeln. | 11 **plait**: Zopf (*to plait*: einen Zopf flechten). | 12 f. **rear window**: Heckscheibe. | 13 **bare** (adj.): nackt; hier: klar. | 14 **chalked over**: übermalt, geweißt. | **heady**: berauschend. | 15 **scratched over**: zerkratzt; hier: durchzogen von. | **ESB wires**: Stromkabel (*ESB*: *Electricity Supply Board*; irischer Stromversorger). | 26 **flock**: Schar. | 16 f. **to vanish**: verschwinden.

I wonder what it will be like, this place belonging to the Kinsellas. I see a tall woman standing over me, making me drink milk still hot from the cow. I see another, less likely version of her in an apron, pouring pancake batter onto a frying pan, asking would I like another, the way my mother sometimes does when she is in good humour. The man will be no taller than her. He will take me to town on the tractor and buy me red lemonade and crisps. Or he'll make me clean out sheds and pick stones and pull ragweed and docks out of the fields. I see him taking what I hope will be a fifty pence piece from his pocket but it turns out to be a handkerchief. I wonder if they live in an old farmhouse or a new bungalow, whether they will have an outhouse or an indoor bathroom with a toilet and running water. I picture myself lying in a dark bedroom with other girls, saying things we won't repeat when morning comes.

An age, it seems, passes before the car slows and turns into a tarred, narrow lane, then a thrill as the wheels slam over the metal bars of a cattle grid. On either side, thick hedges are trimmed square. At the end of the lane there's a long, white house with trees whose limbs are trailing the ground.

“Da,” I say. “The trees.”

4 **apron**: Schurz. | **pancake batter**: Pfannkuchenteig. | 9 **shed**: Schuppen. | **to pull**: hier: jäten. | **ragweed** (bot.): Beifuß. | **dock** (bot.): Ampfer. | 11 f. **handkerchief**: Taschentuch. | 13 **outhouse**: Plumpsklo. | 18 **tarred**: asphaltiert. | **thrill**: hier: Ruck. | 18 f. **to slam over s.th.**: über etwas rumpeln. | 19 **metal bar**: Metallstange. | **cattle grid**: Viehgitter. | 20 **hedge**: Hecke. | **to trim**: schneiden, stutzen. | 21 **limbs**: Gliedmaßen; hier: Äste. | 21 f. **to trail the ground**: etwa: bis zum Boden ranken. | 23 **Da** (coll.): Dad.