

Cover Sheet Task #1

Introduction to Ghostliness in Art

Learning aims:	The students understand the concept of ghostliness in art and the term “disembodiment” and can describe it in their own words. The students can critically reflect about information that has been presented to them and verbally express their agreement or disagreement to their peers.
Short description:	In this task, the concept of ghostliness in art is introduced to students through a short video essay. They discuss why and how Roger Casement could be seen as a ghost.
Prerequisites:	The students should already be familiar with the basics of Roger Casement’s biography, namely his expeditions to the Congo Free State and the Putumayo, his support for the cause of Irish Nationalism, and the debate about his (alleged) homosexuality and the “Black Diaries.” If this is not the case, Biletz’s short biography can be used to introduce Roger Casement.
Required material:	Original Video: “Ghostliness in Art,” available here : www.dropbox.com/s/svmubkiiqdwelj/Ghostliness%20in%20Art.mov?dl=0 Handout for students Additionally: A computer, beamer, screen and speakers (or other technology) to show the video to the students
Main type of student activity/output:	Language production
Key skills involved:	Listening, speaking
Primary texts Referenced:	A detailed bibliography for the video essay can be found on document “1.A Video Essay Ghostliness in Art.”

Bibliography

Further Reading

Biletz, Frank A. “Casement, Sir Roger (1864–1916).” *Historical Dictionary of Ireland. Historical Dictionaries of Europe*. Scarecrow Press, 2014. 69–70.

→ Biletz’s short biography provides a good overview of the cornerstones of Roger Casement’s life. It could be given to students in case they are not yet familiar with Roger Casement.

Burroughs, Robert. “England’s Eyewitness: Casement’s Amazon Journal.” *Travel Writing and Atrocities: Eyewitness Accounts of Colonialism in the Congo, Angola, and the Putumayo*. Routledge Research in Travel Writing 4. Routledge, 2011. 122–143.

→ This book chapter examines Casement’s 1910 expedition to the Putumayo region of the Amazon, the report he penned about the conditions of the rubber workers practically enslaved there, and the result his report had on British legislation and the reputation of rubber companies and investors in Britain.

Solnit, Rebecca. “The Butterfly Collector.” *A Book of Migrations: Some Passages in Ireland*. 1997. Revised edition. Verso, 2011. 38–60.

→ This essay (excerpts of which are part of task #2-4 of this teaching unit) beautifully weaves together the many aspects of Roger Casement’s life and is an illuminating read for teachers who want to familiarize themselves with Casement beyond Biletz’s short biography.

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Task #1: Introduction to Ghostliness in Art

1. Carefully watch the video “Ghostliness in Art.”

Available [here](#):

www.dropbox.com/s/svmubkiiiaqdwehj/Ghostliness%20in%20Art.mov?dl=0

→ A transcript of the video’s voice over as well as a collection of passages from works which the video is based on can be found on the document “1.A Video Essay Ghostliness in Art.”

2. Discuss the video (first in pairs, then share your findings with the class).

- ◆ According to the video, how are ghosts related to literature? And what about other types of media, like photographs and voice recordings? Do you think this connection between art and ghosts makes sense? Why (not)?
- ◆ What does the word “disembodied” mean? (Tip: Can you point out different parts of the word and their meaning?) Why is the concept of “disembodiment” important when it comes to the ghostliness of literature? → **Answers:**
 - ◆ dis-embodied: the prefix *dis-* means “the opposite or absence of”¹; *embodied* is the past participle of *to embody* (“to give a body to; to incarnate; to incorporate”)
 - ◆ em-body: the root *body* is affixed with the prefix *em-*, meaning “provide with; within”²
 - ◆ “Disembodied” describes something that is not (or no longer) situated within a body. The separation of voice and body is central to the notion of ghostliness. It is a major characteristic of the ghost and can also be seen in voice recordings and literature.

3. Roger Casement as a ghost? (Discuss in pairs first, then share your findings with the class).

What may be reasons why people think of Roger Casement as a ghost? In other words, what events or aspects of his life make it likely that Casement will be imagined as a ghost, coming back from the dead? → **Possible answers:**

- ◆ While RC was alive, he already “haunted” the British Empire: At first, he worked with and supported the British colonial administration, but then he turned against the strategies used by colonialist forces in Africa (by writing two reports exposing the cruelties committed by King Leopold’s administration in the Congo Free State and by a Peruvian rubber company in the Putumayo³), and against the British empire, specifically (by joining the Irish Nationalist movement and helping to organize a revolt in 1916 – for which he was arrested and hanged).
- ◆ RC dying for the cause of Irish Nationalism renders him a martyr, a legend, or even a saint in the eyes of many. As a result of his heroic death, he becomes “bigger than life” and stays alive in the memory of his supporters.
- ◆ The scandal and uncertainty about RC’s rumored homosexuality affects the way he is remembered. RC, being incarcerated, was not able to (or chose not to) comment on these rumors. Hence, the secret died with him, haunting his memory.

¹ “dis-.” Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. *Merriam-Webster*, 2021, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dis. Accessed 11 November 2021.

² “en-.” Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. *Merriam-Webster*, 2021, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/en-. Accessed 11 November 2021.

³ Burroughs, Robert. “England’s Eyewitness: Casement’s Amazon Journal.” *Travel Writing and Atrocities: Eyewitness Accounts of Colonialism in the Congo, Angola, and the Putumayo*. Routledge Research in Travel Writing 4. Routledge, 2011. 122–143

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2. Discuss the video (first in pairs, then share your findings with the class).

- ◆ According to the video, how are ghosts related to literature? And what about other types of media, like photographs and voice recordings? Do you think this connection between art and ghosts makes sense? Why (not)?
- ◆ What does the word “disembodied” mean? (Tip: Can you point out different parts of the word and their meaning?) Why is the concept of “disembodiment” important when it comes to the ghostliness of literature?

3. Roger Casement as a ghost? (Discuss in pairs first, then share your findings with the class).

- ◆ What may be reasons why people think of Roger Casement as a ghost? In other words, what events or aspects of his life make it likely that Casement will be imagined as a ghost, coming back from the dead?

Video essay: “Ghostliness in art” (Task #1)

This video essay introduces the students to the concept of ghostliness in art. The video is under three minutes and can easily be played multiple times. It is inspired by ideas and concepts from various authors and presents them in a very accessible and comprehensible way. Below, you can find a transcript of the video’s voice-over as well as the passages the voice-over is based on. This document also contains a detailed bibliography.



[The video can be streamed or downloaded here.](#)

Or by copy-pasting this link: www.dropbox.com/s/svmubkiiiaqdwehj/Ghostliness%20in%20Art.mov?dl=0

Voice-over transcript

“Ghost (noun): a disembodied soul

Especially: the soul of a dead person believed to be an inhabitant of the unseen world or to appear to the living in bodily likeness” [A].

We are scared of and yet fascinated by ghosts. We write stories about them, try to prove their existence, or invent new ways to portray them in art.

In a way, the art we create is similar to the ghosts it depicts. Like a photograph, or a film. It captures a moment and makes it permanent, repeats what cannot be repeated in real life [B], turning the places or people in it into ghosts coming back to haunt those who look at it [C]. The person in the photo or film may no longer look like this - or may have died. The subject of the photo, like the ghost, isn’t here, but isn’t entirely absent, either. Does it have a body, or not? Is it here, or is it not [D]? Is it in the present, or in the past [E]?

Sound recording and reproduction technology does something similar. Since the invention of the phonograph in 1877, we can hear voices long after the sounds were spoken by a human, even after the speaker has died. We can actually listen to voices from the beyond. The body has been separated from the voice; the voice has become disembodied [F]. But rather than replacing the real voice, the recording creates a Doppelgänger, a ghostly double of the real voice [G].

And then of course we have literature - maybe the ghostliest kind of art? When we read, we look at words on a page and invest them with life in our minds. Some of us may hear voices when we read, some of us may see images. Aren’t we essentially hallucinating when we read, embodying the disembodied characters and giving voice to the voiceless in our minds? Could reading be described as a ghostly experience, a haunting from a different place or time, from voices long dead, or not yet born?

Passages from the works the video essay is based on

A: “Ghost.” Merriam Webster Dictionary, Online Version.

B: “What the Photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the Photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially” (Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 4).

C: “And the person or thing photographed is the target, the referent, a kind of little simulacrum, any eidolon emitted by the object, which I should like to call the Spectrum of the Photograph,

because this word retains, through its root, a relation to ‚spectacle‘ and adds to it that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead” (Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 9).

D: “[...] as Marx himself spells out [...] the specter is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming-body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit. It becomes, rather, some “thing” that remains difficult to name: neither soul nor body, and both one and the other. For it is flesh and phenomenality that give to the spirit its spectral apparition, but which disappear right away in the apparition, in the very coming of the revenant or the return of the specter. There is something disappeared, departed in the apparition itself as reappearance of the departed” (Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, 4-5).

E: “Das Gespenst ist eine unheimliche Figur, die sich, selbst wenn es sich eine feste Adresse gesucht hat, nicht domestizieren lässt. Gleichwohl sucht es heim. Es trägt ein Anderswo und ein Anderswann in den konkreten Ort, den konkreten Zeitpunkt seines Erscheinens ein” (Wagner-Egelhaaf, “Autofiktion und Gespenster,” 135).

F: “[...] this is a practice so familiar to listeners today that we take it as a given: the separation of the voice from the body from which it originally emanated – the emergence of the disembodied voice” (Young, *Singing The Body Electric: The Human Voice and Sound Technology*, 17).







G: “Wie nicht anders zu erwarten war, misslang die Doppelung jedoch, und ein ekto-plasmatischer Überschuss haftete der angeblichen Identität von Stimme und Maschine an. «Sprache ist in gewisser Weise unsterblich geworden», schrieb der *Scientific American* 1878 über Edisons Apparat; jedoch gerade in dieser ‘gewissen Weise’ residieren die Geister. Die Behauptung der Austauschbarkeit erzeugt Doppelgänger. Wie alle Science Fiction- und Stephen Hawking-Leser wissen, impliziert eine Zeitreise immer eine stoffliche Replikation, und die dabei entstehenden neuen Körper haben fast immer etwas Unheimliches an sich” (Durham Peters, “Helmholtz und Edison: Zur Endlichkeit der Stimme,” 306).

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Secondary sources of the video essay “Ghostliness in Art”

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- Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. 1993. Translated by Peggy Kamuf. Routledge, 1994.
- Durham Peters, John. “Helmholtz und Edison: Zur Endlichkeit der Stimme.” Translated by Antje Pfannkuchen. *Zwischen Rauschen und Offenbarung: Zur Kultur- und Mediengeschichte der Stimme*. Edited by Friedrich Kittler, Thomas Macho, and Sigrid Weigel. Akademie Verlag Berlin, 2002. 291-312.
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- Wagner-Egelhaaf, Martina. “Autofiktion und Gespenster.” *Kultur & Gespenster*, no. 8, Fall 2008, pp. 135-152.
- Young, Miriama. *Singing the Body Electric: The Human Voice and Sound Technology*. Ashgate, 2015.

Image and audio sources (of the video essay “Ghostliness in Art”) in order of appearance

1	<i>Soundtrack</i>	MacLeod, Kevin. “Ghost Processional (Alternate).” <i>Incompetech</i> , 2021, incompetech.com/music/royalty-free/index.html?isrc=USUAN1100219 . Licensed under Creative Commons: By Attribution 3.0 License.
2		<i>A Ghost Story</i> . Directed by David Lowery, starring Rooney Mara and Casey Affleck, A24, 2017. <i>YouTube</i> , uploaded by A24, 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmQ2MnSs6q0 .
3		“Image of a ghost produced by double exposure.” 1899. <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Co9man, 20 January 2015, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Image_of_a_ghost,_produced_by_double_exposure_in_1899.jpg . Accessed 11 November 2021.
4		Daguerre, Louis. “Boulevard du Temple.” 1838. <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Quibik, 18 November 2011, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Boulevard_du_Temple_by_Daguerre.jpg . Accessed 12 November 2021.
5		“Sir Roger Casement.” <i>Library Of Congress</i> , Prints & Photography Division, LC-DIG-ggbain-19597, 2001, loc.gov/pictures/resource/ggbain.19597/ . Accessed 14 November 2021.
6		“The only extant footage of Roger Casement (1864-1916).” <i>YouTube</i> , uploaded by Grainne Mhaol, 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q45khUNFMP8 . Accessed 12 November 2021.
7		“Broadcasting from a central studio.” <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Materialschemist, 03 May 2021, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Broadcasting_a_radio_play_at_NB_C_studio.jpg . Accessed 17 November 2021.

8		“Thomas Edison.” <i>Library Of Congress</i> , Prints & Photography Division, LC-DIG-cwpbh-04044, 2003, loc.gov/pictures/resource/cwpbh.04044/ . Accessed 13 November 2021.
9		“1920s Radio Broadcasting.” <i>YouTube</i> , uploaded by MyFootage.com, 2010. www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRp2u8d7lrg . Accessed 17 November 2021.
10		Master of the Vanitas Texts. “Vanitas.” 1650. <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Canaan, 24 November 2019, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vanitas_MNAC.jpg#/media/File:Vanitas_MNAC.jpg . Accessed 14 November 2021.
11		Ancher, Anna. “Interieur mit Mohnblumen und lesender Frau (Lizzy Hohlenberg).” 1905. <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Mefusbren69, 19 January 2010, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anna_Ancher_-_Interieur_mit_Mohnblumen_und_lesender_Frau_(Lizzy_Hohlenberg)_1905.jpeg . Accessed 12 November 2021.
12		Backer, Harriet. “Evening, Interior.” 1890. <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by BotMultichillT, 24 December 2020, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Harriet_Backer_-_Evening,_Interior_-_NG.M.02216_-_National_Museum_of_Art,_Architecture_and_Design.jpg . Accessed 17 November 2021.
13		Herrmann, Curt. “Lesende Dame auf rotem Sofa.” 1893. <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Rlbberlin, 10 May 2007, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Curt_Herrmann_-_Lesende_Dame_auf_rottem_Sofa.jpg . Accessed 13 November 2021.
14		Harlamov, Alexei. “Literary Pursuits of a Young Lady.” <i>Wikimedia Commons</i> , uploaded by Staszek99, 24 February 2008, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Harlamoff_Alexej_Literary_Pursuits_of_a_Young_Lady.jpg . Accessed 17 November 2021.
15		Fabrés, Antoni. “Various sketches.” 1901. <i>Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya</i> , 034896-D, www.museunacional.cat/en/colleccio/various-sketches/antoni-fabres/034896-d . Accessed 17 November 2021.

Cover Sheet Task #2

Ghostly readings – Literature about Roger Casement

Learning aims:	The students can identify the main motives of different characters and restate them in their own words. The students can point out the use of different tenses, passive voice, and demonstrative pronouns in a literary text and are able to connect said grammatical aspects with the content of the text. The students can recognize interesting vocabulary choices in a literary text and interpret their significance.
Short description:	The students can choose a literary text (novel A, short story B, or essay C) to read an excerpt from. After that, the students answer reading comprehension questions. If the teacher plans to follow up this reading task with the interpretation and exchange tasks (#3 and #4) – which is highly recommended – they should make sure that all groups (A, B, C) are roughly equal in size.
Prerequisites:	It is helpful if students have already done task #1 (which introduces the concept of ghostliness in literature). However, this reading task can also be done independently.
Required material:	Handout for students Literature excerpts A, B or C → both provided in the appendix. No additional material required.
Main type of student activity/output:	Reading
Key skills involved:	Reading comprehension, language practice: grammar, language practice: vocabulary
Primary texts Referenced:	A. Carson, Michael. <i>The Knight of the Flaming Heart</i> . Doubleday, 1995. B. Devlin, Martina. “No Other Place.” 2016. <i>Truth & Dare: Short Stories about Women who Shaped Ireland</i> . Poolbeg, 2018. 129-141. C. Solnit, Rebecca. “The Butterfly Collector.” 1997. <i>A Book of Migrations: Some Passages in Ireland</i> . Revised paperback edition. Verso, 2011. 38-60.

Bibliography

Image Sources (from the student handout)

Figure 1: Photograph of Roger Casement, taken from:

Crutchley, Peter. “Roger Casement: How did a hero come to be considered a traitor?” *BBC News*, 25 November 2013, www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-25017936. Accessed 17 November 2021.

Figure 2. Painting of Alice Milligan.

Solomons, Estella Frances. “Alice Milligan.” 1918. *ArtUK*, 2021, artuk.org/discover/artworks/alice-milligan-18661953-122840. Accessed 11 November 2021. © The estate of Estella Frances Solomons.

Figure 3. Photograph of Butterflies, taken from:

Reilly, Fiona. “Roger Casement – voice of the voiceless.” *History Ireland*, vol. 25, no. 1, Jan/Feb 2017, www.historyireland.com/volume-25/roger-casement-voice-voiceless/. Accessed 17 November 2021.

Task #2: Ghostly readings – Literature about Roger Casement

Since Roger Casement's death in 1916, different stories have been written in which he, in one form or another, appears as a ghost.

1. Choose one of the following texts to read (you will only read a couple of pages).

A. *The Knight of the Flaming Heart* by Michael Carson, novel, 1995.

This novel begins as Boma, a young woman overwhelmed by her unwanted pregnancy and the recent break-up with her boyfriend, attempts to end her life by drowning herself in the Atlantic Ocean. However, she is miraculously rescued from the waves and led ashore by a tall stranger who turns out to be the ghost of Roger Casement, who asks people to call him by his nickname "Roddie." While only Boma and few other chosen ones are able to see "Roddie's" ghost, the town of Tralee and the rest of Ireland soon become obsessed with the apparition. In the passages you're about to read, Roger Casement's ghost talks to various inhabitants and visitors of Tralee, the small town on whose shore he landed and was arrested in 1916.

→ In terms of vocabulary and writing style, the novel is probably the most approachable (i.e., easiest) of the three texts to understand.

B. "No Other Place" by Martina Devlin, short story, 2016.

This short story is about Alice Milligan (1866-1953), an Irish writer, journalist, publisher, activist and lecturer. She devoted her life to the cause of Irish Nationalism and was involved in the Celtic revival efforts. She was a friend of Roger Casement's and witnessed his execution in 1916 (adapted from Devlin 127-8). The title of Martina Devlin's short story is inspired by the inscription on Alice Milligan's gravestone: "is *Níor car fód eile ach Éirinn* – She loved no other place but Ireland" (Devlin 128). The story begins as Milligan is visited by a local police constable who does not appreciate the way she remembers Roger Casement, a hero of hers, on the anniversary of his death.

→ This short story is written in a more heightened and complex style and probably the most challenging of the three.

C. "The Butterfly Collector" by Rebecca Solnit, essay, 1997.

This text is inspired by the author's visit to the Natural History Museum of Ireland in Dublin. The passage you will read begins after the author has come out of the museum and sits down in a nearby park, called St. Stephen's Green, to eat a sandwich and "digest the museum" (Solnit 38). What does a case of butterflies have to do with Roger Casement?

→ The most experimental in terms of genre, this essay incorporates the author's, Roger Casement's, and other writers' voices seamlessly into one text.

2. Carefully read the text of your choice (A, B or C).

Please note that you will only read certain parts ("excerpts") from the original text, not the entire essay. This is why some parts of the document have been covered up. Some words have been underlined. For these words, you can find clarifications at the end of your text.

3. Complete the reading comprehension exercises for your text (A, B, or C) below.

Make sure to write down your answers on a separate sheet.

A. *The Knight of the Flaming Heart* by Michael Carson, novel, 1995.

- ◆ In the church scene (pp. 138-140), why does Canon Dawson believe that Roddie does not deserve to return to the world from the beyond? And what does Roddie personally think about this "scandal" (p. 139)? → The Canon believes Roddie's homosexuality should "[preclude his] return" (p. 139). Roddie himself believes that the importance of the "diaries" that document his homosexual activities has been overestimated (p. 139, bottom).

He also confirms that the diaries are authentic and that he considers his sexuality “God-given” and “a gift” (p. 140, top).

- ◆ Consider this sentence said by Roddie (the ghost of Roger Casement) to Canon Dawson: “I was made by my writing, then just as surely unmade by it” (p. 140). Is this sentence written in active or passive voice? How would you interpret this grammatical choice for this sentence? → “I was made [and] unmade” is in the passive voice (simple past). This emphasizes Casement’s lack of agency: the way *other people* interpreted Casement’s writing had a major influence on his life (and death), their interpretations *actively* shaped his biography. The British government knighted him as a result of his Congo and Putumayo reports; the publication by the English of his diaries, however, crucially worsened his reputation and arguably made it impossible for his (remaining) supporters to stop his execution.
- ◆ In the bar scene (pp. 190-193), what does Peter Coughlin believe is the reason why Roger Casement has come back from the dead? And why does Peter ultimately leave the bar? → Peter Coughlin thinks Roger Casement has come back to “expose the wicked lies spread about him by the English” (p. 192), i.e. that he had sexual relations with other men. The young men who fill the bar, however, believe the opposite, namely that Roger has come back to prove homosexuality is not a sin (p. 192). Peter leaves because they are in the majority and he feels alienated from his favorite bar.
- ◆ What word does Peter Coughlin use to describe Roger Casement’s sexual orientation? And what word do the younger men use? Do the words have different meanings? Why do they not use the same word? → Peter, who believes that Casement’s homosexuality was just a rumor and a “wicked lie,” uses the word “homosexual” (192), while the younger men use and self-identify as “gay” - “St. [Saint] Roger Casement was gay. I’m gay and I’ve never felt better” (192). The word “homosexual” is thus used pejoratively by Peter while “gay” is used descriptively (to state a fact, bottom of p. 192, “If he wasn’t gay [...]”) or positively ([...] show us that gay can be good” p. 192) by the gay men in the bar.

B. “No Other Place” by Martina Devlin, short story, 2016.

- ◆ When Norman, the policeman, mentions his bike (p. 134, top), Alice Milligan’s comment creates an awkward tension between them which only intensifies as their conversation continues. What topic is it that they have oppositional opinions about? And what are their opinions? → Alice Milligan’s comment reveals that she does not support the monarchy and the British rule over Ireland. Instead, she supports the cause of Irish Nationalism: “He’s her fifth monarch, imagine! None of whose rule she accepts” (p. 139). As a servant of the British empire, however, Norman disapproves of her views and, in turn, her character: “She’s a Fenian to the core” (p. 134) and “But he’s had enough of Alice Milligan. There’s no excuse for it [...]” (p. 136).
- ◆ What kind of anniversary is it? What does Alice Milligan do to commemorate it? And what does Norman think about the person she is remembering? → It is the anniversary of Roger Casement’s death. The British government had him executed for high treason on August 3rd, 1916. Alice Milligan gathers carefully chosen flowers from her garden (p. 129), turns them into a bouquet (p. 132) and sets it next to a framed image of him (p. 138). Norman first assumes that she is mourning a lost love (p. 135). When he realizes she is talking about a fellow Irish Nationalist, he considers his death a good thing: “Those renegades were rotten to the core – they were better off dead” (p. 136).
- ◆ What words are used to talk about flowers in this story? Does the choice of words say something about the importance of the flowers? Why are the flowers important (or not)? → The flowers are referred to as “sisters” (p. 130) or “queens” (p. 132), and Alice Milligan reveals that her first pen name was “a flower. Iris” (p. 133). In this way, the flowers are personified (given or associated with human characteristics). The personification here

underlines the importance of the flowers, emphasizing that they, too, play a role – like the other (human) characters. The argument that they are important is also supported by their omnipresence (they are mentioned on almost every page) and their power in shaping the story: it starts off in the garden, where the flowers are cut, then moves into the kitchen, where they are gathered into a bouquet, and finally to the drawing room, where Milligan sets the bouquet on the mantelpiece, next to Roger Casement's picture. They are essential to Alice's commemorative ritual; the practice helps keep Roger Casement alive in her memory. The flowers also have symbolical meaning: "ivy for remembrance," "white roses for hope" (p. 129).

- ◆ Consider the passages where Alice thinks about the monarchy (p. 139, bottom) and Norman considers the Irish Nationalists (p. 136, middle). Which kind of pronoun do both Alice Milligan and Norman use? Why is the use of this specific pronoun fitting in these contexts? → Both use the demonstrative pronoun "that" in the plural – "those." Alice: "Fancy! She has something in common with *those* British kings and queens" (p. 139). Norman: "*those* traitors" / "*those* renegades" (p. 136). It is fitting because the demonstrative pronoun "that" is used for things that are far away, not here. Both Alice and Norman use "those" to distance themselves from the characters they perceive as their enemies (the Irish Nationalists and the British monarchs, respectively).

C. "The Butterfly Collector" by Rebecca Solnit, essay, 1997.

- ◆ The text starts off just outside the museum but does not stay there for long. What other spaces are invoked in the text? And how does the author connect them to each other? → Firstly, the author imagines the same place, but in a different time: St. Stephen's Green Park during the Easter Rising of 1916 (pp. 38-39). Secondly, tracing the origins of the butterfly on display at the museum, the author invokes the Putumayo (South America) via Casement's journal entries from his 1910 expedition (pp. 49-50). Overlapping with this, the continent of Africa is also briefly mentioned – Casement had been on a similar expedition in the Congo Free State before. Finally, the author invokes Auschwitz as another space in which atrocities against humans are committed (p. 51). Notably, the butterfly connects all of these spaces.
- ◆ Notice the different tenses in the text. Which is the most frequent? Is there a passage that deviates from the norm? Did the use of tenses in this essay help you or confuse you while reading? → The text is written in past simple for the most part. (Past continuous and past perfect appear occasionally ("Stephens was teaching himself to read music" (p. 39); "The Sinn Feiners have seized the city this morning" (p. 38)). However, towards the end, there are two passages in the present simple: "One of his biographers *says* [...]" (p. 50) and "Maybe butterflies and atrocities [...] *are* inseparable in memory and experience [...]" (p. 51). This can be read as a sign that the text has now caught up with the present of the author's train of thought, rather than still "digesting the museum" via other writers' thoughts. This switch could be seen as a useful signpost. However, the use of past simple for the most part could be confusing because it blends the author's own narration with the voices of James Stephens (p. 38-19) and Roger Casement (p. 50).
- ◆ Have a close look at the words Roger Casement uses in his journal entries (p. 50, top half), specifically at the nouns in the September 30th entry and the adjectives in the various October entries. Do you notice a theme? Why do you think the author of the essay chose these specific journal entries for her text? → Some nouns from Sep. 30th entry: "method of torture," "floggings," "guns," "machetes" (p. 50). Some adjectives from the October entries: "splendid," "magnificent," "glowing," "extraordinary," "glorious" (p. 50). While the nouns in the first entry denote violence and cruelty, the adjectives in the second denote extreme joy and beauty – the entries seem to be polar opposites in terms of their vocabulary even though they were written only a couple of days apart, during the same expedition. The author could thus have chosen these entries to highlight the co-existence of both extremes.

- ◆ What question does the author link the butterflies to (p. 51)? And what does she think is Roger Casement's answer to that question? → The question is whether there should be joy in straining political and/or activist endeavors: "A perennial question for revolutionaries and activists is whether they should themselves enjoy the pleasant fruits they are trying to secure for others" (p. 51). The author arrives at this question by following the butterflies to camp Auschwitz and Theodor Adorno: "Theodor Adorno once said that after Auschwitz there could be no more poetry; should there be butterflies amidst atrocities?" (p. 51). The butterfly has become a metaphor for the joys of life. Accordingly, the essay suggests that Roger Casement's answer to the question is yes (p. 51).

Task #2: Ghostly readings – Literature about Roger Casement

Since Roger Casement's death in 1916, different stories have been written in which he, in one form or another, appears as a ghost.

1. Choose one of the following texts to read (you will only read a couple of pages).

A. *The Knight of the Flaming Heart* by Michael Carson, novel, 1995.

This novel begins as Boma, a young woman overwhelmed by her unwanted pregnancy and the recent break-up with her boyfriend, attempts to end her life by drowning herself in the Atlantic Ocean. However, she is miraculously rescued from the waves and led ashore by a tall stranger who turns out to be the ghost of Roger Casement, who asks people to call him by his nickname "Roddie." While only Boma and few other chosen ones are able to see "Roddie's" ghost, the town of Tralee and the rest of Ireland soon become obsessed with the apparition. In the passages you're about to read, Roger Casement's ghost talks to various inhabitants and visitors of Tralee, the small town on whose shore he landed and was arrested in 1916.



Figure 1: Roger Casement being led to the gallows on August 3rd, 1916



Figure 2: Alice Milligan painted by Estella Frances Solomons (1918).

B. "No Other Place" by Martina Devlin, short story, 2016.

This short story is about Alice Milligan (1866-1953), an Irish writer, journalist, publisher, activist and lecturer. She devoted her life to the cause of Irish Nationalism and was involved in the Celtic revival efforts. She was a friend of Roger Casement's and witnessed his execution in 1916 (adapted from Devlin 127-8). The title of Martina Devlin's short story is inspired by the inscription on Alice Milligan's gravestone: "is *Níor car fód eile ach Éirinn* – She loved no other place but Ireland" (Devlin 128). The story begins as Milligan is visited by a local police constable who does not appreciate the way she remembers Roger Casement, a hero of hers, on the anniversary of

C. "The Butterfly Collector" by Rebecca Solnit, essay, 1997.

This text is inspired by the author's visit to the Natural History Museum of Ireland in Dublin. The passage you will read begins after the author has come out of the museum and sits down in a nearby park, called St. Stephen's Green, to eat a sandwich and "digest the museum" (Solnit 38). What does a case of butterflies have to do with Roger Casement?



Figure 3: a display of butterflies collected by Roger Casement at the National Museum of Ireland.

2. Carefully read the text of your choice (A, B or C).

Please note that you will only read certain parts (“excerpts”) from the original text, not the entire essay. This is why some parts of the document have been covered up. Some words have been underlined. For these words, you can find clarifications at the end of your text.

3. Complete the reading comprehension exercises for your text (A, B, or C) below.

Make sure to write down your answers on a separate sheet.

A. *The Knight of the Flaming Heart* by Michael Carson, novel, 1995.

- ◆ In the church scene (pp. 138-140), why does Canon Dawson believe that Roddie does not deserve to return to the world from the beyond? And what does Roddie personally think about this “scandal” (p. 139)?
- ◆ Consider this sentence said by Roddie (the ghost of Roger Casement) to Canon Dawson: “I was made by my writing, then just as surely unmade by it” (p. 140). Is this sentence written in active or passive voice? How would you interpret this grammatical choice for this sentence?
- ◆ In the bar scene (pp. 190-193), what does Peter Coughlin believe is the reason why Roger Casement has come back from the dead? And why does Peter ultimately leave the bar?
- ◆ What word does Peter Coughlin use to describe Roger Casement’s sexual orientation? And what word do the younger men use? Do the words have different meanings? Why do they not use the same word?

B. “No Other Place” by Martina Devlin, short story, 2016.

- ◆ When Norman, the policeman, mentions his bike (p. 134, top), Alice Milligan’s comment creates an awkward tension between them which only intensifies as their conversation continues. What topic is it that they have oppositional opinions about? And what are their opinions?
- ◆ What kind of anniversary is it? What does Alice Milligan do to commemorate it? And what does Norman think about the person she is remembering?
- ◆ What words are used to talk about flowers in this story? Does the choice of words say something about the importance of the flowers? Why are the flowers important (or not)?
- ◆ Consider the passages where Alice thinks about the monarchy (p. 139, bottom) and Norman considers the Irish Nationalists (p. 136, middle). Which kind of pronoun do both Alice Milligan and Norman use? Why is the use of this specific pronoun fitting in these contexts?

C. “The Butterfly Collector” by Rebecca Solnit, essay, 1997.

- ◆ The text starts off just outside the museum but does not stay there for long. What other spaces are invoked in the text? And how does the author connect them to each other?
- ◆ Notice the different tenses in the text. Which is the most frequent? Is there a passage that deviates from the norm? Did the use of tenses in this essay help you or confuse you while reading?
- ◆ Have a close look at the words Roger Casement uses in his journal entries (p. 50, top half), specifically at the nouns in the September 30th entry and the adjectives in the various October entries. Do you notice a theme? Why do you think the author of the essay chose these specific journal entries for her text?
- ◆ What question does the author link the butterflies to (p. 51)? And what does she think is Roger Casement’s answer to that question?

from: Carson, Michael. *The Knight of the Flaming Heart*. London: Doubleday, 1995.

Canon Dawson's confession queue had dwindled to Mrs O'Hara. After receiving absolution, Mrs O'Hara, asked by the canon if she was the last, opened the door, took a look, and whispered back that she was.

But Mrs O'Hara was in error. Roddie knelt down on the prie-dieu in the box, causing a switch to activate a red bulb on Canon Dawson's side. The canon had been in the act of standing up to leave but, seeing the light, sat down again unhappily, placing his elbow next to the grille, sighing into his knuckles.

'I have come to make my confession, Father,' Roddie said.

'Make it, so,' said Canon Dawson.

'I confess that I am Roger Casement, come back from the grave. I confess that I have made myself known to Boma Hephernan and Father Devenish. I confess to feelings of frustration that I am not believed.'

'What are you saying, man?' Canon Dawson asked. 'To fool simple believers, to try to fox my curate! That isn't enough, I suppose, without making a mockery of the confessional!'

'I am not making a mockery, Canon,' Roddie replied. 'I know what you have been thinking. I heard you and Father Devenish talking it

over. Lôrd, it's the devil's own job making believers believe! How am I going to manage with the others?'

'All right. What was I doing while I was talking to Father Devenish?'

'You were drinking whiskey. A Paddy as I recall. You had a second and made out that it wasn't like you. But, of course, it was rather.'

'Oh, was it *rather*? You were spying on us through the window!'

'You told Father Devenish that you thought my character precluded my return. I had a fair amount of burning to do; my reputation was in limbo, you said.'

'Spying! Have you no shame at all, man? Laying sin on top of sin!'

Roddie sighed. 'Amn't I in confession?' he asked.

'You are.'

'And it is a great sin to tell a lie in confession?'

'A great sin; a sin of which you are in grave danger of being guilty—'

'I am trying to think how I can convince you that I am speaking the truth. It's an uphill task, you must admit. Do you want a spring to bubble up outside the church? I can give you that if you want. But you'd probably call the Water Board. How about if I turn Miss O'Shea's kettle water to Paddy? Any good? No, you'd just say I'd got in while her back was turned. A phial of blood to bubble away? That might do the trick, eh? Or maybe not. You see, what I don't understand is how you, who make your living from believing every last jot and tittle of Faith, who believe that this confession is being listened to upstairs, that the Good Lord has the time or inclination to hear past the screams from the poor planet, find it so hard to believe a tiny piece of divine intervention on your own doorstep.'

'All right,' said Canon Dawson, 'let's say I do believe you. What then?'

'I have my own reasons for being here. But I'd have thought that the fact of my being here would be immensely consoling for any poor sheep who are having trouble with their shepherds.'

'Not you. You'd be a scandal.'

'For why?'

'If you don't know I can't tell you.'

'You mean the diaries? It's amazing how they come to be the only thing that some people remember. Did I or didn't I write them? Was I or wasn't I? Father, believe me, though I had my fair share of original sin and a few scarlet letters on my front when I dropped, my jottings were the least of it.'

‘Oh, you think so, do you?’

‘You’re not the first to think it, of course. The British government thought so. My prison guards too. I kept hearing that their distribution among friend and foe would do for me. Cardinal Bourne, when I asked to be received into the Church in the weeks before my execution, made it a condition that I wrote a letter apologizing for the scandals I had caused. I refused. Why should I apologize for something that was God-given? It would be like throwing a gift back in the Good Lord’s face. Even if you might never have chosen it for yourself – and don’t you find gifts are often like that? – manners are *de rigueur*. For I had caused no scandals. The British government it was who caused the scandal, distributing my private papers around the world like tongue sandwiches at a wake. And it worked too. You’ve swallowed it. I was made by my writing, then just as surely unmade by it.’

‘But you died a Catholic?’ said Canon Dawson, then, having asked the question, seeing that he was appearing to accept the invisible penitent’s viewpoint, frowned to himself, invisible in his dark box.

‘I did, but only *in articulo mortis* on the eve of the execution. They kept me on tenterhooks to the very end all right.’

‘You know a lot about your subject, I’ll grant you that,’ said Canon Dawson.

‘O ye of little faith,’ Roddie replied. ‘I’m not going to stay here any longer to beat my head against a brick wall. It will all come out anyway. I had hoped you might like to be the ones who passed on some good news for a change. I thought that was what you were about.’

Canon Dawson saw the light go off, heard the door whoosh closed. He got up quickly and threw open the door on his side of the confessional. He looked about him, but the church was empty.

PETER COUGHLIN TOOK HIS CAP OFF TO SALUTE THE STATUE OF ROGER Casement as he passed it on his way to Brennan's Bar that night. He stopped for a moment, admiring the dark silhouette of the life-size figure, the feet planted a foot apart, his back to the night ocean and the great world, gazing – handcuffed – over Irish horizons.

'A fine figure of a man, you were! God bless you!' said Peter Coughlin. Then he put his cap back on his head, and stepped over to the pub.

Peter was not prepared for the crowd of people in the bar. Brennan and his wife were beside themselves trying to keep ahead of the orders. Peter looked around, searching for people he knew. But if there were any regulars there they were hidden from him by the crowd of strangers, men mostly, laughing and drinking. A group had taken the side of the bar he had always considered to be his own. The television, instead of being tuned to the satellite channel and the big match from Sao Paolo, was showing Radio Telefis Eirann, the sound turned off.

'The usual, Peter?' Brennan asked.

Peter nodded. Brennan pulled his pint without another word, took his money and went off to serve some customers at the far end of the bar.

Peter Coughlin stood, a stranger in his own home-from-home, and drank his pint.

A young man occupying his usual seat at the bar, said to his companions, 'We'll walk along the beach to Banna Strand and then cut inland into Ardfert. That way we can see if we can manage to get to all the places Sir Roger was.'

'It's a long way.'

'There's no point taking the car.'

Peter Coughlin approached the group. 'You're here because of Roger Casement?' he asked them.

They exchanged glances. 'We are,' said the man in his seat. 'We've driven all the way down from Dublin.'

'You and the whole world it looks like,' Peter said.

'We wouldn't miss it,' said the man in Peter Coughlin's seat. 'Isn't it a great thing to be happening?'

'It is. If it is, that is,' replied Peter.

'It's happening all right,' said his companion. 'I'm not a great one for miracles but this one is different. Too many things happening all together to be anything else.'

'It's bloody marvellous, that's what it is!'

'He was a great patriot,' said Peter.

The men looked at one another. 'He was,' said the man with the spiky haircut.

'Do you lads have any theories about why he's come back?'

Once again, the men looked at one another. 'Because,' continued Peter, stepping into the silence with both feet, 'I think he's back to expose the wicked lies spread about him by the English.'

'Ah,' said the older man, 'you do?'

'I do. What do you think?'

There was a hesitation, a long moment of diffidence, before the man with the spiky hair said, 'We don't think so.'

'Oh, you don't? What do you think?'

'We think,' the man replied, looking towards his friends to make confession easier, 'we think that Roger Casement has come back to show us that gay can be good.'

Peter Coughlin thought about that. 'So you're saying that Roger Casement was a homosexual, are you?'

'It's obvious,' said the older man. 'You only have to read a few pages of the diaries to know.'

'It takes one to know one,' said the man with the spiky hair.

'And he's back to bring consolation to homosexuals, is he?'

'Well, we could do with a bit. It's not been easy being despised and told you're damned all these years. It's about time somebody came back from heaven to say we're not. We know it. We feel it in our bones. But it's nice to have an informed second opinion.'

Peter Coughlin saw Brennan passing by. 'Did you hear that one, Brennan? These lads are saying that Roger Casement was homosexual!'

Brennan tried to shush Peter Coughlin but it was too late. The bar went quiet. 'If you believe that, you'll believe anything!' Peter said, smiling round the bar, oblivious, looking for support. 'The moon's made of Irish butter too. Did you know that?'

But there was little enough support for Peter Coughlin. Those who might have agreed with him had already seen how the land lay in the bar. A voice from the far end of the bar shouted, 'St Roger Casement was gay. I'm gay and I've never felt better.'

Another man, invisible to Peter Coughlin, said, 'If he hadn't been gay he'd probably have settled down in the Glens of Antrim and never done any of the good he did. He's my patron saint, so he is! I've given St Paul the heave-ho!'

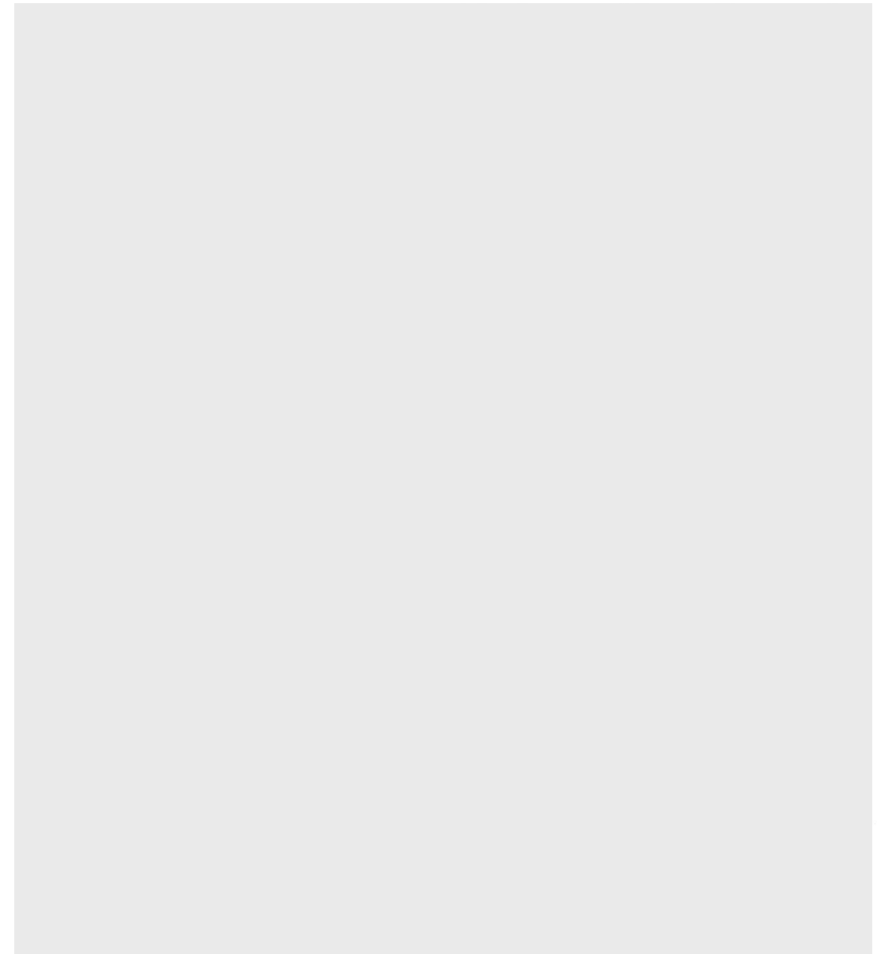
A cheer went up.

Peter Coughlin, seeing at last how the land lay and that it was giving way beneath both his feet, put his unfinished pint on the bar and left

the pub without another word. He heard a cheer as the door banged shut.

The silhouette of the Roger Casement statue loomed across the street. Peter approached it, stood beneath the plinth for a moment, wondering where to go. His cap stayed firmly on his head. He had not frequented any other bar in Ballyheige for years. Not knowing what to do, what to think, he walked off home forlorn.

The following morning the people of Ballyheige awoke to find the statue of Roger Casement bedecked with flowers. Bunches of daffodils and tulips lay around the plinth. On his head had been set a plaited crown of early bluebells and late primroses.



Definitions¹

Page 138

Canon (n.): a Christian priest who works in a cathedral

to dwindle (v.): to gradually become smaller

prie-dieu (n.): a kneeling bench designed for use by a person at prayer and fitted with a raised shelf on which the elbows or a book may be rested

grille (n.): a metal frame with bars running across it that is used to cover or protect something

to fox (v.): to trick or fool someone

curate (n.): a member of the clergy in certain churches who assists the priest in charge of a church or a group of churches

mockery (n.): behavior or speech that makes fun of someone or something in a hurtful way

Roddie: Roger Casement's nickname in this novel

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to preclude (v.): to make something impossible, to prevent something from happening

limbo (n.): an uncertain or undecided state or condition; in the Roman Catholic religion also a place where the souls of people who have not been baptized go after death

uphill (adj.): against difficulties

spring (n.): a source of water coming up from the ground

phial (n.): a small closed or closable vessel especially for liquids

every last jot and tittle (idiom): the very smallest details²

inclination (n.): a feeling of wanting to do something

to console (v.): to try to make someone feel less sadness or disappointment

jottings (n.): notes that are written down quickly

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de rigueur (adv/adj.): prescribed or required by fashion, etiquette, or custom (French)

wake (n.): a time before a dead person is buried when people gather to remember the person who has died and often to view the body

penitent (n.): a person who is sorry for doing something wrong and asks for forgiveness

in articulo mortis (adv.): at the point of death (Latin)

on tenterhooks: in a state of nervousness or excitement caused by wondering what will happen

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to expose (v.): to reveal something

wicked (adj.): morally bad

hesitation (n.): an act or instant of hesitating (to stop briefly before you do something especially because you are nervous or unsure about what to do)

diffidence (n.): the quality or state of being unassertive or diffident (lacking confidence)

obvious (adj.): easy to see or notice

consolation (n.): something that makes a person feel less sadness or disappointment

to despise (v.): to dislike something or someone very much

to shush (v.): to tell someone to be quiet

oblivious (adj.): not conscious or aware of someone or something

heave-ho (n.): the act of causing someone to leave a job, place, or relationship

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to loom (v.): to appear in a large, strange, or frightening form often in a sudden way

plinth (n.): a block of stone or wood that is used as the base for a pillar or statue

forlorn (adj.): sad and lonely

daffodils (n.): a yellow flower that blooms in the spring and that has a center that is shaped like a long tube

to plait (v.): to twist together three pieces of hair (or rope, etc.) to make a braid

bluebells (n.): a plant with blue flowers that are shaped like bells

¹ Unless stated otherwise, all definitions have been taken and/or adapted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (*Merriam-Webster*, 2021, www.merriam-webster.com) or the Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary (*Merriam-Webster*, 2021, www.learnersdictionary.com).

² «jot and tittle.» Farlex Dictionary of Idioms. *The Free Dictionary by Farlex*, 2015, idioms.thefreedictionary.com/jot+and+tittle. Accessed 20 November 2021.

Devlin, Martina. „No Other Place.“ 2016. Truth & Dare: Short Stories about Women Who Shaped Ireland. Dublin: Poolbeg, 2018. 129-141.

No Other Place

“White roses for this year’s bouquet, with ivy for remembrance. What do you say, Willie?”

Alice bends to sniff a rosebud, while a tabby cat weaves figures-of-eight between her ankles. She is slight — a breath of sudden wind could whirl her high above this overgrown garden.

“I know, Willie, I know. You want your milk. Just let me get these flowers gathered up.”

As she straightens, pain catches at her and she gasps, pressing the heels of both hands into her lower back. With an effort of will, she heaves her mind back to the flowers.

White roses for hope, she thinks. His hope and hers too. She must hold tight to hope. This roof over her head might be lost. The flow of words reduced to a trickle from her pen might vanish.

Even Willie might disappear — **tempted by a household with more titbits**. But hope she can carry on her back, like a **tortoise with its shell**. So long as she stays true to hope, it stays true to her.

She looks away from the garden, with its **jungle of foliage** towards the house — a Church of Ireland **rectory without a rector**. It's a **substantial building**, impressive enough in its time. But the **shabbiness of neglect undermines its claims**.

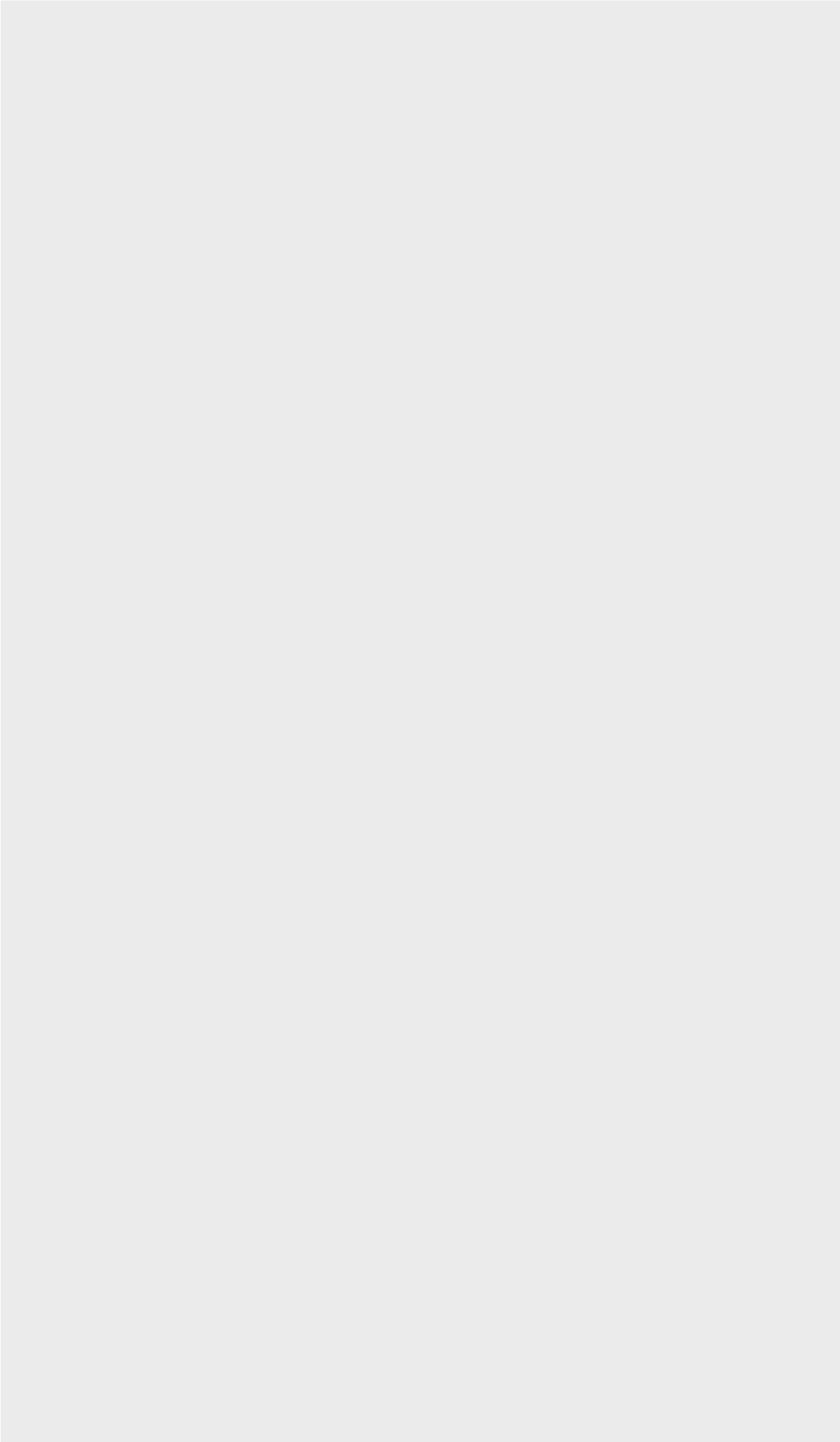
So many addresses over the years. Always on the move. Yet here she is, back where she started, near enough. She was born a handful of miles away and grew up in a house that sat fair and square beside a **crossroads**. How she wishes she was rooted by a crossroads again. A world of possibilities **beckoned at them**. Out here, the world keeps its distance: holding her at arm's length.

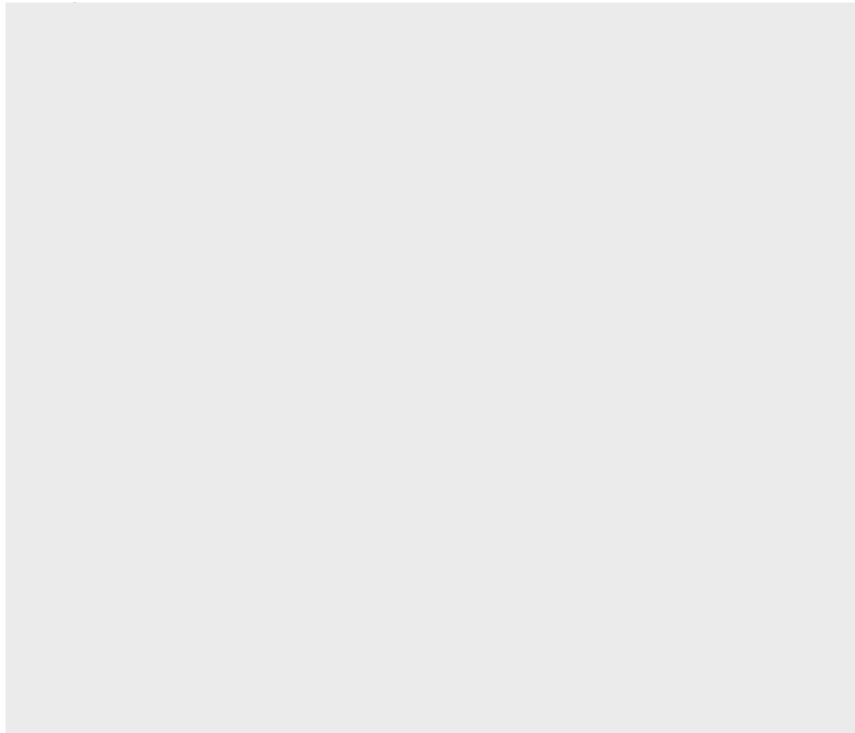
Alice turns back to the rosebush, one hand cupping a bloom. The **penetrating blue eyes examine it for imperfections** before she takes a pair of kitchen scissors from her cardigan pocket and **quillotines the stem**. With the whisper of promise, the rose lands on a **spill of ivy** in the basket at her feet, followed by eight of its sisters.

“Morning, Miss Milligan.” A police constable advances, his moustache as stately as the bicycle he is wheeling.

She hasn't heard him approach and **is peeved by this proof of her deafness**. However, she doesn't let it show. “Good morning, Norman. Isn't it a glorious summer's day?”

[Alice Milligan then invites Norman in for a cup of tea.]





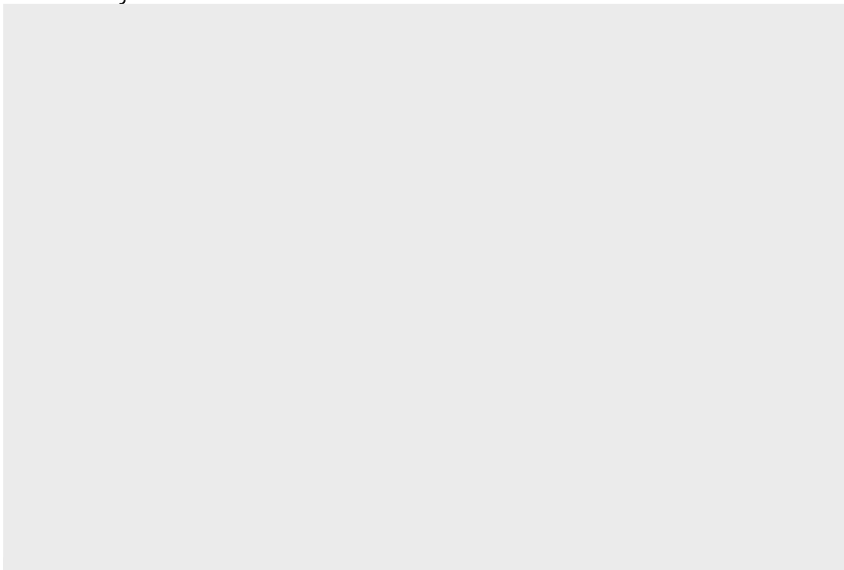
Tea leaves added, she returns the teapot now brimming with boiling water to the range. "I'll just put these roses in water while the tea draws." She opens a press and stretches on tiptoe for a Belleek china vase. Are the shelves getting higher or is she shrinking?

Too late, Norman realises he ought to have offered to hand it down to her. Not that she'd accept help from him or anyone else in a hurry – a headstrong one and no mistake. He watches her arrange the flowers, puzzled by the close attention she devotes to the job – placing them stem by stem, moving some an inch one way or another.

"You've green fingers, Miss Milligan. Them's fine roses." On a surge of emotion, he adds, "Like queens, they are, the way they hold up their wee heads." Mortified, he halts. It's only a jug of flowers when all's said and done.

She nods. "*And these I gathered at the dawn – Remembering you –*

Wet in the gleam of morning' ... the garden is gone horribly to seed. I haven't the time to see about it, with the house to keep straight too. But I've always loved flowers. When I was just starting out, and felt a new name was more appropriate, I chose a flower. Iris. Iris Olkryn."



If you don't mind me askin', why did you choose Iris, ma'am? For tae be a poetess an' that?"

"She was the Greek goddess of the rainbow. I can never see one without stopping to admire it."

"I can never see one wi'out wishin' for a pot o' gold!"

Her smile is polite. Wealth has never interested her, although freedom from this perpetual anxiety about paying bills would be a relief. "Iris was a messenger of the gods – she rode on a rainbow between heaven and earth. Like Iris, I used to travel about a fair bit myself, back in the day. I thought nothing of flitting from Belfast to Dublin or Cork. The railways were my chariot – I had the timetable memorised. My father was the same, he knew the times upside down and inside out. Happy days! Now, I hardly ever leave Mountfield. I count myself lucky if I get the length of Omagh."

"I'm a bike man meself. I love mine. God bless the Royal Ulster Constabulary and His Majesty the King for sunn'v' in' it."

"Hush, Norman, today's no day for blessing kings! If you only knew —" Repenting her sharp words, she stops abruptly.

Shock has immobilised his face.

Alice covers her mouth with the back of her hand, almost laughing aloud. The young are so quick to take offence.

He clatters to his feet, intending to leave. She's a Fenian to the core — just as the Sergeant said. The silver hair could fool a man if he didn't keep his wits about him. But she's betrayed her true colours.

"Don't go. Forgive me, I know you have your line of business to consider. You're Constable Gibson, as well as Norman, all grown-up now. Do, please, sit. Let's have that tea. Truly, I meant no offence. I spoke out of turn. Today's a sad day for me, you see. An anniversary."

Half against his will, he resumes his seat, although tempted to replace his cap in a show of authority. However, Norman's granny, who lives with the family, has impressed on him that only vahoos keep their heads covered indoors. She was in service in her youth and remains an authority on etiquette.

From the same press which housed the vase, china decorated with peacocks is produced.

The young policeman finds its near-transparent fragility as alarming as his hostess's anti-monarchy sentiments. "A beaker's good enough for me, ma'am. I wud'n want tae break one o' them delicate wee boys."

"They're sturdier than they look, Norman. I'm afraid there's only bread and butter to go with your tea. No jam."

"Ach, a cup in the hand is all I want, Miss Milligan."

She pours the strong tea and sets it in front of him, along with a jug of milk and a bowl of sugar. He serves himself only one spoon of sugar, although his preference is for three. Everybody in Mountfield and beyond knows how she's fixed. Poor as a church

mouse, for all her highfalutin ways. Meanwhile, she takes a breadknife to the loaf, butters the slices and lays them overlapping on a plate, devoting as much attention to their arrangement as to her floral display.

"I've noticed ladies is powerful fond o' flowers," he offers, between mouthfuls. "Me ma grows away at them. Though me da says there's no eatin' in a dahlia. A head o' cabbage wud be more tae the good."

Alice sits opposite, her tea untouched. "Flowers serve many purposes, Norman. I like to cut them as an act of remembrance, to keep faith with those who've gone ahead. I make what you might call a ceremony of it."

"Oh aye, you mentioned an anniversary earlier. I'm sorry for your loss. A relative, I take it?"

"The bond was comradeship, not family ties. But a loss, undeniably. This bouquet" — she indicates the roses and ivy — "marks the death of a fine man. An honorable man. I was privileged to know him."

Norman relaxes, at ease now. A spinster mourning a lost love — sure they're ten-a-penny since the war twenty-odd years back.

She realises how he is interpreting the flowers but doesn't correct him. People prefer to elevate romantic love above loyalty, fellowship and a common cause. Let the boy make his assumptions.

"Is he long dead?"

She frowns at the freckled hands on her lap. Involuntarily, their fingers reach out and interlace, one hand seeking comfort from the other. But her voice is steady. "They killed him twenty-three years ago today. It happened in London. I was there. On the pavement outside. Waiting. With other women from our circle who believed in him. When the bell tolled that morning to say it was done, the crowd bellowed its approval. Not words — just a thunderous roar. Of victory, I suppose. The power of might. I can hear it chiming still." She shudders. "I felt as if the human heart was beyond all understanding, that day. To cheer at another

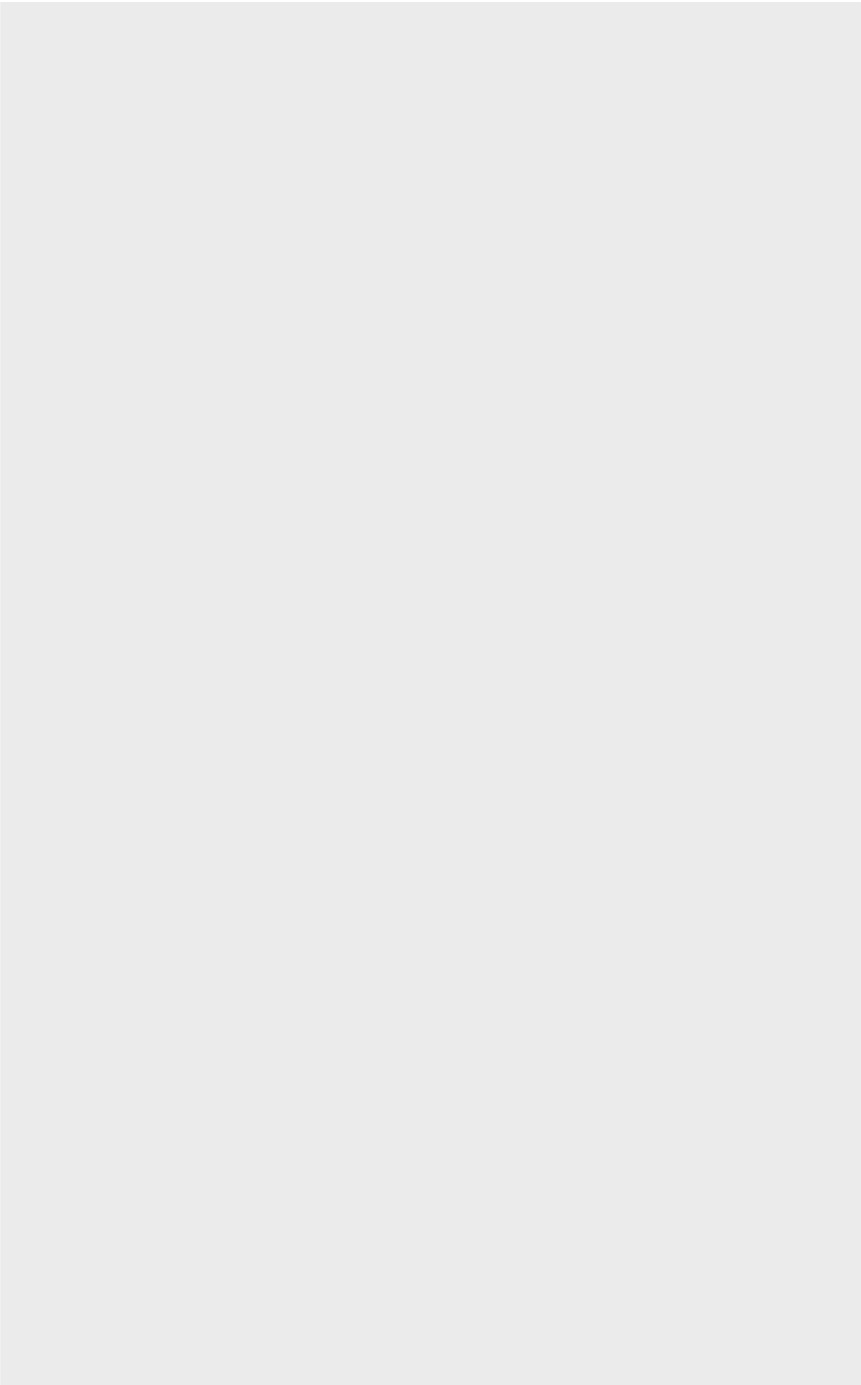
person's death – it left me hardly able to put one foot in front of the other to leave that place. I tried telling myself his ordeal was over: he was at peace, finally. But it took me a long, long time to find any peace, myself. Those were wild times. Frightening. They ran out of control.” A clock ticks and she gives her head a quick shake. “Yet I never felt more alive than I did back then. They were exciting times too, you see. Dense with dreams. Overflowing with possibilities.” Unexpectedly, she smiles. “I always gather flowers on the third of August. In honour of him. And the dreams and possibilities we shared.”

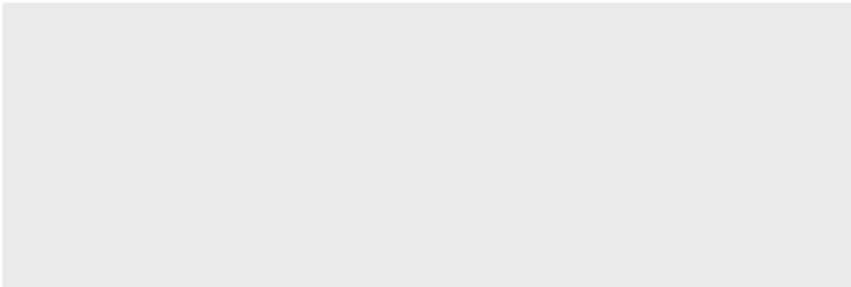
Norman scrapes a tea leaf off his lower lip. He supposes the old lady must be talking about one of her rebels. Hanged or shot for disloyalty – and good riddance to bad rubbish. Which one of those traitors she's commemorating, he doesn't know and doesn't want to know. They were a nest of vipers, trying to murder away the link with Britain. Wasn't the British Empire the last word in magnificence? Envied by other countries with niddling wee empires? It was a privilege to be born British. Those renegades were rotten to the core – they were better off dead.

He's not prepared to listen to any more of this rebel nonsense. His granny always says he should make allowances for her and his ma backs her up. But he's had enough of Alice Milligan. There's no excuse for it, with her from good Protestant stock. Not even a papist who knows no better.

Seizing his cap, he pushes back his chair from the table. “Thankin' you for the hot drop, ma'am. I'd best be on me way.”

She pays no attention, engrossed in her own train of thought. “Sure he's dead now, Alice, for better or for worse.” That's what her brother used to say about her shrines, as he called them. “Is he?” she'd answer him back. “I wouldn't be so certain. There's an alchemy that sparks between memory, belief and imagination – in that space, he's alive. He always will be.”





She doesn't live in the real world, thinks Norman, sliding away.

As though the ghost of that judgement filters through, she lets fly a neal of laughter, clapping her hands together. Cheerful again, she carries the flowers into a drawing room impregnated with accumulated years' worth of turf smoke. A framed pencil sketch of a bearded man stands on a handsome marble mantelpiece, once white but somewhat yellowed by age, and she places the vase next to him.

"God bless you, 'verray parfit, gentil knight'. You waved me into a seat beside you in the Ulster Hall the day the news broke about your knighthood. I was late for the meeting, delayed by a thunderstorm. You wouldn't go up onto the platform for fear they'd announce it. I thought you altered-looking — strained, weakened. And no wonder. You were just back from the Putumayo. Even so, you insisted on putting yourself out for people. Always first on your feet to offer your chair when a lady needed one. And you'd take no end of trouble checking train times for delegates to our conferences. I could never get permission to visit you in prison. Another Alice had that privilege. But you waved at me in the courtroom and sent your counsel over with a message. 'Write a poem about this, Alice,' you said. I suppose you meant it as a joke. But I took you at your word."

Head bowed, she leans against the mantelpiece. Through the years she wrote and wrote and wrote. Verse, stories, drama, journalism. Did any of it make a jot of difference? His words lit a flame. But hers? Did anyone hear her? Or was she just talking to herself? Perhaps it's irrelevant if they listen or not, she thinks —

maybe what matters is the act of writing.

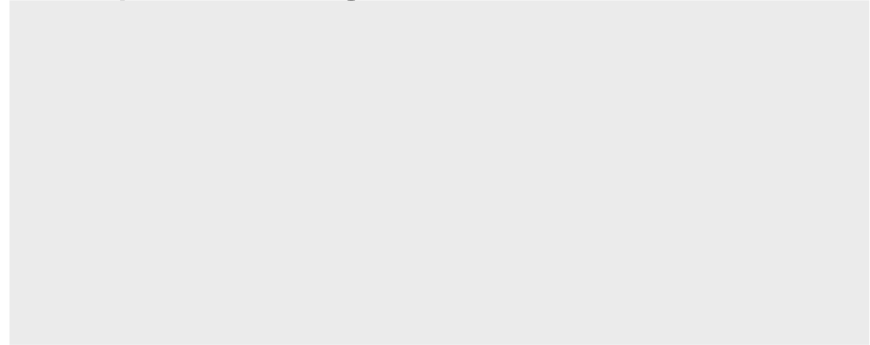
Returning to the kitchen, she pours her cold tea down the sink and refills the cup from the pot. The cat has had the last of the milk. She'll have to take it black. A sip to brace herself. From her waistband she retrieves the dreaded envelope delivered by Norman Gibson. Two stamps on the top right-hand corner, one for a penny and the other a ha'penny. She looks at George VI's profile. The bicycle-provider, she thinks. Among other roles. A figurehead, of course. Kings reign, they don't rule. Bicycles are supplied only in their name.

He's her fifth monarch, imagine! None of whose rule she accepts. But whether she assents to them or not, each one has been a reality. Victoria, then Edward VII, followed by George V, succeeded by the short reign of Edward VIII, who abdicated for the love of Mrs Simpson. Such a burden for Mrs Simpson. And now this George, his brother, reigns in his place. Which tells her that kings and queens endure

As she must.

Fancy! She has something in common with those British kings and queens. They persevere and so does she.

To give up is not in her nature. Here she was born and here she'll stay in this territory they say is theirs. And, after all, they have the crowns on postboxes and policemen's uniforms to support their case. But by living here she's planting a counter-claim. *Planting*. She half-smiles at that. A word with more than one meaning in this northern pocket of Ireland.



Definitions¹

Page 129

slight (adj.): thin and not very strong or muscular

to whirl (v.): to move or go in a circle or curve

to gather (v.): to choose and collect things

trickle (n.): a slow, thin flow

to vanish (v.): to disappear entirely without a clear explanation, to stop existing

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to tempt (v.): to cause someone to do or want to do something even though it may be wrong, bad, or unwise

titbits (n.): a small piece of food

tortoise (n.): a kind of turtle that lives on land

foliage (n.): the leaves of plants

rectory (n.): the house where the rector of a Christian church lives

rector (n.): a priest or minister who is in charge of a church or parish

substantial (adj.): strongly made

shabbiness (n.): the quality of being in poor condition especially because of age or use

neglect (n.): the condition of not being taken care of

to undermine (v.): to make someone or something weaker or less effective usually in a secret or gradual way

claim (n.): a right to have something

crossroads (n.): a place where two or more roads cross

to beckon (v.): to appear attractive or inviting

to penetrate (v.): to see or show the way through something

to examine (v.): to test or look carefully at (something or someone) for signs of illness or injury

to guillotine (v.): to cut off the head of someone or something by dropping a heavy blade on its neck

spill (n.): something spilled

peevish (adj.): angry or annoyed

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to brim (v.): to be completely filled with something

Belleek (trademark): a very thin translucent porcelain with a lustrous pearly glaze produced in Ireland

china (n.): plates, bowls, cups, etc., that are made of china (a hard white material that is made of baked clay)

to devote (v.): to decide that something will be used for a special purpose

surge (n.): a sudden, large increase

to mortify (v.): to cause (someone) to feel very embarrassed and foolish

jug (n.): a large, deep container with a narrow opening and a handle

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go to seed (v.): to produce seed; to become less attractive, effective, etc., because of age or lack of care

pen name (n.): a name used by a writer instead of the writer's real name

tae: to (dialect)

poetess (n.): a girl or woman who writes poems

perpetual (adj.): continuing forever or for a very long time without stopping

to flit (v.): to move or fly quickly from one place or thing to another

chariot (n.): a carriage with two wheels that was pulled by horses and was raced and used in battle in ancient times

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to supply (v.): to make something available to be used, to provide someone or something with something that is needed or wanted

to repent (v.): to feel or show that you are sorry for something bad or wrong that you did and that you want to do what is right

to immobilise (v.): to keep something or someone from moving or working

Fenian (n.): a member of a secret 19th century Irish and Irish-American organization dedicated to the overthrow of British rule in Ireland

out of turn (adv.): at a wrong time or place and usually imprudently

to resume (v.): to take a seat, place or position again

to impress (v.): to put something in someone's mind

yahoo (n.): a person who is very rude, loud, or stupid

¹ Unless stated otherwise, all definitions have been taken and/or adapted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (*Merriam-Webster*, 2021, www.merriam-webster.com) or the Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary (*Merriam-Webster*, 2021, www.learnersdictionary.com).

press (n.): a closet or cupboard
beaker (n.): a large drinking cup with a wide opening that is typically made of plastic or metal
wee (adj.): very small or very young
sturdy (adj.): strongly made

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highfalutin (adj.): seeming or trying to seem great or important
me ma: my mother
me da: my father
spinster (n.): an unmarried woman who is past the usual age for marrying and is considered unlikely to marry — now often considered an insulting word
to elevate (v.): to raise someone or something to a higher rank or level
common cause (n.): a shared goal
assumption (n.): something that is believed to be true or probably true but that is not known to be true
to interlace (v.): to join things together by crossing them over and under each other
pavement (n.): the sidewalk
to toll (v.): to ring slowly
to bellow (v.): to make a deep, loud sound
to chime (v.): to make the sound of a ringing bell

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ordeal (n.): an experience that is very unpleasant or difficult
to scrape (v.): to remove something from a surface by rubbing an object or tool against it
good riddance (n.): an expression that is used to say that you are glad that someone is leaving or that something has gone
piddling (adj.): small or unimportant
renegades (n.): a person who leaves one group, religion, etc., and joins another that opposes it, someone or something that causes trouble and cannot be controlled
allowance (n.): an amount that is regarded as acceptable or desirable
stock (n.): the country or group of people that a person comes from

papist (n.): a Roman Catholic, usually used disparagingly (to belittle the person)
to engross (v.): to hold the complete interest or attention of someone
alchemy (n.): a power or process that changes or transforms something in a mysterious or impressive way

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peal (n.): a loud sound or series of sounds
turf (n.): a dark material made of decaying plants that is burned for heat or added to garden soil (Irish English for “peat”)
mantelpiece (n.): the shelf above a fireplace and the decorative pieces on the sides of the fireplace
a veray, parfit, gentil knight: a quote from the “The Canterbury Tales” by the famous 14th-Century English poet Geoffrey Chaucer. It roughly translates to “a true, perfect, noble knight.”²
to strain (v.): to put a lot of physical or mental effort into doing something
delegate (n.): a person who is chosen or elected to vote or act for others, a representative

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To brace oneself (v.): to prepare oneself for something
Ha’penny: a half penny
To endure (v.): to continue to exist in the same state or condition
To persevere (v.): to continue doing something or trying to do something even though it is difficult

² “Meaning of ‘he was a veray parfit gentil knight?’” *Chaucer’s Tales and Works*, posted by Jk, 31 March 2011, chaucertales.blogspot.com/2011/03/meaning-of-he-was-veray-parfit-gentil.html. Accessed 20 November 2021.

The Butterfly Collector

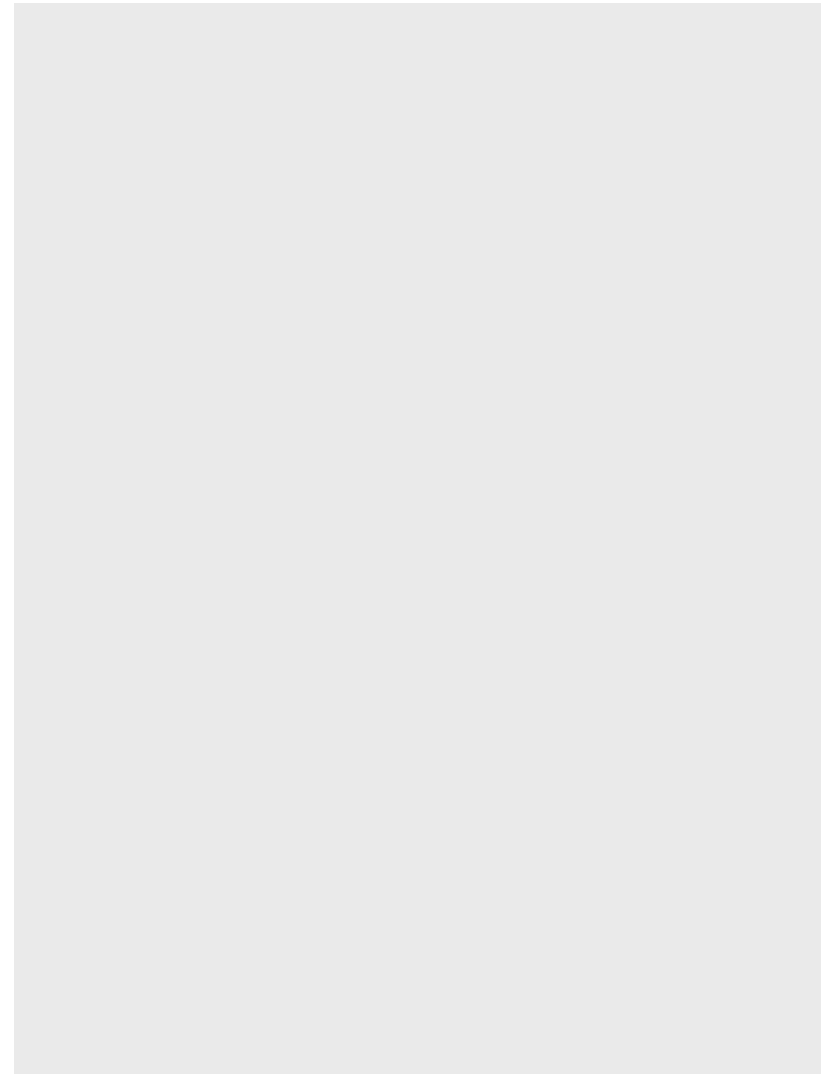
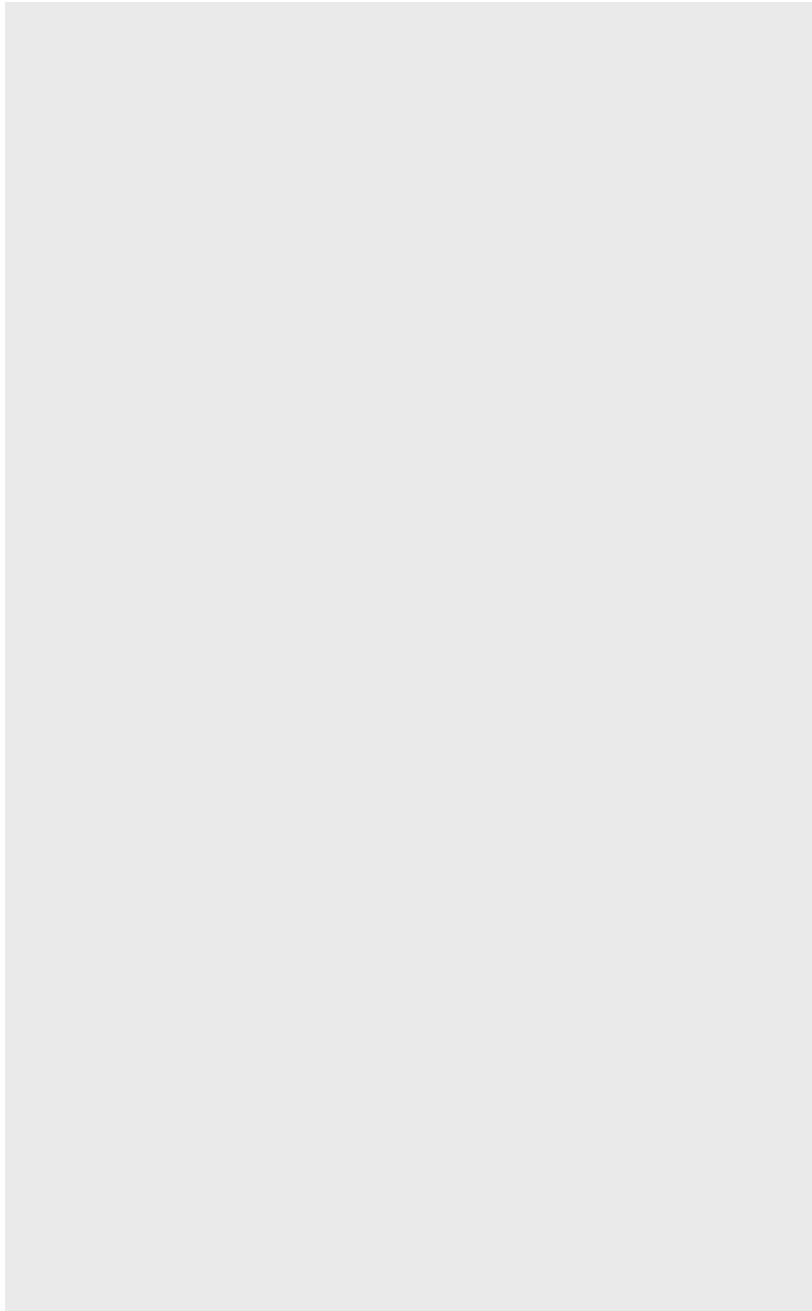
Afterwards I ate a sandwich in St. Stephen's Green and tried to digest the museum. The green was as mild and civilized a place as a park can be, all gracefully massed shrubbery and close-cropped lawns and tranquil waters. This place too had a violent, unimaginable history, most recently as a center for the insurgents in the Easter Rising of 1916, with the troops commanded by Countess Markievicz. She was sentenced to die for her part in the uprising, was pardoned, and became the first woman elected to the English House of Commons, though she was in jail again when she was elected. The poet James Stephens describes how on Easter Monday 1916, he came out from a quiet morning at his desk in the National Gallery to find small groups of people standing about the streets. "These people were regarding steadfastly in the direction of St. Stephen's Green Park, and they spoke occasionally to one another with that detached confidence which proved they were mutually unknown." Finally a man with a red moustache "stared at me as at a person from a different country" and explained: "The Sinn Feiners have seized the city this morning . . . They seized the city at eleven o'clock this morning. The green there is full of them. They have captured the Castle. They have taken the Post Office."

"My God!" said I, staring at him, and instantly I turned and went running towards the Green.

"In a few seconds I banished astonishment and began to walk. As I drew near the Green rifle fire began like sharply cracking whips. It was from the further side. I saw that the gates

were closed and men were standing inside with guns on their shoulders . . . In the center of this side of the Park a rough barricade of carts and motor cars had been stretched. It was still full of gaps. Behind it was a halted tram, and along the vistas of the Green one saw other trams derelict, untenanted." Easter Monday had been set aside for leisure by everyone but the small army of rebels: Stephens was teaching himself to read music.

While I ate my sandwich of egg and marvelous bread in St. Stephen's, flocks of chickens and the usual ducks of city parks hunted for crumbs along the banks of the pond. People sat in the weak sun or strolled, themselves so mild and civil it was as hard to imagine them kin to the tough fighters of the time as to picture the lush trees and lawns of this park interspersed with barricades and desperados, punctuated by gunfire. I had found something else in the Natural History Museum I had been looking for outside. I'd come to Ireland fascinated and impressed by Roger Casement, who had been instrumental in the Easter Rising and who was hanged for treason a few months later. He was among the most thoughtful of Ireland's heroes, and so complex a character that I was foolish to expect some bronze or marble tribute to him in the streets. Instead I found what seems to be his only monument, in a glass case on the ground floor of the museum, protected from light by a soft imitation-leather cover, so the case had to be opened like a book. In this case, at the beginning of a row of similar covered insect cases, was a huge tropical butterfly all alone, surrounded by poetry on the subject of butterflies. With its deep orange wings bordered in black, a white spot at their upper ends, and a pin through its heart, it hardly looked the worse for age. "A South American butterfly collected for the Natural History Museum by Sir Roger Casement circa 1911," read the inscription on this frail monument.



The Putumayo, where Casement caught the butterfly I came across in the Natural History Museum, was essentially a rerun of the Congo, though the results of his Putumayo report weren't as dramatic. Like the Congo, it was a rubber-tapping region turned into a private slave-labor camp. His 1910 journal of the expedition is an odd mix of subjects jotted down casually.

“September 30th . . . the new method of torture being to hold them under water while they wash the rubber, to terrify them! Also floggings and putting in guns and flogging with machetes across the back . . . then sent for Francisco and will interrogate later tonight. I bathed in the river, delightful, and Andokes came down and caught butterflies for Barnes and I. Then a Capitan embraced us laying his head against our breasts, I never saw so touching a thing, poor soul, he felt we were their friends. Gielgud must be told to stop calling me Casement, it is infernal cheek. Not well. No dinner.” On October 6 he noted splendid Emperor butterflies, and on the next day, “magnificent display of butterflies; beats anything I’ve seen yet.” On October 27 he caught three butterflies on the road, and an expanded diary notes, “. . . to relieve our feelings we began an elaborate butterfly chase there & then on the sandy bank of the river. They were certainly magnificent specimens & the soil was aflame with glowing wings—black & yellow of extraordinary size—the glorious blue & white, and swarms of reddish orange, yellow-ochre gamboge & sulphur.”

One of his biographers says that the butterfly expeditions were a way to hear evidence out of reach of the overseers. The butterflies, the annoying traveling companions, unavoidable dinners with murderers, his own ailments, his many swims, his admiring looks at nearly nude natives: none of this is part of the official report. Like the other, it is a relentlessly detailed account of the varieties, locales, and inflictors of torture, the political information sifted out of all the range of his interest in the jungle. Like the Congo report, this one portrayed a brutality that was supposed to enforce an economic program of rubber harvesting, but was in fact eliminating its workforce—“I said to this man that under the actual regime I feared the entire Indian population would be gone in ten years, and he answered, ‘I give it six . . .’” Casement considered its horror surpassed anything he had seen in Africa.

Picture the enormous weight of Casement’s responsibility to his government, his conscience, the Putumayan people his

heart went out to all around him, the weight of suffering and death; picture the tropical leaves, the mud and the humid air, a world in which gravity must have pressed down like that of some vast, strange planet, and amidst it all the weightless airy rambles of the butterflies. Theodor Adorno once said that after Auschwitz there could be no poetry; should there be butterflies amidst atrocities? A perennial question for revolutionaries and activists is whether they should themselves enjoy the pleasant fruits they are trying to secure for others. Casement’s answer is affirmative: there should be sapphire and sulphur-colored butterflies to chase and rivers to swim in and journals to keep, for the interminable task of fighting for justice demands its moments of reprieve. When Adorno spoke, his generation imagined the holocaust inflicted upon Jews—and Gypsies, homosexuals, and dissidents, among others—as unique, having already forgotten. Cromwell in Ireland, the Turks in Armenia, and Casement’s reports and not foreseeing the Cambodias, Guatemalas and Rwandas that lay ahead. There were poets *in* Auschwitz, writers like Primo Levi, who could quote Dante inside the camps and who survived to write his own lyric, damning books. Casement’s butterflies seem to propose the complexity, the irreducibility of experience even at such terrible moments. When T. F. Meagher, a leader of Young Ireland’s 1848 revolt, thought of its momentary triumph afterward, in his exile, he found it impossible not to recall as well the hair of the women in the hilltop crowds of supporters, “disordered, drenched, and tangled, streaming in the roaring wind of voices.” Maybe butterflies and atrocities, like victories and streaming hair, are inseparable in memory and experience, however sifted out by reason.

Definitions¹

Page 38

shrubby (n.): a planting or growth of shrubs (a low woody plant)

insurgent (n.): a person who revolts against an established government

Sinn Feiner (n.): a person who is part of a movement based on the doctrines of Sinn Fein (a national Irish society founded about 1905)

to seize (v.): to possess or take by force

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derelict (adj.): abandoned, run-down

untenanted (adj.): not leased to or occupied from a tenant (someone who rents or leases a house, apartment, etc., from a landlord)

marvelous (adj.): of the highest quality, causing wonder

flock (n.): a group of animals assembled together

kin (n.): something or someone that is related

to intersperse (v.): to put something at different places among other things

desperado (n.): a violent criminal who is not afraid of getting hurt or being caught

looking the worse for age (idiom): being in a worse condition after doing or experiencing something

frail (adj.): easily broken or destroyed

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rerun (n.): an event that happens again

to jot down (v.): to write briefly or hurriedly

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to flog (v.): to beat or whip someone severely

infernal cheek: probably from *infernally cheeky*

infernally (adj./adv., *old-fashioned*): very bad or unpleasant

cheeky (adj.): rude and showing a lack of respect often in a way that seems playful or amusing

magnificent (adj.): very beautiful or impressive

to expand (v.): to increase in size, range, or amount

elaborate (adj.): made or done with great care or with much detail

specimen (n.): something (such as an animal or plant) collected as an example of a particular kind of thing

gamboge (n.): an orange to brown gum resin from southeast Asian trees

sulphur (n.): a yellow chemical element that has a strong, unpleasant odor

unavoidable (adj.): not able to be prevented or avoided

ailment (n.): a sickness or illness

relentlessly (adv.): continuing without becoming weaker or less severe

inflicter (n.): a person who causes others to experience something unpleasant

to sift (v.): to go through something very carefully in order to find something useful or valuable

to harvest (v.): to gather a crop (a plant that is grown by farmers)

to surpass (v.): to be better or greater than someone or something

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perennial (adj.): existing or continuing in the same way for a long time

affirmative (adj.): saying or showing that the answer is “yes” rather than “no”

interminable (adj.): having or seeming to have no end, continuing for a very long time

reprieve (n.): a period of relief from pain or trouble

dissident (n.): someone who strongly and publicly disagrees with and criticizes the government

to damn (v.): to say or think bad things about someone or something, to strongly criticize someone or something

irreducibility (n.): the quality of something not able to be made smaller or simpler

to recall (n.): to remember something from the past

to drench (v.): to make someone or something completely wet

¹ All definitions have been taken and/or adapted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2021, www.merriam-webster.com) or the Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2021, www.learnersdictionary.com).

Cover Sheet Task #3

Ghostly interpretations

Learning aims:	The students can apply the concept of ghostliness in literature. Drawing on their findings from the reading comprehension exercise in task #2, the students are able to recognize figurative meanings in a text.
Short description:	After having read and of a literary text of their choice in #2, the students now form groups and interpret their text from a ghostly perspective with the aid of two guiding questions.
Prerequisites:	Students must have completed task #2 before starting this task. Ideally, they have also completed task #1 already.
Required material:	Handout for students (Material from task #2)
Main type of student activity/output:	Language production; (reading comprehension)
Key skills involved:	Speaking
Primary texts Referenced:	<p>A. Carson, Michael. <i>The Knight of the Flaming Heart</i>. Doubleday, 1995.</p> <p>B. Devlin, Martina. "No Other Place." 2016. <i>Truth & Dare: Short Stories about Women who Shaped Ireland</i>. Poolbeg, 2018. 129-141.</p> <p>C. Solnit, Rebecca. "The Butterfly Collector." 1997. <i>A Book of Migrations: Some Passages in Ireland</i>. Revised paperback edition. Verso, 2011. 38-60.</p>

Further reading

McDiarmid, Lucy. "Secular Relics: Casement's Boat, Casement's Dish." *Textual Practice* vol. 16, no. 2, 2002. 277–302.

→ This text introduces the notion of a secular relic, which provide be helpful background knowledge for the teacher in the discussion and interpretation of Rebecca Solnit's "The Butterfly Collector." Note that the "Afterlife" section also contains a teaching unit on Casement's bones and secular relics. Task a) deals with McDiarmid's text, specifically.

Task #3: Ghostly interpretations

1. Form a group with at least one other student who has read the same text as you (A, B, or C) for task #2. Together, discuss the following questions:

- ◆ Describe the type of ghostly presence that Roger Casement has in your text. How is he present despite his absence (death)?
- ◆ What elements from Roger Casement's life are relevant for the way he is being remembered?

→ Possible answers:

A) *The Knight of the Flaming Heart* by Michael Carson

- ◆ Describe the type of ghostly presence that Roger Casement has in your text. How is he present despite his absence (death)? → Casement appears as a physical manifestation of his spirit in this novel. However, even in the scenes in which his ghost does not appear, the *idea* of his ghost remains central, haunting every conversation and every space.
- ◆ What elements from Roger Casement's life are relevant for the way he is being remembered? → The "Black Diaries" and his rumored homosexuality are central in this novel. They determine what different groups of characters think about him: the young gay men like and praise him, the older, more conservative locals are shocked, and the Church officials try to deny and hide Casement's apparition because his sexuality makes him an undesirable saint.

B) "No Other Place" by Martina Devlin

- ◆ Describe the type of ghostly presence that Roger Casement has in your text. How is he present despite his absence (death)? → The story takes place on the anniversary of Casement's death (August 3rd). Though he is not physically there, he assumes an invisible, threatening presence in the room, dividing Milligan and the policeman, and thoroughly poisoning the atmosphere. To Alice Milligan, Casement becomes a symbol of her ongoing identification with the cause of Irish Nationalism. To the policeman Norman, on the other hand, he represents the enemy, the side he dislikes and opposes strongly. The memory or ghost of Casement alone is powerful enough to affect both characters strongly.
- ◆ What elements from Roger Casement's life are relevant for the way he is being remembered? → his support for the cause of Irish Nationalism, his execution by the English Government

C) "The Butterfly Collector" by Rebecca Solnit

- ◆ Describe the type of ghostly presence that Roger Casement has in your text. How is he present despite his absence (death)? → Firstly, the text revives Roger Casement by reprinting his diary entries. In this way, his voices can be heard again. Secondly, starting off with the very butterflies that Roger Casement caught, killed, collected, and brought back from his expeditions¹, and then following the butterflies to Auschwitz and into more abstract, philosophical terrain, the text strongly connects Casements to butterflies. Thus, by close association (metonymy), the butterflies and Casement become one, and haunt the different spaces of the text together.
- ◆ What elements from Roger Casement's life are relevant for the way he is being remembered? → His hobby of butterfly collecting; his expeditions to the Congo Free State and the Putumayo, where he documented the atrocities committed by the respective colonial administrations; his political activism.

¹ The butterflies Casement collected could be considered a "secular relic" (see McDiarmid). The "Afterlife" section also contains a teaching unit on Casement's bones and secular relics. Task a) deals with the McDiarmid text, specifically.

Task #3: Ghostly interpretations

1. Form a group with at least one other student who has read the same text as you (A, B, or C) for task #2. Together, discuss the following questions:

- ◆ Describe the type of ghostly presence that Roger Casement has in your text. How is he present despite his absence (death)?
- ◆ What elements from Roger Casement's life are relevant for the way he is being remembered?

Cover Sheet Task #4

Exchange

Learning aims:	The students can abstract the main ideas from a text they have previously read, analyzed, and interpreted. They can present these ideas to their peers. The students are able to compare and contrast three different literary texts in terms of their depiction of Roger Casement as a ghost(ly presence).
Short description:	After having interpreted the primary text in a group of students who read the same text in task #3, the students now form groups of three. Each student should have read a different text, so that experts on each text are present in each group. The students now take turns introducing their text to their peers. The group then discusses the similarities and differences.
Prerequisites:	Students must have completed tasks #2 and #3 before starting this task. Ideally, they have also completed task #1 already.
Required material:	Handout for students (Materials from task #2 and #3)
Main type of student activity/output:	Speaking
Key skills involved:	Language production
Primary texts Referenced:	A. Carson, Michael. <i>The Knight of the Flaming Heart</i> . Doubleday, 1995. B. Devlin, Martina. "No Other Place." 2016. <i>Truth & Dare: Short Stories about Women who Shaped Ireland</i> . Poolbeg, 2018. 129-141. C. Solnit, Rebecca. "The Butterfly Collector." 1997. <i>A Book of Migrations: Some Passages in Ireland</i> . Revised paperback edition. Verso, 2011. 38-60.

Task #4: Exchange

1. Form a group with two other students – each student should have read a different text (A, B, or C).

2. Each student introduces their text to the rest of the group. Make sure these aspects are covered in your introduction:

- ◆ What, in a nutshell, is the text about? What happens?
- ◆ Which characters or voices make an appearance?
- ◆ How would you describe the ghostly presence of Roger Casement?

3. Together, the group discusses the following questions:

- ◆ What are the similarities between the three texts concerning the ghostly appearance of Roger Casement? → **Possible answers:**
 - ◆ In *The Knight of the Flaming Heart* and “No Other Place,” the ghost of Roger Casement has a powerful effect on the other characters and the situation. Regardless of whether or not he is actually in the room (*The Knight of the Flaming Heart*) or even mentioned explicitly (“No Other Place”), his memory alone changes the situation: his ghost has a certain type of agency in the world of the story.
 - ◆ In all texts, his ghost is connected to and figuratively associated with a place or thing: the butterflies in “The Butterfly Collector;” the place of Tralee itself (where he was arrested in 1916) and a statue commemorating him in *The Knight of the Flaming Heart*; the flower bouquet and a portrait in “No Other Place.”
 - ◆ In all texts, Roger Casement’s voice is channeled: the character “Roddie” speaks for him in *The Knight of the Flaming Heart*, we can read his diary entries in “The Butterfly Collector,” and Alice Milligan remembers what he told her when she last saw him before his execution in “No Other Place.”
- ◆ What are the differences? → **Possible answers:**
 - ◆ The characters and settings are different in each text.
 - ◆ Each text has a different genre: novel, short story, essay.
 - ◆ Different aspects of Roger Casement’s life are central (Irish Nationalism in “No Other Place,” the expeditions to the Congo Free State and the Putumayo in “The Butterfly Collector,” the black diary debate in *The Knight of the Flaming Heart*)
 - ◆ In *The Knight of the Flaming Heart*, the ghost of Roger Casement actually appears in the flesh in the world of the story. In the other texts, he is ‘merely’ present as a memory, an invisible haunting.

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- ◆ Which characters or voices make an appearance?
- ◆ How would you describe the ghostly presence of Roger Casement?

3. Together, the group discusses the following questions:

- ◆ What are the similarities between the three texts concerning the ghostly appearance of Roger Casement?
- ◆ What are the differences?

Cover Sheet Task #5

Roger Casement's ghost writer (Creative Writing Task)

Learning aims:	The students are able to compose a short text assuming the perspective of (the ghost of) Roger Casement. The students can write a text that demonstrates how they would intervene in the ongoing debate about how Roger Casement is being remembered.
Short description:	Imagining that the ghost of Roger Casement returns today to haunt us one last time, the students channel his voice and write a social media post for him. They have the option to attach a picture, too.
Prerequisites:	Ideally, this is the last task that students complete (after tasks #1 – #4). However, this task can also be done independently.
Required material:	Handout for students <i>Please note that there is no separate teacher's version of the handout for this task.</i>
Main type of student activity/output:	Writing
Key skills involved:	Language production
Primary texts Referenced:	-

Task #5: Roger Casement's ghost writer

Imagine the ghost of Roger Casement has come back from the grave... *today*. He has one last message to share with the world. In order to reach as many people as possible, he decides to use the typical mode of communication of our time: a popular social media platform on the internet.

Channeling his voice, ghost-write his (first and) last social media post for Roger Casement (max. 250 words). What does he want to share with the world? Is there a rumor he wants to end, a secret he wants to reveal? Does he have advice, or a warning for us? Would he like us to finally leave his ghost alone? Are there questions he'd like to raise? It is up to you.

Optional: In typical internet fashion, you may also want to attach an image to your post. This could be a picture, drawing or painting you found on the internet or created yourself, or even a meme that Roger would like to use to emphasize his message.