

## **Leprosy Window, Culbone Church**

A slit in a wall where we stood in line  
and one by one took the sacrament  
in our enfeebled palms  
knowing our state was grievous  
and full of sin.

Priest, a shadow with a white hand,  
proffers bread and wine on a long spoon.  
Inside, a carol, almost in tune,  
outside, birds sing; sea sparkles;  
trees pierce the sky.

We follow this creed of love and grace  
hoping to heal limbs and face  
with a sliver melting between lips,  
wine a trickle from a reed's end,  
but our curse is ordained.

Our way home to the colony  
is marked by pitted drover paths,  
scars from charcoal burning,  
patches bleached by lime.  
A miner's adit spits poison  
over the copper-green glade  
where we belong in this place and time.

***Ian Enters***