

Butt Naked But Alive



Fifteen feet of a stump is all that's left. It used to be a 48-foot high oak tree; I can tell because the torso and the head are lying on the ground further down the slope, where they are engaged in the slow, sensual dance of ecological recycling - a dance that may last 20 years until the very last molecule has been gifted to a squirrel or a mountain lion or me.

Meanwhile, the stump is clinging tenaciously to the side of the hill; it is naked all down its front, with not even the semblance of bark. Somehow the western side has managed to retain its gnarled hide and this is enough to protect the hydraulics which are lifting water from the roots to two great bunches of young branches, some of which, even at this time of the year, are waving golden leaves at the morning sun.

The stump has the appearance of a naked woman in a housecoat, unbuttoned all the way down the front, but hugging her shoulders, back, buttocks and legs.

Even the dead parts of the stump are giving life; pale white fungi are sprinkled on the grey skin like fading tattoos. Patches of lichen are placed, like pubic hair, discreetly covering the secret places. And hosts of insects have turned her flesh into apartment buildings. A woodpecker has discovered these condos, and hammers insistently until somebody answers his knocking, only to be gobbled up. When nobody answers, he breaks down the grey doorway exposing a bright yellow interior.

The stump is a metaphor of Gaia, feeding us from her own semi-naked body; she is a metaphor of Jesus, feeding us from his own fully-naked, semi-dead body; she is a metaphor for Eucharist, feeding *us* in our semi-dead psyches.

Can we wake up? Can we wake up and become Gaia? Can we wake up and become Christ conscious?

Namasté,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seán". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Tír na nÓg
August, 2014