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Stanstead Airport

I met a woman in the boarding queue
from the other side of Tubbercurry.
I recognised her accent, she knew

my brother's wife, had been over to bury
a first cousin. We mocked the formality
of English funerals, old hymns and sherry,

freezers, top-hats, recalled the humanity
of our own late fathers' funeral rites,
the friends and neighbours, hospitality

of tea and sandwiches and cakes, late night
whiskey, tales of struggle and achievement,
how in the fifties her father brought light

and power along the mountainside, went
house to house with sockets, bulbs and cable.
How mine saved mountain turf, not content

until a winter's stock was stacked at our gable.
At Dublin I wished her a good trip west
and drove home, glad to be back but unable

to shake off a vague feeling of unrest.
Travelling always makes me feel like that,
as if I've returned from another failed quest.