

*Why Cows?  
Irish Landscape Art*

Because they sauntered into the dusk,  
black and white and tan,  
redefining green as they moved

across the juicy fields,  
patches shiny as patent,  
rich as cream sherry.

Because in the shimmering light  
they looked satisfied with themselves,  
tight udders eased.

Unhooked from machines,  
prodded out of the yard,  
they sashayed through the gate to paradise,

heads already down, nibbling  
a springy dinner in slurry season,  
air sticky and ripe.

Because when they buried their muzzles  
in the feathery pasture  
they ruminated on pleasure.

Because being cows they knew  
what to do with deep grass  
swishing against their knees.

Because in understanding where to graze  
and how to space themselves  
they drew the landscape together,

balanced the round hills  
with the angular barn,  
the barbed fence smothered in hedge,

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the toasted coconut of new-mown fields  
with a lone oak halfway down the slope,  
a steady line drawing parallel

with the narrow lane above  
and me, a point on it,  
now somehow part of this perspective.

*Jeri Kroll*