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NOVEMBER NIGHT

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Abstract

Candy-bright bulbs, strung out along the seafront, mark the spot where the flat earth ends, unstable sea begins. A few incorrigible cases, grim as night-shift workers, try to gain the upper hand on one-arm bandits.

Dennis O'Driscoll

NOVEMBER NIGHT

Candy-bright bulbs, strung out along the seafront, mark
the spot where the flat earth ends, unstable sea begins.

A few incorrigible cases, grim as night-shift workers,
try to gain the upper hand on one-arm bandits.

Other than those out-of-town diehards, ownership reverts
to locals, seasoned folk who overhear the sea all year

pottering at the other side of a garden wall, hammering
and sanding, its blue the rim of a familiar dinner plate.

The bar door of the Ocean View Hotel bursts open with an icy
heave of wind, revealing through a weave of smoke and steam

the used-car dealer, the remedial teacher, the full-time soak,
the man who lives fat off the summer ice-cream trade.

The sea holds its breath before pouring out venom, its roars
drowned by card games, sing-song ballads, old emigrant laments.

Tossed on their electric fence, the seaside lights sway.
A draught discomforts the surface of the Victorian bandstand.

Pillars supporting the promenade grind their iron teeth, resigned
to another storm-force assault; flashing like a lighthouse,

amusement arcade neon washes across its spent clientele.