

To Dursey

by Cherry Smyth

We were crossing to the island in Ireland's only cable car,
a patched-up crate, its windows malted with salt and spume,

the floor cracked with straw. We held on, knees locked as it jolted
over the steel cords, then steadied in a heavy catch Dursey was reeling in.

I prayed my mind be light, my body airy, worried about loosening the door should
we plummet, when you signalled to an open pane to look down to the pale sea,

where the moving shadow of ourselves seemed to attract spokes
of sunlight to its square hub. It wasn't the headlands, the ruined church,

the long unsown furrows, or the waveburst on the rocks below we'd come to see,
but this green star, its vehicle flimsy, worn, but its energy enough to wring

the ocean's clarity into a show of underwater, thistled light,
as if the water reflected what air cannot:

the pull of perception itself, making us sense that we could cast
into the essence of anything and shine through in another world.

Published: <https://magmapoetry.com/archive/magma-44/poems/to-dursey/>