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*The* FURROW

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*Pádraig Standún*

My Father's  
Hands

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# My Father's Hands

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Pádraig Standún

You could turn your hands to anything.  
Trowel, float, cement, stone,  
Scythe, sickle, sleán, saw.  
Pick, plough, harrow, hoe.  
Cow-calving, horse-training.  
Thresher-chest of oats and barley,  
Ready for winter feeding.

Last time I saw your hands,  
Beadsbound, white and waxy,  
I wondered at the waste of talent.

That right hand took the tongs  
To tame the devil each Christmas Eve.  
Broke his back with gusto  
Among burning turfsods.

Have you seen him in the yonder?  
Met him at a rave in Many Mansions?  
“Is the backbone as supple as ever?” you ask.  
The dancing devil laughs it off:  
“You did wonders for my slipped disk.”

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