

## Faith of Our Fathers

I am a Catholic born and bred

but I have always had a wee voice  
a sense of something else  
beat beat beating  
like a distant Lambeg drum

my Granda jumped the dyke  
traded bleach fields in Belfast  
for a Lanarkshire pit  
one true faith for another

when he died  
breathing hard and sore  
from a life cutting coal  
black dust was part of his skin  
impregnated

I've got that too  
Protestant stoor in my lungs  
flecks on my complexion  
spots you can never erase

see that's me  
a wee bit proddy dog  
a wee bit cafflik cat  
green with a twist  
of orange

the thing is  
they keep telling me  
you have to be one  
or the other

**Charlie Gracie**