



Crossing Highbridge (Irish Studies)

Maureen Waters

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The first in her family born in the United States, Maureen Waters grew up the “Bronx Irish” daughter of two unforgettable immigrants: her storytelling, former revolutionary father, and her fierce, IRA-supporting mother. *Crossing Highbridge* is framed by the accidental death of Waters’s son and her struggle to make sense of this loss by re-imagining her past and her heritage.

Her life in postwar New York City was colored by Catholicism and strong cultural links to “the other side”—by Irish step dancing, the melodies of Thomas Moore, and the rituals, inflections and harrowing memories impressed on her. Sex was a mystery. Schoolgirls wore below-the-knee blue serge uniforms with starched white collars and cuffs. Brutal treatment at the hands of nuns who ran her college drove Waters to transfer to a secular school.

Waters rebelled against an upbringing that seemed to wall her off from the twentieth century. She married outside the church, divorced, and became a scholar and professor at the City University of New York. Waters follows in the tradition of her father with this vividly humorous and moving true tale.

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