

## **The Crock of Gold**

1912

By

James Stephens

1880-1950

## **Book Discussion**

Irish Cultural Center/McClelland Library

Norton Room

September 27, 2025

10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

James Stephens was an Irish novelist and poet. *The Crock of Gold* is his most famous and enduring work. It is a mixture of philosophy, Irish folklore, and commentary on the battle of the sexes. By the time it was published in 1912, he was a dedicated Irish Republican and a close friend of the 1916 Easter Rising leader, Thomas MacDonagh.

- The novel is a comedic satire. Consider what Stephens is satirizing..
- Some issues to think about: gender roles, philosophical issues (the head vs. the heart), use of Hibernian English.
- Stephens make his points using the interaction between mythological characters (Pan, Angus Og, fairies) and the humans (Philosopher, Thin Woman, Caitlin Ní Murrachu, Meehawl MacMurrachu). Consider some of the dialogue the Philosopher has with other characters.
- Why do some characters have names, but others are only identified by either descriptions or by their role?

In October we will read and discuss “The Ghosts of Rome” by Joseph O’Connor.