

'Night Fishing'
Glyn Edwards

For decades my dreams were pike,
winched up from the barnacle dark,
febrile in the ugly dawn
and shameful of scrutiny.

At the spinning glint of a pen
or the lure of a bedside light
a pike would flex in my neck
as ruthless as a fired shell

and rise at the tense skin of sleep
and break it like glass. To trap it,
I'd force tired fingers down my throat
and catch the dense greengold gills

as they thrashed to be swallowed back
into a crypt of gut, then haul
it from my head in waking gloom
and wrap its snarl in puddled paper.

In the morning, on the yawning dresser,
I would weigh its mean physiognomy,
unbutton my flesh from its teeth
and find fluency in its jewelled flanks.

Later, I would relent my grip on its tail
and watch the denuded pike
descend in the printed page
until its candle eyes went dark.

I dream of carp now: basking
just below the milky surface,
anodyne and abbey pool bland,
floating shadows, too fat to land.