

## 'Something Lurks'

Annest Gwilym

Inspired by Helen Dunmore's *Hungry Thames*

We walk by your side in the silence of crabs  
as your mocking laughter ripples  
the sea's crypt. Too close, your mud-flesh  
sucks at our feet, sinks them  
with sly sips, sucks and swallows.

Your distilled Cretaceous soup is home  
to one who drums his fingers in the dark,  
jaws snapping in the tunnelling depths.  
Long reachings taste children's legs,  
unaware of a huge digestion in the deep.

We bring you gifts of skimmed stones,  
cigarette ends, plastic bottles and bags.  
You give us the ruin of shells,  
vomit a brown yeasty froth,  
spit out bodies of the drowned.

During high tides and storms  
your fingers reach up our garden paths,  
sneak under doors into our houses.  
And at night your tentacles whittle down  
the star-draped heavens.