

*Bait*

*Gareth Alun Roberts*

The sky in all its greyed fathers was over us  
and the low-tide mud,  
shimmering and reeky in the dirt-light. Mud,

deep, dark and oozing  
through our fingers  
like the histories of silent children

washed from the spate of broken valleys  
to this tongue, this vacant mouthing;  
forlorn principality. Kingdom of mud.

We came un-mouthed to estuaries, slowly sinking;  
silt seeping over wellies and all sound.  
The daylight hung greyly in your beard.

I held a three-pronged fork, and you, a spade;  
I remember the whorls of its wooden handle  
more keenly than your face.

I hold the light of the shimmering mud  
more brightly than your eyes.  
We were both reeky, I remember that  
  
and silence.

But what thought is speaking  
when words turn to worms:  
corpulent lug and bearded rag,

and all this silty demise that sucks us down  
to mollusc and shrimp and crab.

We are the seekers of the worm,  
the perfect phylum  
to un-shape us.