Poetry by Nalini Paul

Blustered

The sea is in a foul mood.
Spirits blow across the Sound,
howl in the hollows
of dry stone walls

like countries drawn
on landscape paper,
borders scribbled in blue pencil crayon
a fall-off-the-earth edge
before water.

The path twists rock-hard, Achilles-swift.

At the bending crest,
rain stretches like washing on the line
From Hoy to the Black Craig.

Wind lashes my face.
I'm a martyr, of sorts,
trudging through mud that shines
in fading lilac light.

Gravestones cut the sky.

Day shines in waves
too animated for words

until country roads darken
and lapwings take flight.

From *Slokt By Sea* (Red Squirrel Press, 2010)
© Nalini Paul 2010

Sunlit Swim

The first plunge is ice immovable,
then laps slap at the heart;
salt tang kisses,
seaweed tangles toes.

Barnacles threaten to cut
the flow of flight through water,
light-heavy, cold-warm.
Returning to shore,

skin glistens pearl-water
that sticks behind ears,
disappears in vapours.

From Skirlags (Red Squirrel Press, 2009)
© Nalini Paul 2009