

## Black Grass

waking caked in gristly sweat, you remember  
crawling out of the sea, from the wet  
crawling after something better?  
and suddenly feeling so old:  
you'd better have a nice cold  
glass of water.

10 cold gushing from the faucet  
darker than it's ever been  
water tasting like hot toddy –  
drink it down, for you must clean  
the tap water with your body

something for your aching limbs:  
fill the black up to the rim,  
remember not to throw out the baby  
and please don't forget to wash  
the bathwater with your body

20 the wolf is here now, at the door  
black shit dripping from its maw  
the sea rearing up behind him  
crashing & roaring like thunder  
he's come for his dues, come to drag  
your children back down under

running upstairs, you slip straight back  
on black oozing through the floorboards:  
thick and dark, treacle and tar,  
and you know when you're beaten  
held down by shit spent, and shit eaten  
and the wolf is upon you

30 lie back and think of England  
while the black drips into your mouth  
think green and roses, Thames and fog;  
think of when we worked the land harder  
and smile to yourself:  
someone will come and clean it up  
as someone always does

40 or maybe they can have it all? all twenty percent.  
twenty percent – yes that seems  
good enough, seems to be in order:  
twenty percent of slow rivers and fast seas  
of black grass and orange water.