

## Rain 48

The shape of the landscape spoke of her lips.

The way the ranges lay low in the rugged distance

all chapped and scaled from the constant squalls; the whittling ice.

She opened the crag of her mouth, and the tongue was a salt marshland

stocked with waders and stoats. They fished through the reeds and the bitter vetch.

They ventured into the dome of her corbelled palette to orate their foraging thoughts.

The dusk moves on, the dawn moves in and they move off, as light slices down through the gap in her capped front teeth. She holds a wedge from the gap in those limestone teeth. Keeps it as a tool with which to test the way the winds blow.

Her eyelashes come from the wandering hedgehog; strong rushes woven into hoods, thatched visors to shield her hare quick eyes and to house the long stag-heart gaze. The hedgehog made off to become a mole, was part mole already with the long brown nose, and glad to be rid of his quiver of quills, as he dug down deeper away from the Queen. She took her nose from the beak of an eagle recycled her mind from the dog fox, and a bearded jackdaw made up her chin.

She has the frantic fingers of a spider but the palms of her hands are badger big.

A garland of blackthorn and oak twists around her hair, beech clogs clad her feet and between each toe grows the rowan and the scarlet holly.

The berries she gives to the fortunate rook.

Now the canine frosts are cast in cold iron,  
and winter storms suck the sap out of prong tongued trees.  
This is when the hare in her eyes will saddle the wind, will race the long shadows,  
and chase mountain goats, chase mountain rams to be sacrificed for her own good.  
She employs a gizzard to chew on their entrails, grates fog into sleet from the bark  
of their gnarled horns, and then sounds out a summon to the wolf hounds waiting in the woods  
as her eyes shine like demons and she moves across the peaks, swift as a swallow.  
She roars her orders through the rain; a report comes baying back from the distance.  
A sad and desolate call from the hill, from the throat of a scorched vessel  
thousands of years old, and covered in stones.

She is bound to our time through the weight of the ages  
and she watches from the wave of the mountain, in the coil of it  
as the rusting wind plucks at the wire in the lyre of her larynx.  
It suckles on her nostrils, fights the foxes in her ears,  
and drives home an air, through that shining gap  
between her teeth.

CRONA GALLAGHER