Rooks

Four days after the funeral of my mother
I am walking up Kippendavie Road
and the June evening sky’s filled
with the slow, wild cries of rooks
gliding in from the sheep fields
to the sprawl of oaks halfway up the hill.

My mother had her service all planned out
would have imagined her sons and daughters
grandchildren, neighbours
gathered on the narrow, familiar pews
as sunlight flowed through the tall windows
onto the bright cross and cut flowers -
imagined our voices joined in psalm
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help

but these rough midsummer hymns
these dark stone-throated birds
vanishing into the leaves
as the earth calls them – us - all of us – home?

Chris Powici
The Otter Goddess

The otter goddess won’t hear our prayers,  
cares more about the sway and feel  
of kelp against her belly  
than whether we believe in her or not.

She’d sooner eat gull than have anything to do  
with love or forgiveness;  
she can’t even tell herself apart  
from the slick sinewy crab huntress  
her presence inhabits.

All she knows is grace -  
cool thrill of tail-flick and fur-glitter  
as she surges up the green depths  
to sashay on the swell.

And guillemots dive about her.  
And death is another time.

Chris Powici