

# POETRY WALES

## Noontime Newtown

*Easy girl easy* the harbourmaster told me  
like he thought I was his horse or stoppable  
*what are you doing running in this heat*  
*why've you come this way at such low tide*  
I'd have been more bothered if the people  
on the island didn't treat their horses  
so impeccably well, so I turned and first sat  
and then lay down in the long grass  
when out of nowhere a passerby said  
she *wouldn't do that* if she were me, she'd seen  
an *adder* in *exactly that spot* and I thanked her but

I stayed there, defiant, shedding clothes,  
not the slightest breeze to take my mind off  
with them what was I doing running in this heat  
but the tide came back, it couldn't stay away  
so in I went swimming, I set the fish leaping  
in dismay *Fuck! Off!* they took it in turns to tell me  
closer to my face each time they broke the surface  
fins so thin and expressions so outraged as though  
in the middle of sharp intakes of breath I retreated

and where I clambered ashore was one field away  
from where we by we I mean me and my brother  
it goes without saying we were walking, talking  
about George Michael RIP about shame  
and its behaviours, when a ram appeared suddenly  
bolting and headstrong I wouldn't say hostile  
I'd say young and lost, no herd for miles and nothing  
but sea ahead of him *Don't worry mates, I'm on the case!*  
cried a National Trust lady chasing three red setters which were  
the colours of that evening, which were the best I'd ever seen  
and we let the sun go down without catching him

# POETRY WALES

and really, after all this, Newtown's such a good place  
on a grey day to watch an incoming storm, like when  
we leaned on the boathouse and compared the thunder  
to that which Edward went in RIP Granny Joan at his side  
quote at the ready, or jolted into her brain like lightning  
    *good night sweet prince* and the rest      her stroke  
    soon after, a real broken-hearter, made her nearly speechless  
    for the remains of her days when the doctor used flashcards  
you know sheep. dog. fish.      *Fuck! Off!*      is what  
she managed to say

    the same way that salt will put a spring into soil  
salt will make good wooden things much better the wood on  
the walkway over the water is the softest I've ever known  
why else would I have rested right up against it as I dried off  
until I got splinters lodged in my temples      until I saw  
what I thought was a fencepost was a kestrel  
because the fencepost was flying away