

Kimmeridge

*the Jurassic shale rocks at Kimmeridge in Dorset jut out into
the sea in long fingers which are just covered by at high tide*

They tell us there's a boy,

fifteen, damaged and wild.

We buy biscuits and apples

and he walks into the kitchen,

stunted and wary. Grotesquely clothed

he raises an ancient face and his eyes

don't smile. His teeth are rotten stumps.

He plays us like puppets

pushes us further and further

and pulls back laughing.

Day after day, we visit the beach.

We collect fossils, walk on the cliff

on dangerous edges. Let him

wander. We light fires.

On the third day we are weary

and then we turn and there he is

alone, fiercely engrossed

with a net he's found abandoned,

a stick. Raw flesh of a clam.

And he's out on the rocks, far out

like Jesus walking on the sea,

dirty and wet, triumphant

holding up the wriggling fish

he's caught

on his invented line.