

Matt Stockl (AH) Ullapool High School

Erosion

(From a series of three poems on the theme of the shore at Loggie, Wester Ross)

My feet were younger then, fleshy pads
When the dust comes, the summer months stick between the toes
The straps leave stripes, the stripes are white
The white stripes circle the skin.

The ground of course is cracked
Skin of the cliff
It gapes
Absorbing the seeds, absorbing the rain, the wind
Seeking cause to split further, cut deeper

Down
Below
Where the waves
Where the spiral stones
Where the broad flat granite sits expectant
Looking up.

The sea wall curves out looks down
Sheds monumental tears
Before stepping back into the hills.

In our house, at the back, in the concrete a door
Led down they said
Down.
Wormcasts through the sheer.

A tunnel for the smugglers
The museum men.
Those mannequin models in greenhouse glass
Looking up like the granite past the history walls
The place by the pub that sells heritage.

The tunnels twist, writhe, meet in the middle
Welcome the seeds
Welcome the rain, the wind
Until the flowers and air own the centre, expand.

The sea wall curves in, breathes out.

Meanwhile my feet grow hard
Solid as the smuggler's effigy
Expand and erode.

New skin forms and falls
New blood inherits the space inside
New stripes circle the old.