

Wigtown Poetry Competition 2018

Main | Highly Commended: Robert Duncan, *Evolution*

All rights reserved

Evolution

A soft black tongue has licked a trail of slime
across our path. Luckily for it, the crows
seem to have little appetite for slugs,
or for the snails that suck in sticky rows
along our fence; or for, in spring, the frogs
whose low, flat bounce skips them across the grass,
brown, molten stones, skimming on waves of time.

The slow millennia of evolution
play out in our back garden day by day.
The short, moist lives melt in and out of being:
a night will see a mass extinction, a ray
of sunlight hatch a thousand eggs, freeing
a thousand slugs to lick their slimy way
across our paths with a slow, steady motion.