

'Diviners'

Under the iroko tree the old men are tossing nuts.
Three strokes across and two strokes down
is for the harmattan wind.
is for trouble. sickness. hunger.
Who can plan for the future when the experts disagree?

-- C. C. Hebron

Birtley. Co. Durham. England

Nightshirts

I shall praise nightshirts
whether striped or dotted
that shrink in the wash.

But your gift especially --
which tickles the hips.
rides an erection.

When I slide into bed
how cool your sheet is
to my bare ass.

Short of Eating Slugs

My three-year-old finds slugs beneath each stone.
Fondles them. hugs them. wants to chew them up.
Delights in everything that's like a slug.
(Even the yellow haddock on his plate
is obvious to him in its resemblance.)
When he repeats to me that boys like slugs.
it seems I've made the statement necessary.
Though. short of eating them. I like slugs too.

-- Knute Skinner

Killaspuglonane. Kilshanny. Co. Clare.
Ireland