

## **Inadvertent Consumption**

Amy Crosby

Heaving on the flat white of the bathroom tiles  
remnants and spittle of last night's meal.  
What was it this time?  
Rich man – Poor man – Beggar man  
or someone who called me a thief?  
I retch  
and out comes a sandcastle,  
aborted in its prime by waves of abrasive shingle,  
and suddenly my vomit smells of  
salt and intermittent sunshine,  
a cold shower in public, European toilets  
and the fat black spider that sat watching in the corner.  
Memories I'll be picking from my teeth  
for weeks.  
The brittle plastic in the form of a bucket and spade  
catches in my throat  
and, as I choke them free,  
out comes the dead seagull,  
spread like a book.  
It looks at me with eyes the colour of my bile,  
glasses over  
and shows me its feathers dipped in incomprehension.  
I never like the taste of children.

