

Laura Forwood

Osedax

You grow in the dark
In the vertebrae of a carrion-spine.
Isopod clamouring, cesspool of squid,
gape-mouthed Sleeper sharks reaping.

Past the first plateau,
Of stargazers, lanternfish, and brittle stars.
A six-gilled shark spies a shipwreck.
Bubbling past, Abyssopelagic, Blubber snow,
Your newborn god of hot-vents and sulphur springs
a baptised, capsized cetacean

Your own descending eucharist
All blubber, and body, and beast
Hadalpelagic, Holy and whole. A sweet smelling
desert oasis. Ballasted, Billowing, ballooning.

Your sleeping sacramental leviathan,
Hosts hagfish in Hollowed, hallowed bone.
Bleached white cathedral arcs
A frothing blue blanket, more living than dead.
In the rhythmic gnawing of crustation teeth,
The congregation comes to choir.