

THE RAIN COAST

Stewart Wright

There are cracked tarpaulins of ice left by the winter tides,
And the tides move with kelp rafts and bleached sunken logs
Past hemlock coves dripping, snow bent and fogged,
Where ravens make odd sounds from crude eyries
Of black slanted pilings labyrinthed by worms,
And the tide floods the flats, and oceans of flakes dissolve in the flood:

There are places this wild. In the spring
Blue grouse make grave ghostly hoots in the spruce tops,
And the Sitka deer rub velvet antlers on trunks,
And the streams which cut icy troughs in the snow
Run through moss, sunlight, pebble and shade,
Then burst into silt beds which flurry with spawn:

The rain coast is cut, eyed and circled
With plans. There are plans
For the dull uncut diamonds of slash,
There are eyes on the great bear, their steaming piles, and tracks,
There are buoys in the saltwater which spills up the flats,

And the eagles float, sometimes, in bright panes of glass.