

## The River

*Extracts from a longer Gaelic original*

### III

Speaking to the unsovereign mind  
The bone-filled river spoke in its own tongue

And the mind heard the river clearly  
Because the river spoke droplets  
Corrupting nothing of their meaning.

And as the unclouded beads of speech  
Glistened on the river's smooth skin  
The mind became ashamed and fled  
Fearing the river would consume it.

### IV

The man spoke to the river  
'Consume the mind,' he said.  
The river did  
And, in full flood, broke its banks.  
Now the mind spoke  
'River,' it said, 'consume the man.'  
The river did and the limpid waters grew black  
So one species leaves its mark  
On the untouched.