



Fox

I heard a cough
as if a thief was there
outside my sleep
a sharp intake of air

a fox in her fox-fur
stepping across
the grass in her black gloves
barked at my house

just so abrupt and odd
the way she went
hungrily asking
in the heart's thick accent

in such serious sleepless
trespass she came
a woman with a man's voice
but no name

as if to say: it's midnight
and my life
is laid beneath my children
like gold leaf

Alice Oswald

*Alice Oswald has lived in Totnes for many years, and her long poem **Dart** is a journey down that Devon river. She goes on another watery odyssey in her latest long poem, **Nobody**, a sea-obsessed telling of stories from Homer's *Odyssey*. Last October she was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford University.*