

**Edgelands**  
**Sarah Wallis**

Tell me a half-tale set on the edges, a place  
of pine forest and saltmarsh, hardly peopled

where two waters meet, the river she curls her  
back into the small of the sea,

all sinewy movement, all grinning serpentine  
innocence, the sea smiles, plays this game,

sends in white horses,  
seashells to play with and plait into her hair

a wave of young greenweed, wild medusa  
tendrils in the currents, the eddies and pools,

and all that makes her feel motion, forward  
trajectory, the whole, going somewhere baby?

style of the day, walking the riverbed,  
the scalloped lines carved on her midriff,

fingering nacreous and gleaming insides  
of shell; mussel, dog whelk, cockle, razor and clam,

she plays with the jewels the sea sends her,  
counting the hours until the moonpull hauls

her away, swims the minutes left  
on the wide-open estuary salt flats, lingers

with the scent of the trees, pinecone  
and shell intermingle, a daisyset grows through

a cold whisper of bone, a long dead seabird's  
remains, possibly gannet.

Soon the fishing boats will find the current  
and pull them apart, salmon and trout them

salt and freshwater fish summon and divide  
them, until the sea turns, decides to roar

back to her, roars back to her side, seeking  
the pine scent of the wind, the fresh salt

taste on the lips of a girl she cannot resist

Sarah Wallis is a poet and playwright based in Scotland, UK. Sarah has recent work in *Trampset*, *Lunate* and *Abridged* (Nyx issue) online and in print journals *Finished Creatures* (Stranger issue) and *The Alchemy Spoon* (Metal issue). A chapbook, *Medusa Retold*, a feminist re-telling of the myth from Medusa's point of view is available from @fly\_press and she tweets @wordweave.

