

Stephen Robertson

Shore

1 Nonet

Cold and clear. The tide runs out, the creek
is draining back towards the sea.
Along the margins waders
scutter, scavenge—redshank,
godwit, curlew—long
beaks probing deep
beneath the
shining
mud.

2 Sonnet

Cold and clear. The tide runs out, the creek
is draining back again towards the sea.
Along the muddy margins, in the lee
of the sea-wall, around the bladder-wrack,
long-legged waders scutter, scavenge, seek
their winter sustenance. Out in the bay
a seal watches us, then flips away,
dives deep, leaving behind a swirling wake.

Nearer, the lapwings forage up the beach.
At water's edge the oyster-catchers, gulls
compete for surface scraps. The beach is good
for all. The redshanks, godwits, curlews search
for hidden treasure, long beaks buried full
to probe deep down beneath the shining mud.