

Footprints in the Sand: the Hugh Miller Writing Competition II 2017-2018

Poetry Runner-up

Gillian Dawson: The first king of Scotland

Footprints in the Sand: The Hugh Miller Writing Competition II carries the name of one of Scotland's most endearing geologists, Hugh Miller (1802-1856), and aimed to honour his legacy by inspiring new, original prose and poetry on the theme of Scotland's rich fossil heritage. The competition was organised by the Scottish Geodiversity Forum, The Friends of Hugh Miller and other partners.

Further details of the competition, and all the winning entries, are available at www.scottishgeology.com/hughmiller/

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The First King of Scotland

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Here he comes, jinking through the gloaming,
elated after a night vibrating
with chorusing frogs, chirruping crickets,
a teeming larder of insects' rasps and ticks.

He's learnt the skills of the hunt:
a rearing centipede disarmed with prowess,
the crunch of carapace between teeth,
his stomach taut from the feast.

Home-bound on the familial track
he scent-marks horsetails and tree-ferns
shimmering green on the lagoon
he drinks in the dawn, sits down to groom.

...

Milk teeth rooted in a stone jaw
exposed by the waves of a cold shore

Wareolestes rex: the first king of Scotland

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