

Thames River by Elka Cloke

The tides of the mind are slow
they flow through time
past monuments in limestone
and tall needles of glass.
Almost imperceptibly, a note of salt
slips in and the river rises,
darkening to the color of tea,
swelling to meet the green.
Above its banks the cogs and wheels
of monstrous machines
clank and spin, the ghost within
vanishes into its coils,
whispering mysteries.
We are at war.
Each tiny golden cog has teeth,
each great wheel moves
a pair of hands which take
the water from the river,
devour it, convert it into steam,
coerce the great machine to run
on the force of its dissolution.
They each believe that they can take apart
the ancient powers, rebuild the pillars of the world.
Gently, the tide is rising,
corrupting the mechanism.
Salt, rust and silt
slowing the gears.
Down at the banks
the iron tanks
sway into their moorings
with the hollow boom
of a gigantic bell,
of drum and cannon
which cry out in a tongue of thunder
and the river rolls under.