

*Dahlias*

**Dan Paling**

Who is there  
after the folding of sheets –  
the rush of cold cotton on warm lips,  
standing close in the gap between speech  
and the decision to go.

Reunite a cup with its nook,  
tie the incision.  
A gram of your voice sends me scrambling  
for gifts in the driftwood,  
stuck flat at the tideline, a remnant.

Yom Kippur and you're fasting,  
standing over the kitchen dahlias,  
smelling of loss.  
Robe hangs creased, blue and cold  
in the backlog of morning  
as bells knell out the day  
in lengths of themselves.

Geography.  
The reaching line.  
Muzzles, gaps and contours.

Our vowels set out to pasture.

**Poetry**

**Section Editors:**  
Ágnes Lehóczky  
A. J. Moore

**Editorial Team:**  
Pia Dela Cruz  
Mark Lindsey

Mina Miller  
Asha Pacey  
Milly Winston-Jacques

*The University of Sheffield's  
Creative Writing Journal*