

#### *iv. The Ninevite sinking boat.*

**(Jonah 2:1-11.)**

*The water and the weeds around my face  
draw me down into the deep –  
into that cold and haunted place  
where icy fingers creep  
along my careworn skin.*

*Terror stricken thoughts begin  
their unwavering climb  
to life and breath and light.*

*Above the surface - silvery white  
and wavering in the sun –  
I long to see, this one last time,  
your holy temple in Jerusalem.*

*As I raise my outstretched arms,  
my saviours smile and haul me in  
and greet me with well-practised charms  
and lock the trap-door overhead  
in the Ninevite sinking boat. Like a shark  
in search of prey it plunges to the dark –  
into the canyons of the dead.*

*For three whole days and nights they grin  
and whisper in the strange half light  
and, when they jeeringly invite  
me to take leave of my imprisonment,  
your friendly hand begins to raise  
me up and on the waiting shore,  
when I tumble in the sand,  
I laugh with wild astonishment.*

*I offer thanks and bow before  
the God of Israel. At your command  
my life, my hands, my feet, my hunger sing your praise.*