

### **The Merthyr Stigmatist**

It challenges the assumptions made by the establishment,  
told us in our overriding cultural narrative,  
that in order to make something of ourselves,  
we must leave behind our small, local, tight-knit communities,  
and swap them for a university education  
in towns and cities where regeneration  
and chic, café-culture living represent  
a professionalism which indicates “success”.

And if, for some reason, we don't quite get on  
and have to return to our native home,  
we must become some kind of saviour to the next generation,  
repeating the same mantra to them,  
and thus becoming part of the false  
and disempowering system that does anything but  
allow young people like Carys to be proud  
of where they come from. If only those in power would

just stop and listen - really listen – to what they have to say.

*By Gareth Williams*