

City Poem
by Phillipa Garrard

We follow

concrete steps,
jutting
the black water.

We feel
the push of twilight

between
shoulder blades.

We watch
city windows,
neon gold,

slide
over the bay.

Black Cockatoos
by Judith Wright

Each certain kind of weather or of light
has its own creatures. Somewhere else they wait
as though they but inhabited heat or cold,
twilight or dawn, and knew no other state.
Then at their time they come, timid or bold.

So when the long drought-winds sandpaper-harsh,
were still, and the air changed, and the clouds came,
and other birds were quiet in prayer or fear,
these knew their hour. Before the first far flash
lit up, or the first thunder spoke its name,
in heavy flight they came, till I could hear
the wild black cockatoos, tossed on the crest
of their high trees, crying the world's unrest.

Tempo

by Ali Cobby Eckermann

sunrise
days pass
sunset

leaves transmute
weeks pass
shifting stars

sunshine softens
months pass
the air cools

winter returns

The Magpies
by Denis Glover

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Tom's hand was strong to the plough
Elizabeth's lips were red,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Year in year out they worked
While the pines grew overhead,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

But all the beautiful crops soon went
To the mortgage-man instead,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Elizabeth is dead now (it's years ago)
Old Tom went light in the head;
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

The farm's still there. Mortgage corporations
Couldn't give it away.
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies say.

The Night-Ride
by Kenneth Slessor

Gas flaring on the yellow platform; voices running up and down;
Milk-tins in cold dented silver; half-awake I stare,
Pull up the blind, blink out - all sounds are drugged;
the slow blowing of passengers asleep;
engines yawning; water in heavy drips;
Black, sinister travellers, lumbering up the station,
one moment in the window, hooked over bags;
hurrying, unknown faces - boxes with strange labels -
all groping clumsily to mysterious ends,
out of the gaslight, dragged by private Fates,
their echoes die. The dark train shakes and plunges;
bells cry out, the night-ride starts again.
Soon I shall look out into nothing but blackness,
pale, windy fields, the old roar and knock of the rails
melts in dull fury. Pull down the blind. Sleep. Sleep
Nothing but grey, rushing rivers of bush outside.
Gaslight and milk-cans. Of Rapptown I recall nothing else.