

## Cut flowers

Her eyes are swing-into-the-river on a rope and let-go blue

The shawl falls around her like a river,  
or hair or an arm  
Something about history, comfort and flow

She stands still by the side of the road  
a stop sign for a face

He watches  
she is just a pencil line  
The tea the ink of tea is spilt blame  
He is water colour leaning his elbow on his knee

Holding hands across the blame

The idea I forgot was blue  
as big as the sky blue  
open bowl blue

## Peg

Her faded perfume  
in this urine-yellow chair.

She sat in her rocking chair for thirty years rocking  
between memories' polarities

and ribbons blow a breeze around her  
as if she is a post marking the way.

Pronouncements in the rain.  
Cool air on the camera.

We live in a bowl.  
The cat licks the bowl of free to leave.

It's nearly over now and the wood  
shows through the varnish.

No tension.  
Eye contact without smiling.

Cellophane remains,  
the flowers long dead, tied to  
a post with ribbon.

In this rocking chair  
next to this fire, wondering  
where contentment is.

## My body

His bleeding was into a shallow garden.  
The sky comes down around the house.

It is a dead room  
with unusually high sound absorption.  
His sweat was dripping in my face.

My body not a crime scene.

Regret a pearl pursed on her  
clay lips.

## For Pindar

His cloud sits down with him, he  
tucks it into his pockets

A swarm of bees landed on his mouth as a baby  
They called him honeymouth

# Hallways

1

I am a horizon,  
thrown over the shoulder, like salt

Sliding down the wall in the hallway onto the floor

Many black doors banging like wings

2

I need to find a  
place for the river in me  
for the dead grey tree

His arm around the  
horizon of my shoulders  
in a photograph

3

Dream the fingers off the wheel  
this is the hour of horizons

tapestries and divisions  
the hour in a glass

kiss the salt

## Sin and linen

I grip the wheel too tight.

The flowers meditate on the fruit.  
Calm enough to be equal to ideals.

Even with my eyes closed I knew it was him because the  
wood groaned  
under the weight of his reason.

## The red line

I saw hands to a throat like a shadow play in a tent

I saw one man place the head of another to the edge of  
the metal bin

I saw the blood from plums dripping down my brother's  
forearms

I saw my mother on her hands and knees scraping candle  
wax off the marble altar

I saw Michelangelo's stairs flowing like a river

I saw my daughter stealing daffodils

I saw my lover forget me

If

If my head is a bunch of flowers,  
my throat is a vase choked with stems.

If the wind is drunk it explains the knocked over tables.

If my mind is a membrane stretched over the mirror,  
the sky is broken.

If I cannot taste fire my breath is scented with dank  
flower water.

If the rain is ink then the face at the window is unreadable.

in her hands

in her hands

static

staring into the flame patting the castrated dog

learn to sleep in the middle of the bed he is not coming back

static

the tick of the clock knocking the right side of my brain

into the left

learn to sleep in the middle of the bed he is not coming back

just to sink as the tide goes out surrendering to the pull

the tick of the clock knocking the right side of my brain

into the left

ambushing the house with blue and cockatoos

just to sink as the tide goes out surrendering to the pull

one metal ant scratches its painful way through veins

ambushing the house with blue and cockatoos

the flowers have been dead in the vase beside my bed

three weeks

one metal ant scratches its painful way through veins

my feet mis-spell

the flowers have been dead in the vase beside my bed

three weeks

my feet a century away

my feet mis-spell

the smell of vase water on my hands

my feet a century away  
time is chilled in water  
the smell of vase water on my hands  
this is the day when the heart attacks the bird in the sky

time is chilled in water  
is the touch of tenor on fingertips  
this is the day when the heart attacks the bird in the sky  
a knife under the pillow for cutting memory

is the touch of tenor on fingertips  
the bare ribs of words the wind blows through  
a knife under the pillow for cutting memory  
falling off the edge of the page

the bare ribs of words the wind blows through  
staring into the flame patting the castrated dog  
falling off the edge of the page  
in her hands

The evening is loud with life

Leaning on the language of leaving  
and the road a line from a song,  
the door smiles open

After the crescendo  
the tick of the clock  
and a car driving past

Headlights behind her  
she is approaching me  
moon walk with my daughter

just

light arrives before the car drives past and is gone

just placed in pebbles the words *amore mio* in the cemetery

headache cicadas deafening the river fast

breath is happening the rain is happening here there is  
no better

every seventeen syllables cicadas leave this shell on a blade

## Lineage

Like half eaten apples  
naked mothers pose for their well-dressed daughters.

Wind in a glass drowning in its own voice.  
In the throat of a rose language is strangled.

The world is a hollow humming and  
the limits are lace.  
A thousand tiny fingers make beautiful mistakes.

The traffic is a ripping seam.

A wound to the back of the heart.  
An axe in wood.

Prayers on my fingertips.

# Soon

Lying on a hot  
rock by black water with a  
friend soon to be dead

Children jump on a  
trailer load of leaves, adults  
scratch the earth with rakes

A bird call  
a crack high  
in the closing sky

## White-tail

*Mistress of arrows*, Arachne

Give me rivers of reason

Form a back water

The pillow spiked with spiders.

I turn from the smell of dreams

sweated on sheets

lay my head down on the pillow that bit me.

Meticulous thinking left a scar in the middle of my forehead.

Let all fall from him

My face a wet painting

She turns her blue face to him in marriage

He has a ladder

He looks at her with a withdrawn chin

The birds peel the paint with song

I was born in the ruins of his life

Every word artefact

In the centre of the wheel the heart unfolding the road like

a love letter petals fall from

Let all fall from him

## Freedom from André Breton

*a response to André Breton's poem 'Freedom of Love'*

My wife with the hair that tells the history of the hunt  
My wife with a waist where the two planets that orbit in  
different directions meet  
My wife with lips that flower the pain of the landscape  
with thoughts to extinguish all thought  
with the teeth of crumbling churches  
with the tongue she swallows souls  
with the tongue of hibernating snakes  
My wife with the tongue of an empty bed  
with brows of the shade and damp of a cave by the sulphur sea  
My wife with eyelashes with ashes in them  
with the forehead of a frozen lake  
My wife with shoulders of melting snow and the sun that  
melts it  
My wife with switchblade wrists  
My wife with fingers of rain that break windows  
with fingers that pick up threads  
My wife with armpits of bursting eucalypt pods  
and of bushfire nights  
with arms on fire around the baby of herself  
My wife with legs of a plough and field of turned earth  
with the movements of a slow mountain climb, thinning air  
My wife with calves of vein in rock  
My wife with feet of saffron  
with feet of details and birdbath containment  
My wife with a neck of salt  
My wife with the throat of a vase  
with breasts of vertigo

My wife with breasts of breath  
with breasts of a continuous curve from her arm to under bone  
with a belly of undulations  
My wife with a back of scaffolding where bird people walk  
    unafraid at great heights  
with a back of sand  
with a nape of forgotten invitations  
My wife of all is not well  
My wife of a well of light with no doors into it only windows  
My wife whose dreams burn her sleep and I wake on a pillow  
    of ash  
Whose history burns with the smell of hair  
Her chair burns absence into patience  
Her arms burn around the baby of herself  
Her travel burns the saris of skies into my eyes  
Her birds burn her freedom with my flight  
Her sex a cat's purr that burns meditation into the walls  
My wife is time, the distance between the beats of a heart, the  
    rings of a phone