



October Morning After Rain

Out into the sea, the heath paints

the feckless weather on the ground.

We skip stones across the trapped and tepid waters of the lagoon,

Rocks dislodged from shelves where once

coal-trains ran, and before that a people prospered—rocks

Smoothed by all the years that time has tossed them hand to hand.

Behind the beach, we sidestep leaches and speak

of nature and Nietzsche. Along the rainforest track,

Whipbirds make love's exquisite cries

and wise cracks, and we moan

about our shipwrecked hearts and all our ageing

Bits, and a regent bowerbird almost takes my head off in its black and magenta haste,

The kind of disguise you're meant to notice, but only

If you're quick. A Beatrice in chartreuse and pitch,

she steals her light back into darkling woods. She turns

Us, and we walk the wrackline back, and, making the ascent,

Our years blow hard, and at the top

lovers sit and watch the whales, but it's we

Who've surfaced. Oh, how we have breached and floundered

Deep and foundered, beached and found

the ground of heaven again. A paraglider lays his sail out

Under the nor-east breeze, and later, as we drink our small reward,

Among an incidental wedding party at the Surf House,

we watch him fly a rainbow

reconnaissance well out over the sea.