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Pemberton to River Road

Josephine Clarke
Out of the Asylum Writers Group

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Pemberton to River Road

The path tunnels us through a low canopy
of green, glisten and tangle. Rain drums heavily
and we all sigh, the walkers and the trees.

It is the second week of the first rains
and water runs with a knowing we try to learn,
of where to go and what to do.

Sodden bark and leaves are gentle on our soles.

We keep our heads down, eyes on the path
till rhythm rises and drives our shoes.

A metronome of drops. We carry
our own repenting, count forgotten loves.

The karri, freshly skinned, wet tangerine,
are steadfast beside our gusting thoughts.

Oh, and the sun on the wet
—the night stars glittering the day.

By afternoon we have no room
for other landscapes, past selves.

We trace hills and valleys knitted with trees,
where rivers once snaked beneath wheeling skies.

Cascading mosses and lichens collar trunks.

Again and again fungi in burnt rust, bright orange
surprise the trance of our treading,

draw us in

and in

to bush

revelling in rain.

-Josephine Clarke

Josephine Clarke lived in the South-West of Western Australia before studying Literature at UWA. She has had poems and short stories published in several Australian journals including *Westerly* and *Cordite*.