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Poetry of Roe 8

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Poetry of Roe 8
Nandi Chinna

Nannas'

Because silver hair shines in the moonlight
we dress in black and cover our heads
when we stalk at night in the banksia woods.

The dumped couch is a handy screen;
fallen branches make crooked spoons
to stir our diversionary recipe.

Buckets of cement in each hand we stagger
towards the fence line, becoming statues
in the headlights of passing cars;

becoming tuart, balga, marri.

When I tell the policeman that I'm old enough to be his Nanna
he snarls *Why don't you act like one*,
which is what I am doing; mixing and stirring,

pouring wet cement into the fence post holes,
holding the future from the inside of the compound,
railing against extinction from the muted

grey space of the paddy wagon.

Watch, 8th January 2017

I'm not a detective. So how is it that I'm waiting
in the Bibra Lake car park, recording the license plates
of white utes, while the animal trappers sit in the shade
at the edge of the lake laughing and eating from their orange eskys?

Then its on. They start their engines, leave the car park, I'm right behind
my no Roe 8 stickers a dead giveaway. They accelerate–slow down–
damn they lose me at the traffic lights. Ha! They must think,
but here I am again waiting at the gate until they emerge again.

To the east I can see Bibra Lake a mass of green
billowing typha grass, water dotted with birds.
At the top of the Norfolk Island Pine tree
a white eagle is also watching, and waiting.

16 January 2017

The tawny frogmouth owls have flown
out from the falling tree.

The woody pear flowers tumble
through the steel teeth of the mulcher.

Our houses are full of dust.

Tawny Frogmouths

Owls have become trees and the trees
are owls that fly up like flames
escaping a fire, disguised as smoke
simmering from the soil.

How quietly they sat for years;
like trees, like owls, moon coloured
eyes closed into knots of bark.

After the bulldozer became silent;
locked in its razor wire pen for the night,
protected by guard dogs and searchlights,
we found the bundle of silvery grey;
disguised as a fallen tree limb,
an empty casing of feather and bone.