Sunday Morning Walk

Sally Clarke

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Sunday Morning Walk by Sally Clarke

Not your regular dash around the block,
nor dodging shoppers in the mall,
step-counting, the pedometer, forgotten,
no water-bottle or back pack.

Joints ease, stiff hips, knees,
aknees, arms soften.
Collecting shade, the stride lengthens,
breath deepens, awareness shifts.

Fresh-linen smell of new wattle,
grevilleas’ stretching antennae,
puffs of apple blossom hibiscus,
gum nuts, sized little finger-tip to baby fists.

Heritage-listed Christmas trees
secrete orange chenille,
Shetland ponies crop lunch,
you pass serious walkers, with water bottles.

In childhood’s slower days,
Sunday morning walks sharpened appetites
sated with roast lamb, all the trimmings,
chapel Sunday school, parents resting, silent afternoon.

Today, your team’s playing on the oval,
there’s a good movie on tellie,
tomorrow, they forecast rain—
back to laps around the mall again.

Sally Clarke lives in the Hills east of Perth. She writes poetry and short stories, and is the biographer of WA author Donald Stuart.