

## Born of the Sacred

I've been here twenty minutes  
but the ibis still surprises me:  
for what they were, firstly,  
in type and for their age

All several of them, old  
until one day, old enough.

So I stood still on the same path  
that had led me through palms  
and adult flowers to their lawn,  
as it were; and its surviving pool,  
despite the sallow weeds, the depletion.

Staring until I forgot I was  
staring at a bird, seeing instead  
a head that wore the shape  
of a hand-patting affection,  
a head whose brain knew  
its nature so well that's all there was  
beside features, black sharp eyes  
blinking at every stroke, every thought.

Such taut skin as that  
had known wind since birth;  
and perhaps time was the hand-patting  
every birthday, another palm  
passed gently over the crown.

Then, more profoundly, I saw  
what the ibis saw,  
the wide ocean, distance;

And what the hand passed over,  
his ears and the lingering sorrow  
of a seagull's vocal departure.

## Intercessions of the Cloth

How do you explain  
the dissolution of despair  
that instant it goes

as rain to a mist.

As being in a cathedral  
searching the altar for your kindred

and giving up, despondent

his late rising from the choir stalls,  
his shepherding of the host,  
his lowered head in prayer,

as the stained glass window  
near the exit, like a kaleidoscope

large, high and well-shook.

## Excerpt from the Secret

My dreams have no land  
though seem peopled

as flowers grow in this

manner of sporadicity:

Myself within and once  
a cloud wide as rectangles  
can be, was It –

then a clamouring of forms  
not distinct as bodies  
gathered about like

flowers again, for their petals  
(which was, really, better

to love and be loved

forever mindful, these nights

of cloud-kissing, how it  
truly epitomises the making

of a scene). In the beatitude.

## Sometime after Twelve

The ocean is mid-way  
between high and low  
tides, a surfer  
upright on his board  
with a long paddle  
travels side-ways  
against the currents,

rising when the waves rise,  
falling when they collapse.

Staring and staring  
from my seat on the rocks  
of a cliff I could mistake  
happiness for everything  
the man owns, his  
board, paddle, humour;

and today, amidst swimmers,

this body of water, yielding  
to the superb example.

# Theology Night Drawing 1

Two things hung from my desk lamp,  
one a blue glass bear, the other  
pink glass beads, pendant-like  
although summer breezes, the type  
that entered my wind out window,  
rarely gave them cause to sway

Only the light this morning  
had caught both on the diagonal  
of an early sun's low-pitched  
rising, circular too in its  
wall patterning or arced lines  
around a centre of coloured shards

splintered hurriedly, jewel-like  
as opals or was it a rainbow  
in parts, the circle a lake

there being blues, greens and one  
luminous red I looked upon

as if a diagram of electricity,  
the aerial perspective of a town  
and its milieu – I fancied

my house, the emerald shard,  
sometimes red, pink and white

the curved lights to the left  
of the image, the brazen  
paths of *vea lactea*

In name, In spirit, In exuberance.

## As a Stream, Glistens

My sister phones to ask  
if my niece can have  
the doll's house, pulled out  
and dusted from the garage  
during a spring clean, my dad  
supervising on pain killers, and I  
text back 'no' in haste. Later,  
talking to mum, I don't need  
to explain what I want it for,  
just a short negative is enough,

but in some ways I want to,  
a present from mum and dad,  
wooden and matching my height  
(then); not much good for dolls  
(the size I kept anyway), so  
owned and utilised by a small  
brown bear, fitted out with hat stand,  
crimson lounge, iron stove, bed  
with striped mattress (see? manly)  
and dresser in that consecutive  
order over three levels; and following,

that name dad called me, China, his  
six months of chemo and I think  
no. It's postcolonial anyway.