



HELEN JONES.

Geoffrey Quinlan

**SOUTH COAST IN
SEPTEMBER**

It was the end of land — distraction ran
Behind the coastal road of the sodden town
With fallen arches: the shops selling ice-cream,
The papers masticating sex and crime,
Motels spelling welcome, and gleaming Holdens
Accelerating past the bowling green.
We scrambled over mounds of sand and grass
Between the masts of the pines, to find a path
That plunged towards the wild clamorous gulls
Circling and caterwauling in their shoals,
And came upon a lonely band of shore,
The key to the legendary sea's treasure.
Under the gaping cliffs and rocky knolls,
We lunged along the bay, stooping for shells
Or poking jelly-fish with sticks. We passed
Some hopeful votaries of the sun — embossed
On the virgin sands. A few kids were framed around
A parasol, and a dog barked at the wind.