

“Goodbye, Alex,” I say, and there is still time for her to come back. Come back, I cry, please come back, but the words will not move further than my eyes, and she cannot or will not read them there. She turns to go. I hear the front door shut behind her, her footsteps walking up the path. The car door slams, the engine starts. She is gone.

The sudden blue of the jacaranda fills my window, and in it perch the rainbow lorikeets, waiting for David to come home and feed them.

JULES LEIGH KOCH

I LEAVE THIS MINING TOWN

I leave this mining town
to its museums and coreless hillsides
Where all is permanent
except work and the waitresses
Walking beneath coal black clouds
through rain as thick as fog
Pass trains longer than the deepest mineshaft
I'm waiting at the station
for my two carriage night train
to take me to where the sky
has sobered up
and stars are brighter
than the belly button of a turkish dancer