

JAN OWEN

TREE

Up the musty rungs of tapering boughs
that slithered us through the crest of the pine
to light, kings of the castle. Faraway down
below: Chris on his bicycle wheeling to practise
figure eights in the middle of Cambridge Terrace
where quartz and fools' gold shine in the bitumen:
Mrs Dunn, a peg doll at her line,
hoisting cumulus sheets for flags of truce:
Herry Bottle-Oh's cart clink-clanking by
on Dover Street till Vardens' terriers yap.
Our mother shaded her eyes and called. Unseen
above the roofs, hidden in leaves and sky,
we gasped with height and clung to the growing tip;
the wind and tree together swayed us green.

MANFRED JURGENSEN

to vincent buckley

autumn campus borrowing light, a time of no return. we meet
elsewhere. your crutch is dressed up as a walking stick with
which to measure patterns of a wilful day. you speak of ireland
and the illness that has called you home. my feeble questions,
weeds of love, outgrow your silent knowledge. naked children
climb a dying tree. we shiver. the cloisters swallow shadows
in echoes of the captive heart. turning our backs, at last you
smile in recognition and raise your glass in joy: well, *slainte*.
and, suddenly, our two half-languages recover some of their
familiar speech, the broken voice of shame and anger.