

Rob Morris

## WHEN THE WINTER WIND

When the winter wind  
lifted up and climbed into our beds  
we kids moaned and curled tighter  
deeply burying ourselves in the belly of the bed.  
It was so cold sometimes my brothers and I peed out midnight windows.

Grandad rose at dawn  
chippa  
to light the sticks and paper fire  
a Kooka  
that crackled and smoked into life  
and Grandad sang  
to the fire

"come on little fire  
come on little flame"

This was embarrassment roaring high.  
We kids rolled our eyes but loved it all  
when visitors slept over  
we giggled at our Grandad who sang to fires  
but the fire always responded  
to his melodious petitioning  
and by the time  
we'd run from bed to toilet and back to dress  
he'd have dished up  
sausages, eggs, toast  
and cups of tea  
that smoked like fog on top.

Sometimes he'd still be singing  
and the fire would still be going  
at the end of the day when we returned from up to the waist surf fishing  
freezing wet and weary hearing from the cold outside our Grandfather  
singing to the fire.