

Les Wicks

IMMORTAL GREY

3. Taste

Sharpest in the memory,
a time beneath a hills-hoist North Coast sun
when Tom & I were shooting air rifle slugs
just loose, up into the gums.
Until (colours implausible beyond the palette)
a thing of green & gold fell
clipping branches — rushed, heedless as though
this was the most important event in a life.

Then at our feet, a slapstick red
on its sunglass lime —
tiny chest heaving
grey eyelids locked.
That parrot demanded further butchery
to hide the crime & leave
a flat decency of death,
the jury of worms.

Two small males learnt,
went down the hill in search of a spade
followed by creamcake hours
amongst the baked company of women.
We thought they knew everything
except our filth.