

JOSEPHINE SCICLUNA

LAKE PEDDER

We are swimming above the forest
in our cold orange skin,
the skylight inches of surface
jaundice us
as we seep
foot
 after foot
 into blackness
here - below island peaks where eucalypts
hover at false white shores.

In fronds of risen water
this water gate descent
roots loose their grip on earth
to become soft and flailing
like fingers of suiciding women
the charge of electricity men
stunning their veins.

Did I push myself into this
Abyss, or is it a mountain?
I plunge my toes in
and slide off the edges of a solid world
to drift in the flesh of your dream
pictures I cannot discern
and you cannot remember.

The crescent birds cry egypt
when here are no pyramids of sand
to raise or enlighten our shadowy floor.
This quiet sea is a reflection
of wilting leaf tresses
it is the under storey of all love
we have left for dead.
Look at us, how we cling

to our sodden anchor trees.
When the pond imploded
what fell the animals
two by two
expelled from the spell of travel
as once I thought I was before you.
If you walk beneath the weight of myth
then as a myth I must dispel you.

See the eucalypts, they hold vigil
for a vain tide of sea
to evaporate finally these thin saline shores
and reveal old ground
the drowned lovers' chorus:
to take my hand, not ask of happiness
but to walk with me.

If you were a creature of trees
in an arc I would have carried you
two by two
not left you with the rest
to roam a hillside till death
crying for your land ho.

But this is now
and we are swimming
above the stolen forest
the sky lit inches of surface
these remnant light inches
repeat
in this deep land
we are all at sea.

I touch your skin
see its nuclear timbre
and our legs blown off into blackness
Sometimes
it is better to not see colour.

