

### 3. The Honourable Lover

She bore pinched feelings enough; knew  
the lover waiting (celibate, such austere  
restraint) could whisper in curtain-corners,  
break surreptitious breath, and bread,  
while the invalid grew old upstairs,  
and weak. Sometimes, carefully,  
touched his hand, merely tendered skin  
against his skin, leading to nowhere  
but vigil and a husband stubborn to live.  
Thought fed on unfleshed evenings alone,  
cold ash came flakes, and Irons hunched  
grimly, suffered the heroine's patience,  
piety, and care. Outside, unrealized in night,  
the scribbler moved to set things right.

The magic accident, the reader's awe,  
and stricken Florence dressed in black.  
The virtuous hero waits the time prescribed,  
allowed the final chapter, tears and all.

## DIANE MENGHETTI

### DAWN IN MOUNT ISA

Could I but taste a sunrise,  
Could I but taste it  
thick-packed, layer on layer,  
But red and rose-petal light  
in flavour.

I am a part of this town,  
seeking the vision  
Coming from under the ground  
to fumble for Eurydice in the dance-hall  
To cry for a revelation in the pub,  
To taste the daylight.

From the four corners we come,  
to look for the rest of it.  
In the cotton-wool, blood-flavoured dawning  
seek copper-gilt consolation  
for foreign children.

Over the slag-heaps and chimneys  
the sun once more rises.  
And echoing Cerberus howling  
we cry from the under world:  
'Lord just a sip

That we might know this sunrise  
And this day.'