

## MARGARET BRADSTOCK

### BIKE BURIAL (for V.S.)

Those ancient Vikings  
honoured their dead heroes  
with ship burials.  
We talked about that  
in the first Old English class:  
the ring-prowed ship  
icy and eager to depart,  
overly well equipped  
with corselets and weapons  
to bear the king out  
into the rime-cold sea.  
You rode it easy,  
yourself a war-goddess  
with braided hair,  
but braked interest  
said you'd take a year off,  
would rather be  
in the pits at Bathurst  
or riding courier to meet  
the h.p. instalments  
on your 1,000 c.c. machine.  
We laughed and promised  
a bike burial.  
The payoff came too soon:  
you put on battle-gear,  
visor lowered  
over helmet of fibreglass,  
accelerated all the way  
up infinity  
harnessed to an idea  
and got your hard reward,  
slammed into the future  
all systems screaming,  
immortalized in a tracery  
of twisted metal.