

NORMA KNIGHT

NOCTURNE

It is the time
to pause and reflect
the passing of the day—
the hawks, life-mated,
brake their flight
and glide on restless updraughts;
they survey the domain
with skill and ritualistic rhythms,
suddenly spilling their anticipation
past the jutting cliffs.

It is the time
when the waves
lope like spent cart-horses,
overdriven with rushing
and rearing at the bay;
when rabbits can no longer
contain the compelling force
that urges them to hotfoot it from their burrows,
although danger prowls outside
they must nose the buoyant air,
hop to clumps of blackberry-clawed green,
or move with ceaseless caution
to another patch of dandelion.

It is the time
when the sea-fog oozes
over the Hippolyte*
curtaining it till, it seems,
the great rock will not again appear
as an Acropolis for the seals;
when the sun transposes down the slopes,
and clouds take up their weirdest,
saturnine postures –
monstrosities too terrible to think upon
that shuffle and merge with colours
too euphoric to define the senses –

Fairy-tale screens loom
for the mind's inventions –

It is the time
to pause and reflect
upon the phenomenon
that all this will be permitted
to take place again.

*Hippolyte – Huge rock formation in the sea off the coast of Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania.