

DAVID BROOKS

NIGHT RAIN

Rain, hard rain, long after midnight.
We wake, and sleep, and wake again,
sometimes in sorrow, sometimes pain,
sometimes from dreams to find more dreams gone,
the body and the life readjusting, limbs
twining, or turning apart
in the ebbing and the flowing of the heart.

It continues, in dark walls and brushes,
sweeping forgotten places, chartless
hinterlands of memory or blame, thinning slowly
to the after-rain of branches, lingering
until the first birds come,
until, at last, on clean streets, gleaming pavements,
day breaks open, everything begins again.

ANNETTE CORKHILL

AGE I

The years of a woman's life are long
I do not give in to winter frost
nor succumb to the intoning of autumn leaves falling

I am defensible
strong as the spade which stings the garden
exposing my soul to the sub-stratum rocks
which bloom in age like the oldest eucalypts
spreading shadows in late afternoon or again before the nightfall

I prune my fruit trees
placing feelings under a microscope
and give to the neighbours cheek aplenty and complaining
of soil that spills too freely

I am not weary nor alone in my loneliness
they who pity the widow waste their sensibility

The mail box swings to its close
abruptly briskly slicing through the silence
another day yet without protest

ANNETTE CORKHILL

MANGOES ENCOUNTER-QUEENSLAND SUMMER

you know we all die one day older she was plump and malleable
six years with dark sticky patches the mangoes fallen from
eternity but concrete grooved clawed and suffered by screeching
creatures of the night dark to dark they returned from fruit
tree to leafy shadow joyful their delight their demon faces
blurred by distant lights die but for what to what understanding
pale forgotten death

for a stringy mango juice gliding down grimy faces and later for
a stolen kiss

behind the gate and for
a friend's hesitant plea
let's hide forgotten
in the bluster
of raucous play