The few cars are gutted
with shadow,
wind, sharp from needling rain,
has already cleared the street
of bustling leaves.
In the eat-all-you-can-
for-six-dollars-fifty
an old couple hovering
over their burdened plates
sink in each other’s silence,
two women talk urgently
leaning across a bay of tin pans
a lone man, fork raised, eyes me passing
ready to consume any stray expression.
The corner shop is shut
I turn back without milk or bread.
A Koori has taken his place
on the main street
pooled with spilt light,
lapping the edges of leaf shadow.
Shoulders Atlas braced,
feet threshing/hands kneading
he rises
Kathielyn Job

on the back wheel of a pushbike
and skims past
into succeeding lights.

Barbara Giles

TO A FRIEND LATELY DEAD

My name said once, high and joyful,
so you greeted me always.
Half a year later I hear it.
Can I hold it undying?

Can this imperfect ear
catch it in music?
Your face I have safe
in lasting sepia.

Salve to my soul, you esteemed me.
Raw places healed in your company.
Now I ache for your touching.