

PETER BELL

DISCONTINUITY

I met him in the corridor
as usual and smiled
not so much in deference
as at his sports coat plaid
but if he'd asked I'd
have said it was deference.

I was about to speak and
as Joan's been suggesting,
ask him and his wife round
for some drinks one
Friday

when he leaned against the wall
and put one
hand upon his cheek and
said "doctor" and fell forward.

When the ambulance
arrived I said I hadn't seen
him since the morning.

I'm not sure why.

But since then, I've been cutting
out the ads for other jobs
and planning an extension
to the carport.

I never liked him, but that's
not the point.

This grey roar
is tomorrow's
puddles.

Two frogs speak,
making arrangements.

DE BOUGAINVILLE

Waiting for other empires,
our mangroves slept past
your rigging's rattle.

And certain winds off palms
spoke of reefs
black on your lee.

Your Enlightenment prevailed.

Wanting no
footnoted fleur-de-lys
washed up in
our histories,

you tacked for bluer
water and a pension.