

no one

i am alone.  
my breath makes love  
to a dead phone.  
silence thinks of  
all that once was:  
broken windows,  
spiders on glass.  
a cold wind blows.  
love remembers  
the crying game.  
all prisoners  
beg for a name.

epiphany

daily i wait for the moment  
when the world appears undressed,  
stripped of language, without comment,  
object-lessons self-addressed,  
when form adds up to one clear view  
and wilful lines draw their sight  
of unattended signs that grew  
from a vision cast by light,  
when suddenly horizons call  
me back to one shared being  
where we are part of what is all,  
then, like a child, once more i learn  
the purest art of seeing,  
and all my senses are re-born.

make love to me with words

make love to me with words  
satisfying addiction.  
the senses' touch affords  
passions' most reckless fiction  
and common sense alike.  
teach our tongues to be precise,  
let all their kisses strike  
the one chord, for in it lies  
the secret code, the heart of art.  
make our contradictions rhyme,  
let their knowledge remain a part  
of our speech measured in time.

from *outrider*

bonegilla 1961

the heat of burnt grass,  
impotent anger  
at an english class,  
men getting younger  
by each disciplined day  
till they are schoolboys  
again, told to pay  
attention, roll-calls  
into another  
life, how to translate  
the humid weather,  
the shame and the hate.  
at night the huts throb  
in desperate love-  
making, young men sob

in darkness. dreams of  
childhood call them home.  
twilight rains set in.  
morning builds it dome.  
the snake sheds its skin.

### ethnic food

the brotherhood of man  
in an imported can.  
history's grim lesson  
as delicatessen.

his conscience raised on doubt,  
the jew serves sauerkraut.  
outgarlicked we at last  
are swallowing the past.

hamlet's blue cheese prices  
signifies a crisis  
in the growth of profit.  
death thinks nothing of it.

### migrants and natives

they come and stay,  
you stay and last;  
they lost their way,  
you keep your past.

they take your land  
and buy your spear;  
you lend a hand  
and drink their beer.

their honour died,  
your spirit weeps;  
their promise lied  
while dreamtime sleeps.

time's tracks advance  
whitefella's chance  
while you migrate  
your timeless fate.

can visions see  
a forlorn sight?  
must i too be  
cast in its light?

land makes you real.  
it sets you free.  
(why do i feel  
that it owns me?)

how to belong,  
be a brother,  
sing the world's song.  
we have no other.