

**DARE WE AS EDMUND DID**

Down there in the gutter  
and in the unlovely places  
where beauty does not bloom  
down there in the stinking mess  
where human endurance ebbs  
and the pathos of man's inhumanity  
to his brother and downtrodden sister  
that is where he stepped out  
and dared to focus a vision  
in the midst of all abandonment  
attempting to find that Godness  
hidden in ignorance and greed.  
The mess is still all around us  
though hidden by veneers of pain  
and the blindness of our selfishness  
to step out or to reach down as he did  
there are no accolades for those  
who go out against the fierce tides  
of the insular Australian dream  
and in this post Christian secular world  
we are being asked as Edmund was  
to shine a light into the darkness  
and to discover the Jesus for our age  
in the new poor and in the lost young ones

**NIGHT PRAYER**

It is the blue of evening,  
the sun has orbited away  
into the obscurity of time  
but it is not yet dark night  
all is hushed and quiet silent  
only the brush of a rare artist  
could piece together in order  
the mystery of this picture-form  
the blue is gradually darkening  
it is creeping down to touch  
the solid sure substance of earth  
with its breadth of quiet nothingness  
and in this act of divine intimacy  
birth is given over to darkness  
the picture holds for precious time  
and merges into the dying of day  
we draw our blinds out of respect  
and retire to bed for ritual sleeping.

### **INCIDENT**

The other day I fell off my bike,  
at the outset I had better explain  
it's not a ten-gear racing machine  
with aluminium wheels feather-light  
mine is just a battery operated bike  
a three-wheeler weighing a tonne  
and constructed entirely for invalids  
the generic name is 'gopher' I hear  
although mine is a 'Fortress 2000'  
but then again what's in a name!  
I must repeat that mine is a three-wheeler  
unlike the more sedate, squat machine  
having four wheels They hang to  
the earth but are stodgy of movement  
while a three wheeler will spin on the spot  
but are notoriously unstable at times.  
explanations complete I tell my story.  
I must have hit the curb or something  
so over it went and up I flew air born  
landing spreadeagled on the bitumen  
arse over turkey as said in the vernacular.  
Well with some effort I managed to  
up-end the bike on its three wheels  
but getting myself up was another thing  
I sat there stranded, trying in vain  
to hoist my pathetic useless bulk upright  
I struggled but all was a waste of time  
it was a deserted quiet stretch of road  
used by fewer cars and even fewer trucks  
but suddenly a running figure emerged  
a teenager, dark, possibly part Aboriginal  
he got his arms under my armpits  
and heaved me up into semi-standing  
but my bulk outweighed his slender form  
so he got a second grip and tried again  
'til I stood up again and sat on the seat  
he ran off heading for the Vic Park station  
I caught up with him and thanked profusely  
he had missed a train in the rescue attempt  
but now he quietly awaited the next one  
and smiled having done his deed for the day  
this whole rare incident reassured me  
of the inherent goodness of humanity  
I actually felt the fall was worth the effort  
Goodness exudes when under pressure.

### **A DAY**

It came and went  
in rare quietness  
which I desired  
preferring quietude  
to banal celebration  
not that I'm a wowser  
I desire happiness  
as much as the next  
but on this day  
I need to ponder  
on future plannings  
as dwindling days  
whittle the years  
leaving me fragments  
of precious timing  
to grapple with  
eternal problems  
ever compounded  
by electronica.

### **WONDER-BIRTH**

They were a tough looking pair  
he in creased singlet and shorts  
she in garish nondescript gear  
both were rather over-weight  
both looked sloppy in appearance  
then she lifted the tiniest baby  
from out of the depths of a pram  
the smallest baby I've ever seen  
its slender arms were as slim  
as my average size index finger  
I couldn't take my eyes away  
from this wondrous mime event  
he rummaged around in a bag  
and produced a wrapped bottle  
she suckled the tiny miracle-mite  
while he continued to rummage  
on producing finally a large pink bib  
bigger than the tiny feeding bundle  
my heart was so totally touched  
my superior subconscious attitudes  
dissolving into this so human miracle.

### **DAISY**

Daisy bushes have burst wild asunder  
into brilliant blooms without number  
the miracle has happened overnight  
after the first day of a sun-wonder  
they herald the introduction of a Spring  
of new life born out of Winter's shard  
when all has died, frozen into rottenness  
providing seed of rare lush new-life  
they appear suddenly out of a nowhere  
from smallest buds ripped from the womb  
of soft sensual earth-real deep-wormed  
into the lush mess of afterbirth providing  
this wondrous prism of wildest colour.

### **WARM LONGINGS**

It was a grey grave afternoon  
not really made to my likings  
because I am so grey by nature  
pain has worked its filigree patterns  
like tattoos up and down the body  
and happenings of living have burnt  
shame and tears deep into my frame  
yet still the sky piles clouds higher  
cloud upon cloud of latest winter  
we sense that Spring is close at hand  
we have felt warmest days of wonder  
but the weather is a mean back-slider  
not to be trusted in those early days  
so greyness is our close companion  
we drift together in our sad depressions  
would that we could laugh aloud forever  
but Our human nature is a fey changeling  
we mourn in the grey grave returnings  
but trust in the coming of rich warming  
and the wild revelations of newest light  
so we will endure the grey fag-endings  
carrying a little longer shame's banner.