

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.