

Story for performance #793
webcast from London at 08:09PM, 22 Aug 07



Source: Isabel Kershner, 'Prescribing surfboards for peace', *New York Times online*, 22/08/07.
Tags: [animals](#), [intimacy](#), [violence](#), [poetry](#)
Writer/s: [Margaret Trail](#)

© 2008 Barbara Campbell and the writer/s

blossoms soften
fat drops slip from broad leaves
her glossy ringlets spring gold and glittering
from under a pearly clasp
a dark crow wings west
its melancholy cry: is he crippled? has he died?

oh! warriors! declaim your slogans!
sharpen your arrows
shoulder your axes
gather every wily wit
grasp the hilt of your shining blades
we ride into Jerusalem tonight

roar roar
roar roar

silver stars sparkle in a frosted sky
the cat licks her litter of kittens in the fireglow
flames crackle water sizzles a soft hiss of steam kisses
damp tendrils
the baby smiles and chuckles

a sad sigh
a strangled cry
he sobs
I've lost my zip!
I've lost my job!
she sobs.
you rat. you rodent. you fat dolt.

a milk calf shivers in a copse of she-oaks
a shadow slinks
wind gusts bring a nipple-stiffening chill
her eyes fill with giggles
stuffing down laughter to stay quiet
hush he whispers
finger tapping on her plump lip
his salt belly sweat tangy-sweet
fuggy cum
orange sherbet on her thirsty tongue
she peeks over his hip bone at flickers in the dark
mice pattering? or just nothing, sliding in great blobs and droplets
into corners of the courtyard, down into the garden's dank ground
a match flares, a cigarette lit in the window

swans ripple cross the lake
galahs shriek
cockies pelt down gumnuts from the tree tops
clatter on the tin roof
the wombat grunts and hunkers down
the boy is ill
rheumy eyes brim with tears, splash on lashes smudge
dust on whiskered cheeks
the phone beeps

dice clatter on the table and death shifts in his seat

an icy glance
meets the long look of a grey-green eye
tick tock of the snow white clock
and he mopes
while she glowers in the heat

pictures from the tv soaked into her dreams last night
she was drunk
filled with flickering
the drone and sigh of newsmen
all night long in layers of crosshatched filament
incandescent and luminous
fluorescent, glimmering
hoards of angry men kerchiefed
masked and scarfed, guns jogging on their broad chests
dust clouds kicked up by tramping boots
blanketed and drowned her
the blunt edge
the sharp point
and clouds of fragrance
incense, soft hands paddling her through moonlit blankets

she shuffles and then cuts the deck
her elegant hands flip up
the queen of wands

oh my heart! the mother cat is back!
licking her kittens on the heavy rug
I pour her milk from the glass bottle
a fat inch of cream splashes over her saucer
her black muzzle is wetly white
in a pink minute

there on the doorstep a long box
wrapped in red paper, a big bow
velvet ribbon the colour of roses
and a cinnamon stick through the knot
how can I open this?
no gift is better than a wrapped up box
the card says: I love you very much
the box is heavy, I had thought cardboard
but it is a case
shining glossy black as I scrunch aside the paper
unknot the ribbon and drape it round my neck
still sitting on the step
it tickles
He has sent me a gun.
I snap the case shut. look up.
a curtain rustles
did some eye spy?
no other.
I splay my palm on the dark case
warmed by the sun
inhale his cinnamon, and the lash of his rose ribbon
stuff down my giggle
and stay quiet

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a
story by Margaret Trail.*