

THE QUARRY

Loud Crashes and Booms

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Trotting rain pounded
the tin roof in a deafening rhythm
Puffs of dust exploded as drops hurled from
A sky furious with drought

Black and grey bubbled against the fuchsia of the afternoon sky
Streaks of light shot through clouds
As the sun became a hidden nucleus of light
caught within a churning darkness

And the kookaburras laughed for the end of the dry
as they hid behind the flapping green leaves
and the wind raced by leaving the sweet
scent of rain and a quick jet of wet

blew inside through the window of the silent house
where Spank was curled, dreaming of runs in the bush
and the shining coats of female dogs

But he was awoken with a raspberry spray of rain

And thunder announced the storm's arrival
Spank braced, alert, never quite ready for the
fracturing bellow that followed the blades of light
and as his dream ended, and the storm grew

Spank's eyes flashed from side to side
their whites shining in the dark afternoon
for the loud booms reminded him of death
and turned the sweet scent of rain to the sweet scent of blood

And the flashes of light turned to sun-glinted metal
Shining near the sick horse or barren cows
or when the tide of drought pulled and
drowned the bull

The metal would flash
The noise would boom
and death would occupy his mind
different to the death of his own prey

Which was a warm scent of death but
The glint of the light and the darkness of metal
meant a cold death that threatened him
Not a sweet death and the comfort of food

The drought sucked the life from
The green of the valley
The wallabies left and there was silence as the land emptied
Until the booming came

Bringing him back to now
Surrounded by storm alone on the farm

His warm blanket was thistly and bristled against his hackles
as the wind mockingly howled from outside

He tried to think of happy times
Early mornings and stashed food
And his spray of yellow melting frosted tips of green
And snacks of dried and chewy afterbirth

Dreams in the sun
Curled on a lap by the fire
swimming for rocks
and chewing on tasty hoof trimming taffy

But the storm was the now
and the booming was closer and closer
and the strikes were nearer and nearer
He wasn't safe here

His nails on the wooden floorboards
increased the tempo in the storm's cacophony
The peacock sang out
a solo voice above the thunder

Dust swirled as the wind picked up
and Spank looked for a place to hide
from the noise and the flashes and
The smell of rain that trickled behind him

The noise of the rain and thunder increased
And the farmhouse lowered its roof
And drew in its walls
Until Spank was a puppy in a box

There, he quivered and whimpered and prayed

for the drought, for the animals
whose bodies had flattened
and been claimed by the drought

their skin draped over their bones
stretched and dried, taut across ribs
a pelted drum hit with raindrops
as the rain sang across the valley

And he pushed
And scratched
And howled
To be free

Until a wall opened up and he was outside
where there was no protection
From the sky who hurled
rocks of water

and he ran
away from the flashing
and the grumbling
and the battering

Through the thrashing trees
and the swirling wet leaves
tossed about by the wind
and clung to his back

Spank ran past ducks
Drawn out by the rain but turned back by the hail
and the horses, heads bowed
gave reverence to the storm

And Spank realised he was free
as the rain washed the dirt
from his coat and the rain
and his fear washed away with the water

A rhythm snaking across the land
Rivers held by the sky
Taking and giving drought
to those who weather storms