

TWO POEMS



Bruce Beaver

THE WAVE

At Avoca in 1950 the summer flowed
over the three of us once on a heather-covered
cliff-top. We lay back and let the warm
breeze move the flowered grasses about us,
watching the grey-white gulls in the towering
blue, beneath us the huge oasis-islanded
desert of the ocean. At another time
we walked over the table-topped apron of creviced
stone at a cliff's foot following the anemonied
and soda bubbling pools around the fang
of the coast when a great wave
came levelling and wallowing about the three
of us, arms linked together, and lifted us
a good half foot off our own treading
feet, swaying us arm-locked together
for more than one eerie moment, pushing us
towards the cliff then pulling us insistently
towards the crevassed edge of the ocean
forever for five seconds. Then we were half
wet through and free to assume our shocked way
to the cliff-top and the sun's abiding
warmth, too chilled to talk, too relieved to run.

THREE NOT-QUITE-SO-STILL LIVES

I

A primitive aware of its usage,
its aim and battered equipage,
a roofless trailer housing a cement-
mixer squats beneath a pine.
Dead-headed yet enriched by a body of leafage
the tree pretends to shelter the machine.
Two red flags at its rump complete the vision
as unattractively functional as asphalt.

II

A plastic bag borne on the wind like a bird
dive-bombed by two Stuka magpies
beating embarrassed recalls
into the green gum foliage.
On the lawn the white deflated bag
calls it a day replete with heaven searching,
come to earth away from penetrating beaks
and the pneumatic freshets of the dawn skies.

III

Disconsolately tuneful, the painter's radio
hangs over the abyss of roofing.
White-spattered black of plastic transistor,
aerial bent over like a metallic snowdrop.
It burbles rock and worse,
the talk-back of a pop demagogue.
It mollifies him. Someday it will slip,
fall for a while then simply fly away
triumphantly, fellow to the crazy plover.