

Poetry

Whisper

Close by the bones of Joshua Blane
paving is laid, and tiles are hoisted up,
ochre and grey-green, and wedged between slats
in thick stacks. High up, dirty dishwater cloud
botches heaven again, tends to apricot and ash-black
as it should, must — now while the wicked clock
is thinking, diesel quarrels with diesel, executives
ponder the employment of cabling
and its guest electrons. Flavour is an abstraction,
even if you can feel it — behind the glass of wine
a manufacturing sector switches on
and the motors begin their old complaint.

Now the dazzle falls from the sky
at purple dusk, glitter sprinkling down
on the lucky citizens of Oligopolis
and on the lawn a drawling colonial accent
fondles and enriches every idle comment
turning shopping into a kind of predestination.

The folding table folds up and rolls away
and a First Aid kit has lots to tell us:
traffic, old musicians, polystyrene —
we all have a right to speak, and an obligation
to pay attention to the slightest whisper.

JOHN TRANTER