

# THE WAITING

'My lungs burst  
like fire in dry grass.  
You are scarred from rib to rib  
and it looks like a smile.

It's loud when the moon's out –  
the dancing branches shake  
blossoms from the trees.

We were gentle when the night fell  
like eventual rain  
and we slept like curled dogs  
our hearts jumping at the night owls  
and all the birds sleeping.

I called you in the gum drenched dark  
and you were just a shiver,  
so I warmed myself  
on the curve of your spine.  
I can bear it more  
if we feel real.'

Kirsty Oehlers (Western Australia)