

Eucalyptus-Undom

After artefact, the red bellied mahogany,
Is meat in resin, a folked taste of sap,
In dark museum halls, human arteries wrapped under the cambium,
Walk in the fantastical cinema, spectate, the wood chop fair,
How bodies learn fire, smelt steel, grind ancient limbs to abstraction
Fire projected on the walls at great distance,
Libraries of lumber, on the walls at great distance,
Eucs licked slick of commodity; kino, tale, timber, fibre, art piece, artefact,
Or to quantify the cellular layer, the nutrient value, how to syphon oil from the wood with beakers and
bunsen burners and reduce it to purity, to one thick molecule
And collect it in the private chambers of a museum to be consumed as
Alchemy, chemistry, language, economy,
In fat delicious arbour the Corymbia, Angophora, Eucalypt,
Hung heavy with abattoir smell with human sound—
Suspend disbelief, that there is virgin forest,
Eucalyptus-undom
Somatic in-body-experience
Swallowed inside hollow roots of the body,
Where there are leaves the size of a face.

Static Beneath the Machine

Broken down by the cotton crop
Through diegetic radio static beneath the machine, that,
The [new] site would provide the koalas with the “greatest safety and wellbeing”
Flat tyre and arid dirt on hands and on the tyre
A farmer runs his cotton-picker across the land
After the harvester, there is the vacant, soiled ground,
Though sometimes, sunlight tries to pool between the burrs and make small swamps
Or streams in like dripping magnitudes of blue gum forest, like marsupial land,
Absent is the cicada noise, now radio noise in and out, and
The report [that] argued the relocated koalas “would have a good opportunity to settle in”
Brown snakes are swimming like hands through the distant vegetation, and still,
Every single one of those plantations is due to be cleared at some point
A magpie nests on a branch at the periphery
Though, the tyres carry onward.
Man’s hands and arid dirt and spare tyres in hand
Gathered a dress up into soft palms
Cotton strange beneath engine oil
Engine oil strange on bare soil.
The company has decided to go ahead with the logging without relocating the koalas

A harvester continue along in the distance
Man says,
'Big car for a little girl.'

Just to try and the koalas from disappearing¹
To watch soot turn the magpie black.

Yellow-Top Mallee Ash/Eucalyptus luehmanniana

Stalacmite-d and stripped bark stringy follow streams of mallee down miles of glaucous shoots nibbled by moth larvae leave trailways along lignotubers and suckers and brack-ed branches, invertebrates in hollows hovered away from antechinus scrubbing beneath the tangle and over rocky escarpments and under plains and plateaus, coming up from the soil from the sleeps of fathomless fires the yellow top ash with leggy labyrinths nested in sandstone heath headed towards the sun through flood through drought through time and time again, through human epithet Luehmann like the first scrape against immaculate bark like the letters m-i-n-e brak-carved into the cambium and clearing the corridor to grub the heath to uproot the rhizomes from triassic sandstone make way for cattle grazed in craze upon foreign seeds in fireless fields and craft the killing apparatus, the final cut in our hands upon the floor.

George, the Barrenjoey Light-Keeper

George Muhall was a saint of sandstone scrubland and light-ed the way for passing sea-boats and died on a Thursday
in the storm gathered wood for a fire to keep the cold socked out after his shoes came on he died without preamble as lightning came and struck down upon the heads
came starboard through his body and boots like the hands of god or perhaps just the bough of many Angophora
just imagine the charcoal and the limbs,
in fact, newspapers said that he was burnt to a cinder [like timber] to which he replied;
repent, repent, or prepare in time to follow me to which I say;
alright, trees are bitterscorched, heath in flames again, hands are tied, and the light may yet burn black.

¹ All indented lines are extracts from Stephanie Tran's article in The Guardian

Tran, S. (2022, May 6). *Wildlife activists make 11th hour plea to save koalas before Victorian blue gums logged*. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/may/05/wildlife-activists-make-11th-hour-plea-to-save-koalas-before-victorian-blue-gums-logged>

The Elegy to Tree at Curtain Call

The loose opposites that silence and noise bring,
Neither fully sympathetic
To branches soft with cicada and hawk moth wing, the gliders in hollowed-out-corymbia-utero, and black
cockatoo squawked upside down like an acrobat in the wings with beak and phenomenal ribbons,

Just the heavy cadence of limbs falling,
Big globed palms wrapping around the log,
The last crescendo spat through the mulcher
Or more solemn still, the absence of any sound subsequent, and the curtains close and no applause.

Where does the ticket stipulate that first human must be animal
To write away entire forests, to bring scene into silence?
The actual animal of it,
That there is no loose opposite of human or tree and
Only longing silence from beyond the curtain

When at last the marsupial is splayed on the stage and we are in our seats
We would slip our sawmill mouths closed and listen as our animal sounds are silenced.