

From a collection of hand and typewritten pages of verse
by Elizabeth Durack – loosely assembled into five parts
by padc July 2010.

V **Blaze Blue Giant!**

- 1 Let critics snort ... (c.1962)
- 2 Pictures talk at an exhibition (1974)
- 3 Random titles from an exhibition catalogue (1973)
- 4 The struggle between real and abstract painting
 (1956)
- 5 March (1956)
- 6 **About Painting** (1962)
- 7 Stand still that devil (1968)
- 8 Include me out! (1980)
- 9 Trying is not enough (1974)
- 10 Oh angel (1956)
- 11 **I wandered in a desert** (c.1960)
- 12 A thought on life patterns (early 1960s)
- 13 Reward (1956)
- 14 Vale and Ave (1956)
- 15 Apres Suez (1956)
- 16 **Blaze Blue Giant!** (1956)
- 17 the rim and beyond ... a reply (1988)
- 18 **Owed to a PC** (1994)
- 19 Petit testament (1998)

6 About Painting

I would reach up
 and with my hand's eye
 tear open
 the imprisoning sky
 and twisting cloud
 around my fingers
 rip it like fairy floss
 across –

I would stretch out
 and with my heart's length
 wrench children
 from maternal arms, wind-scattering them
 in cloud dust –
 to hold them there
 though cyclone lost,
 unlost.

I would, with a brush knife,
 prize off the domes
 of human heads
 beat up their brains
 in shattered skylscapes
 of cloud-wrack
 to shower them down again
 in rain.

Oh, I would take flight
 upon the mind's wing
 rise above earth-bound earth
 and, spiralling through vortices
 of cloud funnel
 float out at last
 upon translucency
 to dream
 to drown
 and, there within the Calm Eye
 of my own mind.

Find.

#

Perth, April 11, 1962

11 **I wandered in a desert ...**

I wandered in a desert and found it peopled
 Dying of cold in a waste-land I kindled a fire

Bring fuel for the fire
 The fire of my eyes
 And build it up higher
 (Too soon a blaze dies).

Fuel of hard deserts
 Red as hot blood
 Where brittle bright green
 Shoots up after flood.

Fuel of the wind-torn
 And rain-sodden places
 Where the dead and the unborn
 Lift up their faces –

Fuel of the biting rocks
 Gnawing at white skies
 Its hard glare that unlocks
 Closed mouth and shut eyes.

Bring in more fuel
 Stack it yet higher
 Hot, red and cruel
 And hungry my fire

Fire in these eyes of mine
 Tend it and feed it
 Red in the night to shine
 Should the lost need it.

16 **Blaze Blue Giant!**

"The nearest star is 300 trillion miles from the earth..."

*"What nonsense! Why, I touched one on my way here across
the common tonight."* William Blake

Blaze Blue Giant!
and pour forth
your azure brilliance
further than outer space –
swell and distend yourself
and in the full lust of growth –
predatory now
swallow your component star
disgorge it.

And in a frenzy of insatiate appetite
build up, break down your
component in digestible parts
to mystery gases – freeze and burn
shrink –
and in an incalculable
furnace switch helium to iron
and in doing so distend
again shrink and distend.

Then beyond all hope
and out of all control
explode in a frenetic instance –
now as a White Dwarf
remnant of your former splendour.

Come, while I toss you
to Bill Blake
in the backyard after dark –

#

Perth, 1.10.1956

18 Owed to a PC

I intuited the writing of poetry
and of deathless prose -
that was why I got
a Dedicated Word-processor
in the first place.
It was called a Brother -
but not so easy going.

I answered an ad in
the local Post and
a young woman came
and gave me lessons.
She said she had once had one
and they were good
when you got used to them.
So I battled on
through cold days
and sometimes
quite late at night.

Then David came
from overseas:

'Get rid of that! Auntie Bet!'
he said. 'It's a dinosaur!
What you want is an IBM Compatible
and a Hewlett Packer printer ...'

So I went shopping
and when I saw that Myers
was discounting
an Amstrad 630 PC
I asked casually
as though I knew what it meant:

'Is it compatible?'
Assuredly I was told
and 'on special'
So the thing came in -

Like having a baby I had to re-design the room
to accommodate it -
With the help of a carpenter
and an electrician eventually it was installed.
More lessons and
Private Tu' of a Wednesday
morning.

It was into another winter now
so I got a safety device
against electrical storms
and a power surge -
I also got it inoculated against
virus infection
that could be deadly,
I was told, particularly
if one shared around.
I joined an Amstrad-users Club
where a lot of that
sort of thing went on -
I didn't care for it at all
so I dropped out
after only a couple of meetings.

Time passed -
Holding Control I pressed Home
hopefully
and the files mounted
Open Options
press Alt+O ...
But the Last Used dates
got wider and wider
apart -

Time passed.

Then David's son
turned up -
from overseas:

'Get rid of that! Great-aunt Bet,'
he said, 'it's a dinosaur!
'What you want
is an Apple
the new LC475
so user-friendly
you'll not believe ...'

But all the poetry
that I intuited
and all the deathless prose
has not materialised to date ...

Then last night as I slept
the ghost of Jeremy's son
stood by my bed
and taking me by the hand
led me to this desk:

'Get rid of that!
Great-Grand Aunt Bet'
he said, 'that's a dinosaur -
and, moreover illegal -
there is no place for fuel-guzzlers in this day and age
of sustainable postponement of the ultimate demise of our
species

take up your pen and pencil again and turn your back on
the dreadful mistakes of our far and terrible past ...'

Then the ghost of Jeremy's son
faded away ...
and I was left
all alone
with my Myers account
and the latest bill
from S E C W A.

#

Perth, Monday July 25 1994

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