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## Poetry of Roe 8

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**Poetry of Roe 8**  
*Nandi Chinna*

*Nannas'*

Because silver hair shines in the moonlight  
we dress in black and cover our heads  
when we stalk at night in the banksia woods.

The dumped couch is a handy screen;  
fallen branches make crooked spoons  
to stir our diversionary recipe.

Buckets of cement in each hand we stagger  
towards the fence line, becoming statues  
in the headlights of passing cars;

becoming tuart, balga, marri.

When I tell the policeman that I'm old enough to be his Nanna  
he snarls *Why don't you act like one*,  
which is what I am doing; mixing and stirring,

pouring wet cement into the fence post holes,  
holding the future from the inside of the compound,  
railing against extinction from the muted

grey space of the paddy wagon.

*Watch, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017*

I'm not a detective. So how is it that I'm waiting  
in the Bibra Lake car park, recording the license plates  
of white utes, while the animal trappers sit in the shade  
at the edge of the lake laughing and eating from their orange eskys?

Then its on. They start their engines, leave the car park, I'm right behind  
my no Roe 8 stickers a dead giveaway. They accelerate–slow down–  
damn they lose me at the traffic lights. Ha! They must think,  
but here I am again waiting at the gate until they emerge again.

To the east I can see Bibra Lake a mass of green  
billowing typha grass, water dotted with birds.  
At the top of the Norfolk Island Pine tree  
a white eagle is also watching, and waiting.

*16 January 2017*

The tawny frogmouth owls have flown  
out from the falling tree.

The woody pear flowers tumble  
through the steel teeth of the mulcher.

Our houses are full of dust.

## *Tawny Frogmouths*

Owls have become trees and the trees  
are owls that fly up like flames  
escaping a fire, disguised as smoke  
simmering from the soil.

How quietly they sat for years;  
like trees, like owls, moon coloured  
eyes closed into knots of bark.

After the bulldozer became silent;  
locked in its razor wire pen for the night,  
protected by guard dogs and searchlights,  
we found the bundle of silvery grey;  
disguised as a fallen tree limb,  
an empty casing of feather and bone.