

Whispers, songs and shrieks

Anonymous

I thought I heard a chorus
 Soft and sad upon the wind
 Whispers of an ancient forest
 Where the ghostly gums once lived.
 'I'm sure it was nothing ...
 But these new suburbs are something!
 "Gumnut Vista", "Forest Valley"
 Springing up all around me.
 Though I'm yet to see a gumnut
 Or a valley filled with trees.'

I thought I heard a soft song
 In the melancholy flow
 Of a sombre sapphire ocean
 Of crashing waves and woe.
 'I'm sure it was nothing ...
 But wasn't that coal-ship something?
 That cocktail of oil, reef and sea
 Spread out like shadow
 In shapes you wouldn't believe?
 These things sometimes happen.
 It's part of industry.
 There's no need to worry,
 Though you best avoid the beach.'

I thought I heard a chanting —
 Solemn, woeful, muted shrieks
 Flooding opal crusted caves
 Many miles beneath my feet.
 'I'm sure it was nothing ...
 But this mining boom is something!
 Rip rocks out of the earth
 For bucket-loads of money
 And everybody's winning
 ... except the land we live in.
 Consequences be damned
 When dollar signs are glistening!'

And in the evening silence
When the stars hold up the sky
If I listen hard enough
The sad sounds linger and combine
In a song that's inconvenient
I prefer the peace and quiet
If I crank my telly loud enough
I'm generally alright.