Croatia: Parallel Migrations

Magic
eight ball darkness
follows like a cape.

Unwoven
from mother’s bindles it
spills out to
nuzzle at our ankles
and window panes in
a mist.
We strike and pounce,
bag the mist,
throwing it under the
bricks that built
our home.

Our home.
ivy gathers like lace
in patterns of stones.
Stones poached from
the Royal National Park:
sandstone, quartz, aragonite
and granite.
Mother says
“Why we pay for earth
when everything around us is?”
We roll the rocks into
a membrane around
the garden.
Simian feet melting
into the grooves as I
retrace retrace…

We race
home with council stakes
ripped from the sides
of the congealed highways.
It’s midnight and with a
hanging brow we lean them
against all sides of the house,
which for six years now
have all but
remained free.

At the other end of Earth
I find the remains of the cape.
Scattered as scraps of a pall now,
it’s the darkness in the buts of
cousin Ivan’s cigarettes.
His ogre teeth, bathed in beer
that’s been superglued to his hand
since he served in war.
He’s fired a gun twice,
once by accident and the other at a squirrel.

Their crunching chatter
fills summer nights as we
walk through
desktop wallpapers.
There lie the lapis waters,
no tropical drink in sight.
Instead, a pool of water
is surrounded by a sea of green fronds,
moss-encrusted boulders and
slick ferns that hug the edge
of shadows.
Regurgitated greenness
blankets the eyes.
Azure waters inhale the sky,
pumping life through darting fish.
A plaque fervently warns
of unknown depths and
the mythic origins of dragons.
My head grows heavy,
spun round at its shores,
never to be
immersed.

My head sinks into the textbooks
but my eyes notice the bamboo outside.
Ivy and gold leaves of torn cellophane,
like lost jigsaw pieces,
they lick and tease the sky.

The sky sneezes.
A pool of black cats
darker than the night above,
lounging on cobblestones,
bathing under streetlights.
The air is thick with
late night strolls,
gelato and reclining stars.

The Orion.
Seen from both ends of the world;
a memory is retold, set in a time
before I was born.
Mist clings to the feet of
mother and father, both bright in youth,
as they stargaze with handmade telescopes.
Dawn breaks over the darkness.
They discuss the wedding,
the farm, the past,
then the future.

Finding the Orion
that first night in Brisbane,
caught them by surprise.

Every year or so a finger points
and retraces the specks to me:
co-ordinates of home.