Poems

Mark Mahemoff
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Abstract
GREG, SOME NIGHTS

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the wire that held his sinews taut
snaps as if oiled by tears
for one on whom revenge
has played its turn –
and it is hard to tell
whether it was them
or it was them...

Mark Mahemoff

GREG

A body was found drifting in the Parramatta River.
Its face was wrinkled, swollen white,
chewed to anonymity by fish.
That wasn't written in the newspaper
but you can imagine it.

I'd known him for some months
and had been drawn into a friendship
by the quiet way he went about his business
in the sheltered workshop.
He managed his psychosis
like a loaded semi-trailer
on a steep mountain road.

While his body was being sliced and probed for answers
I was telling his girlfriend the news.
She cried with the honesty of someone
who hadn't had a chance to say goodbye.
We sat in mute grief
knowing that's all we could do.
We both went to the funeral
that was held in a small coastal town.
Greg's scattered family gathered for the occasion
and they could all see him in each other.
One had his eyes.
Another his mouth or voice.
Greg was in everyone
and the silence revealed birds
as we inhaled life from the newly dug earth.

SOME NIGHTS

Some nights your absence has a shape
that I hold close
like a pillow or memories.
But slowly it becomes less you
and more the lack of anyone
to share a smile, an understanding.
When the phone rings unexpectedly
I always hope it's you
but at the sound of your voice
I find nothing left to say.
I look around my flat
and know how empty it would be
with all you left behind removed.
In fact my life would have less substance
if I did not grant our past
the courtesy of such sad moments.