1998

Poems

Rod Mengham

Follow this and additional works at: https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi

Recommended Citation
Available at:https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol20/iss3/21
Poems

Abstract
SMITTON, THE STOA

This serial is available in Kunapipi: https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol20/iss3/21
Rod Mengham

SMITTEN

Before dawn all the first born
died under the anaesthetic.

Paper, ink, pen and all
the poisonous skin is heir to

started to feel utterly strange
I still have the ticket

lights go out and this automatically
puts hope into the hygienist.

They named a clinic in Chicago
I have never walked into

in the dark of the stem
although hidden now is the balance of power

the square root on which life depends
but that's not the only answer.

The casual tourniquet has ceased to turn
I explain to the children my nightmare

hating the mainland as it slips from view
for the breaking surf has covered it over

with everlasting moisturiser.
THE STOA

i. No republic without hard art
debriefing a holiday romance

the long wormcasts so dear to me
the rate of flow comes back

gender must be saved from drowning.

ii. The memory roots itself in a dialling tone

no lesson in faith
is the ticklish commander of this mission

incensed and pushily unavailable

iii. the flesh delays for
the sound of breathing up stairwells.

iv. Even in youth you cheated
with hinges of hand over fist.

Now it's a pack of lies

they ply to and fro and
bring colour to the floor of the hunting lodge.

v. The teeming brain

comes off the rails

no one has any idea

in the dark passage of our natural life
draw the veil or apply the dimmer

quietly cross it off the list.

vi. A mind laid waste by flying colours
does not belong in these halls and corridors.

vii. Happiness in side-shows
built on sand. Rest in the shade

with a packet of sliced cheese.
It took three men to guide your feet
your pocket money had gone missing.

Thoughts of impeachment keep things straight
like tiny grubs within the pale.

The last request
carries no weight.

The keys to your cell
are pushed through the bars.

Barefoot in the freezing labyrinth
your friend is a late learner

lower your antennae now.