

Almost Pause/ Pareidolia

*"Narcotics cannot still the tooth
that nibbles at the soul."*

~Emily Dickinson

Labile wonder, no rabbit-like fear, sea hares
filling the tide pools with their magenta ink are
flamenco dancers as much as mermaids were

dugongs. All those sailors mistaking the docile
monogamists for sirens. How often we graze
our hulls on rocks of clear vision. Still, we have

to see it with our own eyes, their turning tricks
their light desires, billowing in the space between
landforms, soft folds shape. Forest cockatoos

have entered the city. Baroque ripples in their
wingtips indicating stress. Married to what
we intuit as signatures, this persistent cleavage

A sickle shaped leaf at the base of one remnant tuart
Slow chanted count of the mopoke above our heads
While in camp fire ash, the roughly laid out matrice

of squares on a turtle's back speaks of net. Here a man
quadriplegic, has been taught by his mother to make
a sign of the cross with his tongue. Number

the things played out in the mouth. Language hesitates
to enter the concealed strand of vertebrae beneath
a dark lick of scales, uncoiling across blackened remains

of balga, racing as snake into our shared vision. Our
hands extensors and abductors gripping themselves
riven in resistance, the words 'beyond regeneration'

heard again in a stand of sheoaks. We can follow
the blood red trail of uneaten zamia nuts out
of scalded wetlands. Mining mountains no longer

unmoved, even this verse cannibalizes itself
remembering the feast to come. *Like, when I
use the word 'eternity', when what I mean to say, is 'water'.*