

Phosphorescence

Three o'clock and caffeine traps you
between sleep and waking,
pulls you back like a dog restrained
from the roadside forest of smells.
Thoughts move and join in something like dream-patterns
so that 'did the new house have curtains?'
becomes a movie of theft,
and probing the future leads to a story
about having a son who'll die of snakebite
far from help in a National Park.
Three thirty and the grey-field swarms phosphorescence,
mushrooms of semi-consciousness,
sickly as the landscapes Nolan made for Burke and Wills.
One wrong turn provokes another and it's four o'clock,
faint light already picking out the calendar,
and the door is a riddle
despite its solidarity with the walls.
Half an hour's blackout and the radio arrives
like a dream come from the wrong place,
giving the statistics on another black-eyed day.

(from Graeme Miles — *Phosphorescence*, p 12)