

# ROB SCOTT

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## WAKE OF A ROVER

I eye him off  
deep in the carriage  
in the last-stop bedlam  
of the 8.15.

I'd seen him before  
sitting knee to knee  
robed in his checkered  
hush-puppy beige;

post-champion demeanor  
calling to mind  
the dust-free and dog-eared  
footy books

jutting at random  
from primary school shelves.  
Approaching the doors  
I have front-running,

am home and hosed  
but at the critical moment  
lose sight of him  
like he's tracked my course

before ducking and weaving,  
throwing me a dummy;  
sending me the wrong way  
to wrestle thin-air to the ground

while he sprints off  
into the clear.  
Right in front  
a switch in play

he reappears  
and disembarks  
legs bowed from years  
of weaving trickery and filling

the pack's hollow.  
He won the Brownlow  
in the late sixties.  
That would make him as old

as my old man  
if he were alive.  
A throng on the steps  
leads down to the Loop

I trail in the wake  
of a rover's search  
for ample cul-de-sacs.  
Glued to the plodding

congregation,  
my also-ran course  
nears its end  
at the beginning

of another day  
as we shuffle to the gates  
all of us with our different  
trains of thought.