

My Country

Tug Dumbly

(After Dorothea Mackellar)

The love of truth and virtue,
Of humanitarian aims,
Of decency and justice
runs through other veins.
Compassion for the suffering
Of folk from other skies
I know but cannot share it,
My love is otherwise.

I love a stunted country,
A land of weeping shame,
Of ragged locked-up strangers'
Incarcerated pain.
I love her stubborn meanness,
Her fat-cat lawyer fees,
Her litigious terror
Of bindi-eye and bee.

Majestic old-growth forests
for whom the woodchip tolls,
are chewed up to produce
a billion toilet rolls.
And stuff the Ozone layer,
Those gas emissions thick
Can melt the polar ice-caps
Like an esky brick.

Core of my heart, my country!
Land of the handshake gold,
Where cash for comment shockjocks
fatten up their rolls.
As flashy corporate swindlers
find greasy palms to oil,
kickbacks top the coffers
And bankers scoff the spoils.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless squalid lies
Sick at heart surround us
Thick as rancid flies
But then an election gathers,
And we can vote again
For some punchless little Judy
Whose vision we sustain.

A flinty-hearted country,
A wanton, slavish land—
Unless you love America
You're for the Taliban.
It's black and white, cut and dried
Pinned in our private sty:
'Bugger you, I'm right Jack'—
the Lucky Country's lie.