

Andy

Redemption

Summer heat shimmers.
Mirages waver and disappear.
Bicycle tyres hum
On the hot bitumen road.
Occasionally collecting a sticky,
Tar covered pebble
And rattling it under my mudguards.
Summer days nearly kill me.

Not a breath of air stirred
At least not in the tree tops.
Down here, trucks pushed hot waves.
I seemed to peddle into a furnace.
Every breath tasted like dust
And only parched me further
Leading me to dream,
Of a frozen lemon-lime splice.

The number 13 bus shelter beckoned.
Its galvanised roof, lattice sides
And advertising signs
Offered shade and relief.
The graffiti etched, slatted seat
Informed me in bold, deeply carved
letters
That Cheryl P was a goodtime girl.
Interesting, but not life saving.

What I needed was something cold.
I turned out my pockets:
Two paper clips,
My Old Timer pocketknife,
One dollar ninety in coins,
A very shiny piece of rose quartz,
And a spare valve cap.
A Lemon-lime splice costs two dollars.....

I didn't notice it at first.
The sun slipping past the zenith
Snuck a slim ray between the latticework,
Reflecting off a glass surface,
Catching my eye.
An empty Coke bottle.
Redeemed for the promised ten cents
This would be my lemon-lime lifesaver.

With enthusiasm renewed
I hurled myself recklessly
Into the same relentless heat.
The promise of that ice cold treat
Giving me strength and purpose.
At last Mr Leong's corner store appeared.
I skidded to a stop on the gravel path;
Yes - I would live to cycle another day.