



Spring Storm Sonata

Glen Phillips

I

Characteristically, young gum tips
are golden, tawny rather. Then greening
later when spring rains have come.

And the other side of spring?
Look on the ground;
look for the florettes—
see the remnants
of gum blossoms
where ants are curious.

Wool-sack clouds scud across this
china-blue spring sky
matched by muted shadows
moving over pasture and paddock.

It is a vast land, yes. Distance means
nothing when a weather front sweeps in;
even ringbarked spectres fringing swamps
are shrugging in the breeze, clattering
limb and clustered branch. And when
the wind rises with gusting tumult,

the next downpour joins in. Even
stutter of hailstones adds measures to the
cacophony of thunder. Then coming dark.

Boy walks roadside
by a muddy ditch
where the overhang
of she-oaks distributes
a stream of droplets
on the nape of his neck.

Yet so long to go
in a life barely begun?
It overwhelms. Now
the paths chosen
are no more.
For here, too, the storm
tracks ascend to
crescendo with
chain lightning flashes.
Then it is finished.