

## **Footprints**

**By Rob Harle**

Scaling the crumbling cliff of destiny  
I turn and let my eye fall  
down down to the valley floor;  
footprints disappear  
filling with the dust of barrenness,  
echoed unmistakably  
in shades of strictures far too harsh;  
every advance eroded,  
every move to imprint upon the path  
a permanence,  
is swept away unnoticed.

Reflecting, resting on a ledge,  
the hardness of my granite loft  
belies enduring limitations,  
decaying basalt strewn across

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a face of life intimidates mortality  
and the fault line of life and death  
narrows to a slit,  
a fractured folding.

Higher now the valley fading  
obscured by veils of mist;  
temptation to dissolve into the misting  
lessens with each weathered rock,  
and mellowness betrays the ageing.

But all too soon I'll reach out gladly  
to touch the rising moon.

## **Sandgate**

Flanked by a nightmare furious highway  
beside a forbidding green-brown river  
the bodies that built - “Our Town”  
lie still and shivering.

Graves stretch in an endless mirage  
like red-brown autumn leaves  
neatly lying in rows,  
facing East at the Sandgate.

Waiting!

But the gates are closed,  
locked solid - topped with rusting razor wire,  
the furnaces deathly cold,  
industrial detritus abandoned  
rusting into a deep red-brown,  
pipes, tanks and twisted iron  
monuments left by the “Big Australian.”

A town built by “little” Australians,  
decent, honest and proud  
steel-town-tough – but,  
not tough enough to cheat mortality,  
their invisible masters  
lurking in stock exchange tabernacles  
hiding in locked board rooms,  
now long gone.

To rest in peace,  
the wages of a well lived life  
a steadfast promise of death  
is cheated here.

The ferocious screeching traffic  
mindless of the sanctity of the Sandgate,  
incessant 'till the witching hour  
agitates the bones of the autumn leaves,  
as they wait for eternity and peace.

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**Bio:**

Rob Harle is a writer, artist and academic reviewer. Writing work includes poetry, short fiction stories (some experimental and co-authored by a computer), academic essays and reviews of scholarly books and papers. His work is published in journals, anthologies, online reviews, books and he has two volumes of his own poetry published – *Scratches & Deeper Wounds*(1996) and *Mechanisms of Desire* (2012). His art practice currently involves digital-computer art both for the web and print. His giclée images have been exhibited widely. He is especially interested in promoting the inclusion of visual art in academic and scientific journals. Formal studies include Comparative Religion, Philosophy, Architecture, Literature and Psychotherapy, his thesis concerned Freud's notion of the subconscious and its relationship with Surrealist poetry. Rob's main concern is to explore and document the radical changes technology is bringing about. He has coined the term *techno*Metamorphosis to describe this. He is currently an active member of the Leonardo Review Panel, Editorial reviewer for the Journal of Virtual World Research and an Advising Editor for the Journal of Trans-technology Research. Artwork, Publications and selected writings are available from his website [www.robharle.com](http://www.robharle.com)