

## **Blood**

***John Ryan***

*gum trees emit, when wounded, a stream of  
reddish fluid of a consistence not unlike thick  
blood  
– George Fletcher Moore, 1884*

once you've seen blood  
you look for it everywhere  
the glowing dark enamel

seeping from chambers  
where organs pulse  
blood impregnating blood

wave after wave  
in the columnar light  
of late afternoon, a marri

performs a plasma-letting  
I taste the feasting flies  
with flecks of sugary kino

disintegrating on my tongue  
imparting an acrid sting  
agreeable as an antiseptic

their lineage inside my blood.  
bloodroot spicing bland roots  
or the colonial bloodroot

white-flowering under oaks  
the profusion of my blood  
after a summer camp slashing

how it spilled like a springtide  
or an open tap in my eyes  
I asked would it ever stop.

strange spangles of crimson  
along a suburban Seattle street  
after the drunken night ranting

of the neighbours, a terse friend's  
nose ruptured from the altitude  
of New England Green Mountains

his only ebullition of the day  
my scalp sopping like fresh paint  
as the surgeon excises a lesion

and all the births I will never see,  
including my own, but blood  
is everywhere, though the body

dams it back in its remotest gorges  
it gushes forth at improbable  
moments of indifference—

blood *ortus* blood, *nativitas* blood.