

THE LAST OF HIS TRIBE – HENRY KENDALL

He crouches, and buries his face on his knees,
And hides in the dark of his hair;
For he cannot look up to the storm smitten trees,
Or think of the loneliness there –
Of the loss and the loneliness there.

The wallaroos grope through the tufts of the grass,
And turn to their coverts for fear;
But he sits in the ashes and lets them pass
Where the boomerangs sleep with the spear –
With the nullah, the sling, and the spear.

Uloola, behold him! The thunder that breaks
On top of the rocks with the rain,
And the wind which drives up with the salt of the lakes,
Have made him a hunter again –
A hunter and fisher again.

For his eyes have been full with a smouldering thought;
But he dreams if hunts or yore,
And of foes that he sought, and fights that he fought
With those who will battle no more –
Who will go to the battle no more.

It is well that the water which tumbles and fills,
Goes moaning and moaning along;
For an echo out from the sides of the hills,
And he starts at a wonderful song –
At the sound of a wonderful song.

And he sees through the rents of the scattering fogs
The corroboree warlike and grim,
And the lubra who sat by the fire and the logs
To watch like a mourner, for him –
Like a mother and mourner for him.

Will he go in his sleep from these desolate lands,
Like a chief, to the rest of his race,
With the honey voiced woman who beckons and stands,
And gleams like a dream in his face –
Like a marvelous dream in his face?