

We rode across the Great Divide  
from the hut at the Howitt Springs  
Where the snow-gums twist on the level plains  
and the snow-grass softly clings.  
We were fleeing a fire on the Gippsland side  
and our horses fled from the smoke  
While we prayed for rain we controlled the trot  
but neither one of us spoke.

The inferno was past but its threat remained  
in the lap of God and the wind  
And I knew my partner's thoughts were mine  
as he turned in his saddle and grinned  
For we'd reached Magdala's peak and broke  
from the smoke and the ash to see  
The awe-inspiring sight of a storm  
building up like an angry sea.

There were layers of grey upon layers of white  
rushing to us before our eyes  
Then all darkened and blackened as only can be  
in the heart of the mountain skies  
With Old Black getting edgy I slackened the rein  
and he settled with quickening gait  
And the mount of my partner fell into its stride  
'neath that grin on the face of my mate

Then the force of the elements let loose its roar  
and the ground seemed to grumble below  
And excitement rushed throughout my body as I  
felt the thrill of the mountain-storm grow  
All became dark, then with one mighty crack,  
the lightning turned everything white  
And I breathed deep the smell of the storm and the Hell  
which is nature displaying her might.

We were into the woolly-butt country by now  
riding deep through these giants of earth  
And the tops of these alpine-ash bent overhead  
while not moving an inch at their girth.  
Then a deafening thud hit the roof of the trees  
hurling tonnage, besplintered to ground  
But the horses, though startled, plugged on nonetheless  
through this frightening, wonderful sound.

We broke into a clearing and cloud swirled around  
as we rode through its beautiful dance  
And looked into the grandiose valleys below -  
deep and turbulent, wondrous expanse  
On we went through the clamour, the crackles, the groans  
the hoof-beats and hissing of leaves  
And the hairs on my back stood as those of a dog  
and the undergrowth ripped at our sleeves.

The rain belted down and we tugged on our hats  
watching trickles turn sudden to streams  
And the hut on King Billy loomed into our sight  
as in ends of our favourite dreams  
With the saddles and bridles removed from our mounts  
they're allowed to roam free and to feed  
Then we strip by the fire and boil up a brew -  
two bushmen now found without need.