

# Out of the Stone Age

One of her stone-babies,  
he took three weeks to birth,  
was left behind  
in the cold Arctic north  
in a sculpture garden.

Touched by northern lights  
glanced in his smooth stone contours  
grooves she grooved  
by chiselling into his garnet crystals  
symbols of the southern cross.

She softened his skin  
with fine then finer diamond discs, wooly muffs  
and tin oxide  
til he shone - not with mere frippery -  
but like a jewel of protest.

Chunks cracked off her heart.  
To give up her infant - a mark of her time -  
to driving snows  
and empty smashing bottles lobbed  
from the hands of discontent.

Signs of southern squalor  
old tires, plastic bags and rusting cans litter  
streams, rock shores  
and in some indigenous veins is  
spent alcohol and southern desires.

Bones and hides don't litter greed.  
Stones carved or stacked were simple signs  
to the old and wary.  
Some can see the passing of an age.  
Some are already blind to the stone.

Leaving your mark is erosion.  
Inside and out, great gorges span opposing eras  
of stone and fuel.  
Iridescent puddles shimmer with spills  
and circle her baby in the garden.

*Denise Reiser*