

Gold everlastings
and shadow.

I'd a class in half an hour. At Victoria Street I hopped off my bike and walked it the last hundred metres to the campus. I was seeing as I did in the city, into some noisy, close horizon.

I talked a lot about history
but imagined I didn't have one

I talked a lot about Whiteness
hoping to come home to

White another smokescreen
another spell to cast emptiness

Paused at the traffic lights, my eyes habitually sought the gate of Old Melbourne Gaol. But in that usual line of sight, something new stood out.

The pedestrian alarm beeped me onwards. Where I normally pushed straight through to the laneway that led into the campus – my path was interrupted.

I edged the bike closer and circled.

Dug into the footpath was a loosely fenced garden. Inside it, paving. And a high frame made of steel, like a kids' swingset. A row of primary-coloured boxes resembling New York newspaper vendors.

It's a new playground, I thought. Facing the basalt roar of the gaol's entrance, it was a strange site: three lanes of city traffic

passed one side; on the other, the uni campus offered more appealing corners for covert pashing and smoking.

A crushed silvereve; its silhouette of motion.

From the top of the steel frame, chains dropped to a gunmetal granite block set on the ground. Instead of being loosely attached to swinging seats, the chains were taut, hooked to the granite. On the block were inscribed two words:

TUNNERMINNERWAIT

MAULBOYHEENER

I stepped towards the colourful vendors. The flow of traffic revved through its timed phases.

I tried to open the bright boxes; they were fixed. Each had a window through which I could see a metal plaque. Each plaque was printed with text – fragments of stories, those names that I stumbled to say.

It took me a while to grasp why the plaques of text were fixed behind windows.

I recalled a walk I had taken back in 2010 while writing my poetry book, *Final Theory*. I had followed a trail around Lake St Clair in lutruwita, Tasmania, where signs pointed out Palawa food sources and routes. But I hadn't been able to read the words or illustrations on the metal signs because each of them had been slashed



Standing at the monument, I balanced my bike with one hand while I checked my phone for the time. My class was due to start any minute.

I tapped a search into the browser. The image loaded in my palm. I held the screen up beside the monument.

The sandy hillock and the granite block; the skyward spears and the steel chains; the bare skin and the city pavement. The friendly hand.

The monument had turned down the traffic's volume. Embedded in my path, it pulsed

