Like that recurrent dream
In which a world of rain begins to pour
And drown the house, to stream
Through windows, down the walls and, inches deep,
Spill out across the floor,
Daylight already, as we woke from sleep,

Was rising, liquefied
By heat and, lapping wall and window pane,
Starting to seep inside.
We screened the garden in a desperate sortie,
Watching the sun ordain
Its record-scoring peak of more than forty,

Then rushed to barricade
The house with drawn blinds from the ever higher
Degrees of centigrade,
In which, one fancied, the perverse intent
To breathe might well require
Adapting to an alien element.

Out in the city’s west
We seemed deep on the seabed of the heat,
Which bending fathoms pressed
To airless temperatures, while in the east
We’d surface to the sweet
Sea breezes of the coast, our lungs released.

And there we went: that night,
Dinner with friends, perched in their top-floor eyrie,
Watching the sky recite
The sun's late lessons in the clouds and preach
Its pyrotechnic theory
Over the revelers on Coogee Beach.

Now we could breathe at last.
And now the southerly came at us, smack,
With an exultant blast,
Chucking the plastic furniture about
And rushing to attack
The living room through open doors, to clout

The dining table, scatter
The napkins, snatch off posters from the wall,
Play havoc with a platter
Of antipasto. Rollicked in the seethe
And racket of the squall,
We gulped great lungfuls down. Now we could breathe.