

## **Marilyn Humbert – Two Poems**

### **Against the Bark**

Under southern stars  
away from porch light glare  
my father sits  
back firmly pressed  
against the wattle's rough bark.

His drawl flows  
smooth as slow dripping honey  
from the harvested comb.  
I sit in the dirt  
beside his shadow.

My eyes are drawn to his arms  
rippling like vast oceans of wheat...  
'65, a good year, six bags to the acre  
he says grinning and again  
he's a sapling  
bending into each season.

Then he frowns  
face etched with furrows,  
mumbles of blight and weeds  
wind's rage under a lava sun  
his looted paddocks  
the dust-filled dams  
of cracked-earth years.

His hands cradle  
shattered candy words  
of a bitter-sugar life.

### **Fairy Wren**

I step lightly  
between brittle tussocks  
the woodland understory  
    all the shades of blue

tiny bird leaps  
stalk to stalk, beak skyward  
singing devotions  
    I blink

now looping canticles  
from her nest, secret notes  
imprint her embryos  
fill me with wonder