

IN MUM'S GARDEN

barefoot on red soil
at dawn I walk the garden
where the sun refuses to rise
crooked ghost gums,
whisper, bark peeling
reaching out with brittle fingers

Mum says Grandad's
frangipanni has a disease –
its petals wither
curling inward
fists of emptiness
I kneel at the roots where
cracks etch like fault lines
through our family tree

Dad's wisteria is
a cascading waterfall
of delicate fragrant blooms
dripping like a chandelier
a cloud of suspended petal
he is not here to see
the silent tendrils twisting
through stone, dividing
foundations – its weight
crushing the steadfast frame

the sun is rising
there is no birdsong