

RAIN FROM NOWHERE – MURRAY HRATIN/CATHERIN CLIFFORD

His cattle didn't get a bid; they were fairly bloody poor,
What was he going to do? He couldn't feed them anymore,
The dams were all but dry; hay was thirteen bucks a bale,
Last month's talk of rain was just a fairytale.

His credit had run out, no chance to pay what's owed,
Bad thoughts ran through his head as he drove down Gully Road,
"Geez, great granddad bought the place back in 1898,
"Now I'm such a useless bastard, I'll have to shut the gate.

"Can't support my wife and kids, not like my dad and those before,
Crikey, grandma kept it going while pop fought in the war."
With depression now his master, he abandoned what was right,
There's no place in life for failures, he'd end it all tonight.

There were still some things to do, he'd have to shoot the cattle first,
Of all the jobs he'd ever done, that would be the worst.
He'd have a shower, watch the news, then they'd all sit down for tea,
Read his kids a bedtime story, watch some more TV,

Kiss his wife goodnight, say he was off to shoot some roos,
Then in a paddock far away he'd blow away the blues.
But he drove in the gate and stopped – as he always had
To check the roadside mailbox – and found a letter from his Dad.

Now his Dad was not a writer, Mum did all the cards and mail.
But he knew the writing from the notebooks that he used at cattle sales.
He sensed the nature of its contents, felt moisture in his eyes,
Just the fact his Dad had written was enough to make him cry.

"Son, I know it's bloody tough; it's a cruel and twisted game,
"This life upon the land when you're screaming out for rain,
"There's no candle in the darkness, not a single speck of light,
"But don't let the demon get you, you have to do what's right;

"I don't know what's in your head but push the bad thoughts well away,
"See, you'll always have your family at the back end of the day;
"You have to talk to someone, and yes I know I rarely did.
"But you have to think about Fiona and the kids."

Then he strode towards the homestead, shoulders back and head held high,
He still knew the road was tough but there was purpose in his eye.
He called his wife and children, who'd lived through all his pain,
Hugs said more than words – he'd come back to them again.

They talked of silver linings, how good times always follow bad,
Then he walked towards the phone, picked it up and rang his Dad.
And while the kids set up the Squatter, he hugged his wife again,

Then they heard the roll of thunder, and they smelt the smell of rain.