

## **ENTREPRENEURS**

From Australia,  
An old vast Continent supplied her  
With the idea of stars on bedroom ceilings.  
A deft galaxy pasted up one lonely  
Winter's afternoon way out on Vega 9,  
Or was it SW4?

Now she's gone commercial, conquering  
Bed-sitter land with a step-ladder and a man.  
Studies galactic clusters at Adult Institutes,  
And orders without a qualm, ten-thousand,  
New Andromeda's -with, of course,  
Environmentally friendly bio-degradeable,  
Sticky on the back.

In their bedroom, they discuss shops,  
Franchises, staff and making money.  
The man -a veteran of caresses, says:  
Why stop there? Let's expand our options.  
Think big! Think interstellar!  
Clear the table for the Universe!  
God, after all, is everywhere.  
How about a dayglo Quetzalcoatl?  
Or a bit of Kali dripping down the walls?  
Or one of those nice licketty-spit,  
Sexy solar-systems?

Remember those old bed-sit blues?  
Remember the sweat of loneliness?  
Just think -all those new season's hearts,  
Ours for the taking!

(cont.)

Five years of assorted Nebulae go by.

Our entrepreneurs succeed beyond their wildest dreams.

Miranda makes a trip back home.

Down Under. Sees again her father's sad,  
Slip-shod eyes. And back in her childhood room  
With sheep-skin rug and Teddy still keeled over  
On the radio, she remembers the day  
The town-hall clock got choked with paraqueets.  
And the endless dinner-table talk of desalination.

Teenage ceremonies on dance-floors,  
Creepy cobweb courtship's... and alone  
By the window, by the stars, she moves  
To long ago music; sings softly  
For the first time in years; sings  
Through her shrivelled and debased soul.

Waiting on the taxi to the airport,  
She pours her father a last cup of tea.  
Takes his hand and wrenches the tears  
From her heart. He goes back to reading the paper,  
And apart from goodbye,  
Says not another word.

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Home again. The man -she calls him, Sirius,  
Now a veteran of the balance-sheets, yawns  
And asks about her trip. 'Predictable,' she replies,  
Going through the ledgers. 'Look, don't feel too bad.  
Anyone could have made the Milky Way mistake.  
Besides, it's tax deductible.'

The man smiles, punches up next week's diary  
In the computer and says:  
'You're right as per usual, darling.'  
Then stands on the bed,  
Reaches up for those long ago, stars,  
And peels them off, one by one.

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