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Flinders University

Steve Evans

10,000 Poems

*On the eve of war, 10,000 poems
are to be sent to the Prime Minister,
calling for peace.*

the PM is up late
in dressing gown and slippers
hunched at a desk lamp
for the seventh night in a row
frowning his brow
as he works his way through
the piles of poetry
answering no calls
refusing visitors
biting his lip
misty-eyed

actually, the poems
have been jammed into boxes unread
a mute petition in a locked courtyard
at the back of a concrete building
not far from the incinerator -
and the emailed ones
have been dismissed to Trash
with a finger-flick

but there is an infiltrator
a single haiku already smuggled in
that will slip under his guard
when he is deep in the morning papers
expecting only politics
and the images of war -
no one yet knows what it says
or who wrote its three short lines
but he will startle
at his own tears
his heart wide open

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