



Sampler of nine poems from  
*Golden Bridge: New Poems*  
by Jennifer Maiden,  
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## **Kutuzov's Bridge**

Kutuzov the Russian General against Napoleon, so admired by Tolstoy in *War and Peace*, advocated a 'golden bridge' to allow the shivering defeated French soldiers to retreat home where they could be a French burden not a dead weight on the heart of Russia. Differently, but with a like result, the Chinese sage Sun Tzu in his classic *The Art of War* recommended always leaving an escape route for your enemies so they aren't forced to fight you desperately to the death. One of the latest, most sublime, tourist attractions in Vietnam is called the 'Cầu Vàng' or 'Golden Bridge' and was constructed busily and benignly by Hanoi architects for a colonial French village themepark, its landscape the great Ba Na Hills and its struts two giant hands of an earth god holding up the gleaming arch.

Kutuzov would have hands like that:

gnarled and bleached by age and earth, to hold his bridge in a grip both loose, reverential and solid.

Russia, having outwitted, outwaited France, Hitler, Soviet



Union dissolution, grips slowly in a bridge-shape,  
mindless of opinion, needing to always leave  
supporting survivors behind. Madeleine Albright  
died today, remembered for bombing Belgrade  
and calling sanctions killing Iraqi children 'worth it'.  
Moscow has said its oil must now be purchased  
in rubles because of the western sanctions, to defeat  
the petro-dollar, is not bothering itself too much  
with its own sanctions yet. What time would Kutuzov  
have had for sanctions? What time would the old  
earth god have to play at chess? The tourists walk  
delighted and awed on Cầu Vàng, safely photograph  
the endless mountains and the quaint French village.

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## Tom Uren Woke Up at the Kantei Palace

Tom Uren woke up in an upstairs Kantei Palace rock garden in Tokyo in 2022. Anthony Albanese, who swiftly was just sworn in as Australian Prime Minister, and who had at once flown here for the QUAD meeting, leant pale on his arm, resting from the deft politeness of India, America and Japan, the reciprocal suavity of Penny Wong.

Albanese appeared condensed by the tension.

He seemed an older, thinner, calmer man.

'Do you know this place is haunted?' asked Uren,

'Kishida Fumio has lately moved back in,

but previous Prime Ministers describe victims of assassins

drifting in the rooms and there was a Shinto exorcism.'

Albanese said, 'These ornamental rocks are ghosts in stone.'

He had not expected gloom and was grateful for Tom,

but sympathised - he was sympathetic in his bones -

'Is it hard for you to be here, having spent so much time

on the Burma Railway and seeing the Atomic Bomb

explode in scarlet silence over Nagasaki: "Fat Man",



they called it, as you always warned me of that cataclysm?

I have opposed Nuclear Power without exception.'

He pronounced things with attention, like Nye Bevan,  
who used his stutter to enforce his reason.

Uren had known at once that Albanese's tensions  
could be harnessed to emphasise his passion,  
even when Anthony was poverty-gauche and young.

He answered, 'No, I am relaxed now in Japan.

Your opposition to the Iraq War being as strong  
as mine, you will be amused that near us is the room  
where Bush brought up his dinner in the then

PM Miyazawa's lap.' It was a sign of being humane,  
Albanese thought, the way that kind-spirited Tom  
would comfort with wry anecdotes of the high ones.

Carved with words, this was indeed a palace in design  
for the highest of the high ones. Cats like chiselled nouns  
basked together, guarding. With their emperor's frown  
outside, two ornamental owls at the door had shown  
all who entered their gaunt sneer of possession.

But Uren thought they'd the look of a Covid victim.



His friend was obliged to have survived that germ  
at once but Uren gripped his elbow with compassion  
for all holding-it together, and felt admiration  
that: 'You have refused to rule out lock-down  
if necessary, despite imperial capitalism,'  
Tom chatted on, 'and I agree with the great Imran Khan  
that India's decision to buy bargain Russian  
oil would have been right too for Pakistan.'  
Albanese also found that reassuring: 'Everyone  
here might not always be gladly leant-upon.  
We can comfort with a trade deal, not the real one.  
I will tell you what happens about Julian  
Assange and not discussing war on China, when  
I return to you in this artful maze of stones.'  
He breathed out shortly in a way that to Uren  
was reminiscent of the boxer that he had been,  
contracting in, to prepare for the last round.

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## Hunger Stones

(On Michael Hudson's thesis that the US war is not against Russia but against Europe to prevent its economic ties to Eurasia, and on Victoria Nuland reportedly saying separately that war in Ukraine was the only way to stop Nord Stream Two)

In Europe there are hunger stones,  
once called milestones or marks,  
exposed when a river level drops  
that say: if you can read me there must  
be famine coming certainly:

A famine in energy  
a famine in water  
a famine in food  
a famine in trust, under  
no golden bridge to Valhalla,  
no golden bridge to Paris,  
no retreat.

Even if Russia in Ukraine  
goes slowly to maintain  
infrastructure in the bones,



having seen the West's destruction  
by air of the whole skeleton  
of Iraq, Afghanistan or Libya,  
and having remembered Barbarossa,  
and the stones of hunger  
that killed Putin's brother, but  
made him hungry for other brothers, but  
made him cautious, made him listen ever  
to Kutuzov. There is nothing left in empire  
now for Europe - although France invades Sudan  
for gas and power - only to celebrate  
the dried-up water  
on hunger stones with golden bridges over.  
There is nothing left to eat.

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*George Jeffreys: 36:*

## **George Jeffreys Woke Up in Doonside at the Chang Lai Yuan Chinese Garden**

George Jeffreys woke up in Doonside at the Chang Lai Yuan Chinese Garden of Friendship. He was on the meditatively placed large stones next to a broad and brilliant waterfall. Confucius and the Duke of Zhou had been dozing beside him, courteously agreeing to meet there, close to where George and Clare and Corbyn lived at Clare's mother's house in Mt Druitt. Clare and Corbyn were playing chasings on a bridge nearby which was in daylight white as bone, but now the moon made into ancient gold, and the shadows from their figures multifold. The arches of the bridge reflected in pleating water formed ovals like Chinese spring eggs. Clare and Corbyn's laughter span wild as thrown coins at the ripples near George's feet. He said, 'In this night that bridge is as gold as Kutuzov's, allowing the enemy to retreat, just as Sun Tzu recommended, too. And after all the fuss about Taiwan it seems China may let it settle down a while, patient, despite all the Five Eye provocations.' Clare heard and called to them: 'But there is a difference between allowing your enemy to withdraw:



as Sun Tzu said, never engage with them when they are going downhill, and another to withdraw and leave your allies, from a position you have chosen not to defend, like the Russians in Kharkov, leaving the Azov to butcher what was left.' The Duke took up the military topic, as Confucius admired the Western Suburbs night, the etched gums surrounding the pagodas, with the incongruity of certain lovelinesses, although he remained a little puzzled by the palm trees. Much of the wood was painted profound Chinese red, with its dark brown tone, too rich for blood. 'When you are stretched thin', said the Duke, 'you must choose what you will reinforce, what not. And if your enemy expands suddenly, after a series of defeats, you must let it exhaust itself with its own new power. That is the wisdom of winter. The Azovs have nowhere to go but Russia, or down into the Don, where we are strong.' George noted Zhou said 'We' about the Russians. Clare came and sat with them on the steep stones. Corbyn was singing songs to sleepy ducks. Clare wore deep blue, a Chinese indigo, darker than the Voodoo azure she had worn once



in flooded New Orleans, when they had met the Master of the Cross Roads, who then regarded George Bush Junior as an epitome of evil - now would it be Nuland and the Kagans? Her hand brushed George's knee and thrilled him, although communicating as much possession as seduction. The ducks began to croon broodily back to Corbyn. Confucius smiled suddenly at Clare: 'It is the revenge the Azovs take that will defeat them, just as the West's attempts to dismember by sanctions now rebound.' Wisening wizenig winter. But her uneasy soul was filled again with victims tied to lynching lamp-posts. She said, 'Even if some were helped escape to Russia, some others trusted and are dead or used for propaganda.' Confucius said, 'It is a paradox. If you fight those who act with evil they will worsen sometimes, even the more so if you fight with strategy.' George said, 'Russia and China's war is not only with Azovs but the petro-dollar, which will retreat into a quiet corner: it must not fall too fast.' The waterfall was built to descend starrily but at an even pace. Clare thought: The Duke, George and Confucius all seem the same age now: weariness



in them has reabsorbed to fluid sinew. One of the ducks  
had led Corbyn to its nest in a lee of bracken. He knelt astounded  
to admire the new eggs, as lustrous as the bridge's rounded  
half circles now perfected by the water.

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## Brookings Becomes a Navy Seal

The little pombat - possum-wombat cross, lithe as a possum,  
soft as a wombat toy - snuggles on my shoulder as I read  
about the blowing up of Nord Stream One and Two, now  
most likely the work of the Poles, the Scandinavians, American  
and possibly British intelligence, and involving either drones,  
depth-charges or Navy Seals. Brookings picks up on the seals.

I don't like to disillusion him too much about anthropomorphism.

Why shouldn't it be real seals, if the Russians once trained  
dolphins? I explain the whole thing is part of the American  
plan to prevent Eurasian integration, and a desperate ploy  
of the Polish right wing to win next elections, but there's no reason  
why innocent seals could not be involved, or that they  
would not show courage and incendiary skills. They would not  
know they were filling the sea with methane, or destroying  
any planned German truce with Russia. He is already  
'swimming' through the bush and any sidelong tree-trunk  
is a pipeline and fairgame. I warn him that in reality the gas  
bubbles in the water take away buoyancy, are dangerous



and would slow down his retreat, at which point he becomes temporarily a drone, but boomerang not kamikaze. He boomerangs back to me in that strange aquamarine light special to the dusk bush, and practises a seal-like bark he has picked up from somewhere, flapping his paws together. There is so much energy there must be sleep, and indeed he has wound around my feet, snores slightly, but with a smooth seal-like expression. The Americans are bashful about the hit and there was some confusion between agencies about whether they'd take credit or blame it illogically on the Russians. There may also be a nuclear false flag from the West, where here the sun sets azure, but the little creature is too tired to be a nuke yet, and there is no animal like death he can become as other.

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## **The Dove as Homing Lily**

A Canberra demo called a dove Assange.

I've been meaning to tell you about doves - not this time

Spotted Doves or the iridescent park ones, but the white

doves that are released at a festival or marriage. The demo

for Assange released a dove in Canberra a while ago, and

apart from the wild hope that this would worry

Albanese, I was also troubled about what doves would

do suddenly in the air and free. Looking up the facts

behind released doves, it is apparently okay:

someone rents them from their cote nearby and they fly

home at once because that is where their bed and birdseed

are. Perhaps when you read this, Albanese will have cunningly

freed Assange by asking Biden to address the Australian

Parliament. Of course when Gillard got Obama to speak

to the Australian Parliament, she said she wanted to revoke

Assange's passport, and agreed to US bases here: that

doesn't seem like any sort of bargain, but Albanese may

regard listening to Biden as a favour by the listener,



one that deserves reward. They fly with a sort of tessellated  
chuckle, doves. It has a note of excitement and alarm,  
and of course there is that metallic whir when they  
ascend fast. Unaware they symbolise death,  
there are tall spring lilies in our yard  
an impossible solar white, each like a feather.  
A celebratory dove flares similar in splendour.  
The Canberra demo called the dove Assange,  
and the dove then flew back home, as pure as hunger.

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## Betrayal

Helmer reviews a book from Harper Collins (Murdoch) by one of John le Carré's lovers, points out the lack of reference to Russia, and also to the fact that le Carré continued to be an Intelligence asset to establish anti-Soviet propaganda in the wake of Kim Philby, like anti-Russian fictions in the Press and BBC now about assassinations, Novichok, although the book seems only to obsess on sex and size. There are movies like *Mincemeat* I'd add, also designed suavely to stress the need for boy's own propaganda, but what I remember is the bleakness in the world of Cornwell/le Carré's shadows, that he wrote as Cornwell when a child waiting for school to beat him, the pain 'excruciating'. All inside are betrayed by not betraying, shrink in loss. And Russia outside is unusually inarticulate as death.

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## **Blood Moon, Beaver Moon**

From the concrete in front of the night house  
the lunar eclipse was at first clouded out but then  
it sailed higher and became a gold scythe that cupped  
the mottled garnet of the big soft red moon  
in its arm, so that I remembered that old border ballad  
*Sir Patrick Spens* : "I saw the new moon late yestreen  
with the old moon in her arm, and if we go to sea,  
master, I fear we'll come to harm." It seems  
a fitting warning against goading Russia and China  
into a war simultaneously as some Hail Mary  
strategy by the American Military, Australia  
arming itself with nuclear potential, Xi  
deciding he must prepare his military for war,  
Putin still hoping for an incremental bridge  
using electricity, maybe giving the Poles Galicia,  
which is anyway a swastika incarnate. Blood moons  
always seem incarnate by their nature. By the time  
this one had cleared the roof by metres,  
it was atmospheric silver on impossibly



radiant fogs again. Katharine stops photographing it.

We return inside to eat, having inadvertently  
observed some Indian fast to watch it, at least  
according to Twitter, where Elon Musk,  
having unsuccessfully 'couped' Bolivia,  
settles for a 'massacre' of ex-comedians,  
most of whom are anyway warlike now.

At the end of *Doctor Who* in a seminal image

Yaz carries the dying female doctor  
back to the Tardis in her arms across  
a destroyed landscape, and the franchise  
has been taken over by Disney, the BBC  
always preferring the blood to the beaver.

In America, this is the beaver moon  
suggesting sylvan industry to them,  
and the blood is incidental. It was more  
beautiful as it vanished, I thought, last night,  
like a Bourbon rose on a gold bridge upside down.

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## Tom Uren Woke Up in Bali

Tom Uren woke up in Bali at the Golden Bridge between  
two islands,  
Nusa Lembongan and Nusa Ceningan. He was on the Lembongan  
side, watching the perfumed dawn also wake restlessly - in  
a gossip  
of palm trees and withdrawing tide - and Anthony Albanese sat  
by his side, as they watched the light increase on a seaweed  
farm, and the patchwork seabed patterns under the sunny structure,  
which was indeed bright yellow and long, the hue even deeper  
in this beginner's light. Albanese had been at the G20 Summit  
and Uren was not hoping for too much from anyone who had  
been left-wing in their youth but who was sensitive and scarred  
from the loneliness of too long lack of power. For some reason,  
he remembered Paul Keating's horror at formica tables, that  
despite numerous discords he had once told Keating he should  
smile more - Keating had a sweet grin, not seen often.  
Albanese gave Uren a sweet grin now: if he were a surfer  
he would see, he thought, Bali as a huge wave smoothly taken.  
Xi had spoken to him with quiet civility, but admonished  
Trudeau for lack of confidentiality, he had not angered France



further about the subs, although he was not sure what U.S. forces were going to do with Western Australia, given them by Gillard, and neither was Macron, who had a French horror at anyone else's delusions of power.

Albanese was delighted anyway to see Uren again, and felt they had enjoyed some reassuring chats in Tokyo. This was a lovely headland and he would not have been here but for this appointment. Uren overcame his own first reluctance, since Gore Vidal had asked him several times to encounter Albanese in some vulnerable sunrise in a sumptuous setting, raise the matter of Julian Assange once more. He told this to Albanese, and that 'I approve of the reprieve for Collaery, despite still costing Collaery funds and reputation, but I'm disappointed by the continued prosecution of Richard Boyle and David McBride, the whistleblowers on taxes and Afghanistan and had hoped they were legally safe because of legislation. But anyway what message can I take to Vidal about Assange? Gore still waits often at the cellside of Assange in Belmarsh prison. He has proved to be the sort of hero I witnessed in Weary Dunlop, one who endures in all senses with no conflict between



the soul and the backbone. As with Assange himself.'

All the scenery about them was fragrant, radiant, Buddhist  
from functional humble bridge to green-blue seaweed orchard.

Albanese knew Dunlop had been a Buddhist, wondered what  
it would be like to save life through distancing life's desires.

They had no grip on you then, but it wasn't a simple thing  
like Keating exchanging tables for French clocks. He said,  
'I was thinking how Macron and Keating might have had  
a conversation about Empire antiques. There seem to be no cars  
on this bridge we watch, only every scooter you can imagine.

I have recently had a near fatal car accident, and Covid.

The line I walk is as straight as the bridge below us,  
and as long, long, long. When I was younger and my body's  
scope was rounder I might have fought for your  
whistleblowers as if against a war. Now I wonder if I can  
insert myself in keyholes. Do you understand?'

Uren understood most things, and was pleased at least  
that Albanese in his efforts to unlock things  
like a skeleton key looked less like a skeleton.

Again the memory

that abstracted and incarnated Tom seemed to wander:

'I would lend my flat to Jim Cairns in Canberra so he could



spend time with Juni Morosi without talk. They were of course  
then more into Wilhelm Reich than Buddha, but deliberate  
sacrifice of power is a thing to respect. The newspapers  
talk of your globalist friends, the rounded company directors,  
and I can see you learning to surf them like a wave, like  
Nye Bevan drinking champagne with Beaverbrook, perhaps.  
Did you know that seaweed farm is fairly recent? By all accounts  
it is successful, though. There are all sorts of cultivations  
that succeed unexpectedly. I met my last love at the Opera  
where she was singing, and we lived together like a fine duet.  
So what will I tell Vidal about Julian that will not just be Quiet  
Diplomacy as yet?' The bridge became brighter as the sun  
rose,  
ennobled their uncovered faces, like profiles on coins.  
'Tell him I may speak soon', smiled Albanese.

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