12 cents

Kevin Gillam and Allan Boyd

you have this memory, aged 7 perhaps,
in the sleepout and tucked in, your brother

can taste freo in the plastic, as she burns
and spectacular gild sunsets, sand in toes

a breath away across the lino,
and you have the scene before, counting

can’t ever trip on concrete-pitted knee-high walls
painted mission brown, now mission purple

cowboys in the bricks, Dad on the piano
with the hymns for the week, and you have

his skin brown face, ripping scowl bracing
against the may gust, fat drops of nitrogen rain

the lighting, kitchen fluoro milky through the
crinkled glass window atop the sliding door,

again unable to really tell the special tales
glass slicing clean through baby skin, like steaks

but most of all you have the moment –
two notes, minor third, descending,

i can’t remember this, but poems of our guts
spat out out in chiddy-chiddy breath, koolbardies mewl

the mopoke’s call, random perhaps, or on the
minute? matters little, the wooden two notes

once we strolled hand in hand to the deli
had 12 cents, found under car seat, tiny fist grasps

of mopoke, through the slivers of louvres,
clear as moon, as yesterday

and none of them said it, no one could speak
that, her petals in cottesloe mud,
our closest sweat unspoken