



NIGHT GUARD - Julian Pellatt

Thorn-studded trees
Stab the dying sun,
And crickets shrill their screeching mirth;
Soft breezes brush
Ribbed wisps of cloud
That float above the shadowed earth.

All shapes stand black
Against the fading
Light, receding into nowhere;
And glowing fires
Blink through the dusk,
Like eyes that seek frail prey, somewhere.

Strange sounds are caught,
Floated high on
Whisper winds that tease taut ears.
Quiet shapes loom bleak
In silvered gloom,
To test and taunt our straining fears.

A rustling leaf,
Our muzzles swing
To aim at shadows in moonlight ;
But nothing moves,
The silence stares.
Faint bells of cattle in the night.

Distant gunfire
Stitches the air
To hammer gold the eastern flush.
And now awake,
Alive and free;
The dawn song from a morning thrush!