

utans in comfy, well-built nests.
Tattooed men of the woods, asleep & arranged
around a dying fire, stir & grumble beneath the starry deadlight.

Lianas embrace the poison tree, riparian nipas click-click-
click at the slightest hint of wind. Gamboge mangosteens stand
weirdly nacreous at midnight – trunks thick

& cylindrical shimmer yellow, verdigris, madder. Mangroves itch
the riverbank's mud. Land crabs – tentative & harried – scuttle across sand
beaches. Ectoproct colonies thrive in a neritic ditch.

Gourami oragami down in rivers & lakes, hang
limp & drift on unseen sublacustrine currents. Bruang
snuggle in caves before sleep, sirgang

furl tired drake-colored wings in nids shaped like loaves.
Arna rub rumps in kurrajong groves.
The *bintang baniak* watch over silent coves.

LATE MAY

for David Craig Austin

The corrugated skyline of low-rise tenements
rustles the sable night. Venus pokes her knowing
eye through new leaves of the blooming
catalpa & all throughout this sleeping city
wide awake sash windows
are thrown open to let in the vaguest
hint of thick air.
Sumac, heavy-scented locust
even cottonwoods recently wrung clean of feathered seeds
gag. Corkscrewing swallows follow unseen insects;

last winter's squirrels' nests are just
visible through virent leaves of maple
sycamore & oak. A letter came today
telling of a friend's death. The garden is in:
marigolds & beans; zinnias, sunflowers & fennel;
kohlrabi, dill, snaps & thyme;
daisies, cornflowers, asters —