

Alone With A Scrub-bird

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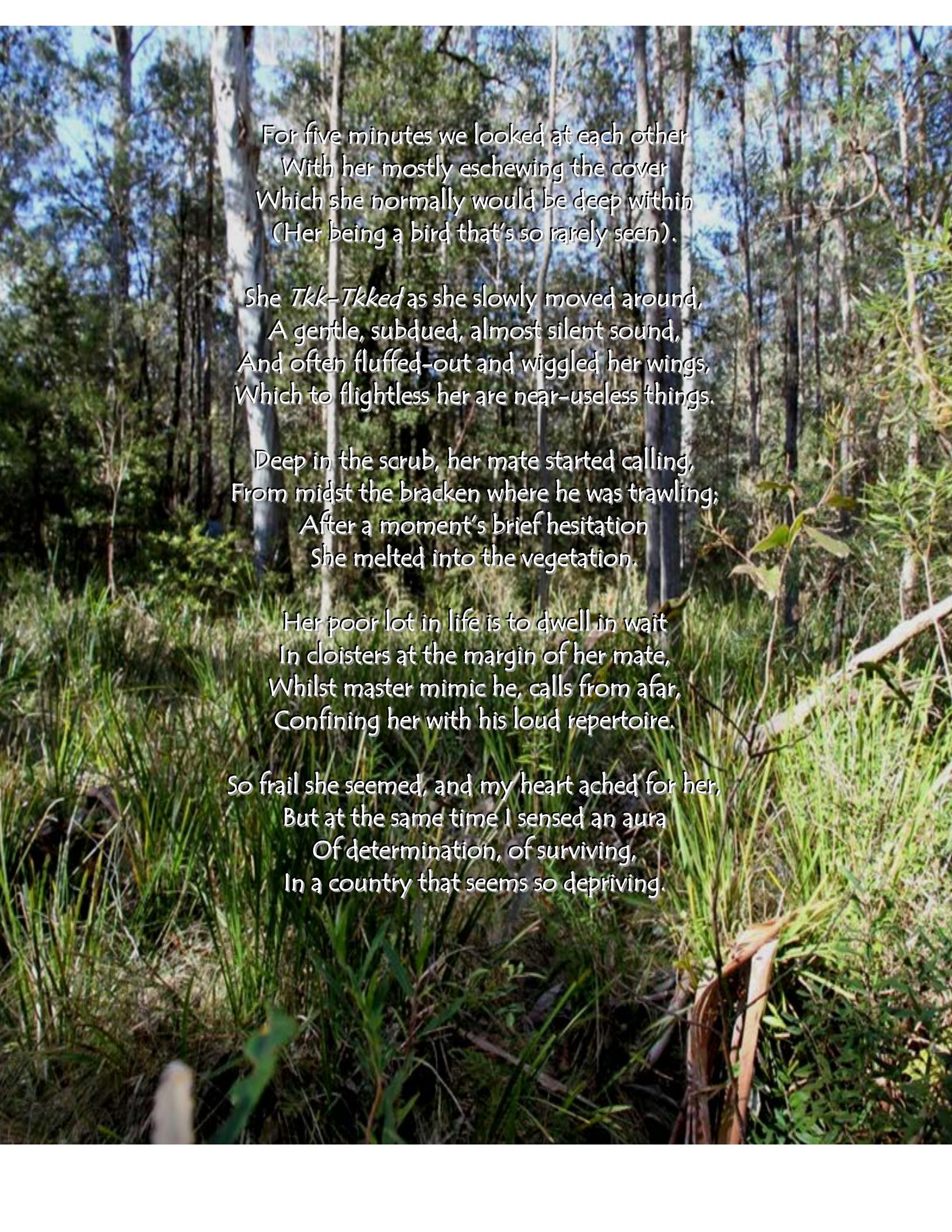
I saw a dumpy dowdy bird today;
Just why I was so thrilled is hard to say.
I heard her first, making a soft *Tkk* call.
I didn't expect to see her at all!

Although it is something of which I'm loth,
I was *pish-pishing* at the undergrowth
Across the opposite side of the track
And then she emerged, behind my back.

I turned toward her sound, and my jaw dropped
And for a while, it felt that time had stopped.
To have her so close, and in such fine view,
The world seemed shrunk, it was only we two.

She'd walked onto a log in the open
A fallen timber branch that was sloping
Up from the ground, lying across a shrub
As one often sees in this type of scrub.

Just two metres from the path she was,
And she was only standing there because
My *pishing* noise had made her curious
And brought me a sighting so glorious.



For five minutes we looked at each other
With her mostly eschewing the cover
Which she normally would be deep within
(Her being a bird that's so rarely seen).

She *Tkk-Tkked* as she slowly moved around,
A gentle, subdued, almost silent sound,
And often fluffed-out and wiggled her wings,
Which to flightless her are near-useless things.

Deep in the scrub, her mate started calling,
From midst the bracken where he was trawling;
After a moment's brief hesitation
She melted into the vegetation.

Her poor lot in life is to dwell in wait
In cloisters at the margin of her mate,
Whilst master mimic he, calls from afar,
Confining her with his loud repertoire.

So frail she seemed, and my heart ached for her,
But at the same time I sensed an aura
Of determination, of surviving,
In a country that seems so depriving.