

The Sixth Creek

Volume 1

Rachael Mead

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English and Creative Writing

School of Humanities

Faculty of Arts

University of Adelaide

May 2016

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree. I give consent to this copy of my thesis when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

The author acknowledges that copyright of published works contained within this thesis resides with the copyright holder(s) of those works.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

Signed

Rachael Mead

Statement of Authorship

Title of Paper	<i>The Sixth Creek</i>
Publication Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Published <input type="checkbox"/> Accepted for Publication <input type="checkbox"/> Submitted for Publication <input type="checkbox"/> Unpublished and Unsubmitted work written in manuscript style
Publication Details	Poetry collection published in a shorter and reordered form by Picaro Press, Cardiff, NSW, 2013. ISBN 978-1-921691-25-6

Contents

Declaration and Statement of Authorship.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	5
I The Sixth Creek	7
Reading fractals	8
Anthropologist at the ceremony.....	9
Hope is a perennial.....	11
Horsnell Gully.....	13
Blackberries	15
The re-vegetation equation	17
The sweetness and the sting.....	19
Geology.....	21
The fire pit.....	22
The borderlands	23
The hunt	25
The storm	27
Power cut	28
The dam	30
II Unpinning Insects	32
The bull ant	33
Wedge-tailed eagle.....	35
Brown snake.....	37
Western Grey Kangaroo	38
Tawny frogmouth.....	40
Chocolate Wattled Bat	41
King Fern	42
Mountain galaxias fish.....	43
The animal within	44
III Edge of an emergency	46
Fire track gate number 13	47
Marble Hill I: Maid of Marble Hill (1882)	50
Marble Hill II: Black Sunday	52

Marble Hill III: Weight of loss	54
The water tanks	56
Country Fire Service I: Monday night training	57
Country Fire Service II: Child's play	59
Edge of an emergency.....	60
I Marriage in a hatchback.....	60
II Waiting.....	60
III At sunset	61
IV Ember check	62
VIII Rain.....	62
IV Second nature	64
Basket Range	65
Body poem.....	66
The slab hut.....	67
Domestic ecology.....	69
Housework	71
The allegory of bin night.....	72
The vegetable garden	74
The waterfall	75
Deviation Road	77
Decansos	79
Death of a tree.....	81
V Rivers and mountains continue	83
Perseid meteor shower	84
The 820	85
Grand unifying question	86
Night walk.....	87
Tried to save the world but she ran me down	88
Gravity	90
Homemade thanksgiving	91
Flying home from Sydney	92
Homecoming.....	94
What will we inherit?.....	95

Acknowledgements

Some of these poems have appeared in the following publications: *Abridged (Ireland)*, *ArtState*, *Australian Poetry Journal*, *Cordite*, *Cottonmouth*, *Foam:e*, *Four W*, *Going Down Swinging*, *InDaily*, *Meanjin*, *Metabolism*; *Australian Poetry Members Anthology*, *Poetrix*, *Prayers of a Secular World Anthology* (Inkerman & Blunt), *Social Alternatives*, *Southern Write*, *Stinging Fly (Ireland)*, *SWAMP*, *The Fire Anthology* (Margaret River Press), *Tincture*, *Verandah and Westerly*. Several have also been broadcast on ABC Radio National's *Poetica* and Radio Adelaide's Writers' Radio. My sincere thanks to the editors.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the staff at Varuna, The Writers' House in the Blue Mountains. This project was the recipient of the Dorothy Hewett Flagship Fellowship for Poetry 2011 and a Varuna Publisher Fellowship 2012.

This manuscript was shortlisted in the 2012 Adelaide Festival Literature Awards for Best Unpublished Manuscript.

Heartfelt thanks to Jill Jones, Sue Hosking, Brian Castro, Mike Ladd, Deb Westbury and Jude Aquilina for their generous mentorship and to the University of Adelaide for the time and opportunity to dedicate myself to poetry.

Deep thanks to Rob Riel and Picaro Press for general brilliance and support.

Thanks and hugs to the Edit When Sober Poetry Group –Heather Taylor Johnson and Alison Flett – who keep me in love with poetry and striving to be a better poet.

Special thanks to Rebekah Clarkson and the Washington family for Varuna Wednesdays, without which the exegesis would be an eternal work-in-progress.

And to my husband Andrew Noble – thank you doesn't even come close.

*For Andrew,
Luka, Des & Furious
who make The Sixth Creek a home.*

I would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the Peramangk people who are the traditional owners of the lands that comprise the Sixth Creek catchment in the Mount Lofty Ranges of South Australia.