

The Dam is Dry

William Loader

The Dam is dry – now for two months. Where once I dug out thistles on its bank and pulled Bathurst burr is dry, patched soil. The 25 mm of rain made not so much as a puddle, though in the surrounds patches of green appear.



When I approach, red dam, as it is called, frowns back at me its cracked frown. Before me is a wound, its history exposed in layers, and now confronting me with a future. Is this the heritage when slick salesmen take the helm, of world apathy, suppressed rationality, the anti-science of those who clutch their wealth?

A gaping hole of incredulity echoing the hates of left and right, a cacophony of those who love to hate and leave no room for dialogue. What future is there? Tropical fruits in Siberia, habitation of the poles, and let middle earth burn?

Seductions of religion point beyond the brokenness, trample the suffering with fantasies of hope. They nail truth to a tree. Will the dam stay dry – a nightmare, doom? No, it will rain again, but it will not be the same over and over. Earth is not boring. It reasserts itself above our needs and when denied defies us with wildfires and floods, reminding us it was here before us and will outlast us, melting amid the stars.

But we can care. We can give back. We can refill at least our hearts with love and then red dam will find its smile, earth bring forth its own, its weeds, and the artificial turf of political expediency be cast aside for new green growth, weeds and all, and the cross become our flag.