

# *TWO POEMS FOR STEPHEN OLIVER*

*by Mark Pirie*

## B U S H E D

1.

Te Kuiti – near bush country  
is all I know.

Remember the Baxter poem  
'Bushed' – in it, he told

of a place, where 'tree spiders  
build/ their houses to the east', where

'sun can enter gossamer tunnels' –  
with grass 'bent over by southerly winds'.

2.

Your phone call made me think  
of it – the idea of you

bushed somewhere, without a compass, solitary,  
writing. The poems coming to you,

and read to me over the phone,  
the words, finding their way out, a slow excavation

in the tunnels of Te Kuiti,  
the light filtering your gold-like words.

*Wellington 2007*

## T H E   B R I D G E

Up on the bridge two men are walking.  
Below them the river runs swiftly, trees fan the air,  
and the ground diminishes with each step.  
The earth's at work, and as they walk towards the end  
neither man knows just when the other will go.

*Brisbane, 2000*

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