

Skeletal & Otherworldly

Mount Trio

April 2022

All along the roadside are ravens and parrots, drinking from the puddles left by overnight rains. Everything is cast in a dull grey light. There are no gaps in the clouds. On the bumpy gravel road leading to the trailhead, you watch a thick shroud of vapours slowly cascade over the mountain's slopes.

You start to ascend up a steep series of steps. Condensation drips from the leaves of stunted eucalypts and montane heath. Spindly silhouettes of branches blackened by fire emerge out of the fog. You look back in the direction from where you came and the path is completely obscured. There's no reference for how far your body has moved, apart from the exhaustion borne of the incline.



After the steps, the trail takes on a more gentle gradient. Kingia have come to dominate the plant community atop the plateau. Rushes grow from spaces between rocks along the trail. A spiderweb is decorated by beads of moisture, dancing back and forth in the gentle breeze. There's something almost gothic about the scene, but

it is calm rather than foreboding. This is an otherworldly space, separated from the everyday experience of humans, where veiled skeletal forms draw you into a particular state of becoming.

Your position is dislocated. You are aware that you are atop a mountain, but any sense of distance or scale has been erased by the mist. Eventually, you reach the summit cairn: a forlorn, isolated pile of rocks.



You realise: there is a single hiker observing a scene so strangely beautiful in its desolation, surrounded by clouds, hearing nothing except the sound of the wind, their own breath, and the chirping of the crickets; a body suspended in space.



* sulphur *