

# Lift off

BY SUSAN HARRIS

I waved a smile  
down against Melbourne's  
white sunshine summer.  
Gum trees waved  
my perch down. I slouched

below North winds  
no cockatoo knows.  
Up, engine wind roared  
frantic gum leaves, last  
wave up toward brown

leaves, frosted under maples.  
When each gum tree waved  
I turned cockatoo,  
flapped my wave, white  
feathered farewell, shrieked

sorrow for my home.  
I searched through cold clouds  
veiling wingtips, weighed  
down. Already my  
eyes grieved for gum trees.

Susan Harris graduated  
in 2004 with a degree  
in creative writing. She  
studied abroad for a  
semester in Melbourne,  
Australia, in 2003.