

## Kevin Roberts / TWO POEMS

### PACKER

Black plank Packer  
backs into Ford's Cove  
at noon  
winching buckets of ice  
into Norpac float

a fisherman yells hey Giorgio  
hows your sister  
right side up for a change  
and the squat dark man  
crushes an ice ball  
flings it at the boat &  
more yells shes got round  
heels and the Packer crew  
forget the winch  
toss iceballs at the voices  
& fishboats and the bucket  
slips  
swings and smashes through  
the cabin & the skippers out and  
barking like a St Bernard &  
the crew turn their backs  
on the insults shovelling  
with easy swings

them bastards got it easy  
someone says

ah hell you aint free  
with a boss  
someone else says  
you aint even got the right  
to go  
bankrupt.

## LESSON

It looks easy this  
40 ft troller bulling in  
to French Creek like it'll  
cut clean through & then  
a pause  
a roar in reverse  
white water at the stern  
it stops  
dead  
beside the dock

the first few times you got  
everybody yelling you're  
floundering like a shot seal

you learn the one  
way the boat  
kicks  
in reverse  
way the wheel spins  
right or left hand  
slowly the boat comes  
alive under you  
end up trusting your  
engine  
let the wind crossdrift  
you into dock  
feeling for that point  
in the boat it all moves  
about stern to bow

learn to push the boat  
up to  
the point  
where you and the sea  
and the boat  
meet