HUMAN, ALL-TOO-HUMAN

they are, those fuzzy little balls

curled into the right fork in the gum.

Nearer, resolving into black eye

patches, leathery nose, a hanging

loose of arms to scratch the way we

just a know a teddy bear or Pooh does

scratch. Even the pouch is sewed on

backwards. So comfy a hug, a fit.

Cousin Leo, whose mother died young,

once held a nurse. Oh, she looks so

good in white, he said, my Magyar

Florence Nightingale. He didn't let

her change her clothes at night.

The nurse grew tired of Leo (who

wasn't much good at earning a living

in Szeged or Australia) and because

it was not a time for divorce, she

gave him hell after dark, beat the kids.

So you can't tell about koalas either.

Sweetness and light, fluffy ears?

Up close, there are scars to show

that strong clawing is what makes

this niche fit. The young are weaned

on a thin eucalypt soup lapped off

the mother's anus; even before, blind,

grub-like, many don't make the un-

aided climb to that cute pouch.