

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE
(aka The Witch-Hunt - Yet another world premiere)

VOICE 1

Forget about the tracks, that led into the sand-dune from the tent
You invented the dingo story , tis what we really meant
We don't care about the cry, after junior had been bedded down asleep
We just want to lock you up, to put you away for keeps

You must have lied about the jacket, to explain the lack of drool
Anyone who fell for your story, was probably a southern fool
The campsite crew that stuck up for you, couldn't be taken serious
They'd been out in the sun far too long, must have been delirious

If Karpunya's pup was really runnin' wild in the land of the desert sun
There'd be screams and cries mingled with the dust and flies, coming from everyone
Our head ranger's request for extra bullets, is still buried in a Darwin In-Tray
If we've got anything to do with it, it will never see the light of day

We know nothing of the three-year-old, dragged from a car some weeks before
However you try to justify your tale, we don't believe you anymore
Any time you spend tracking down that story, would be a terrible waste
For the page is now missing from the log-book, the parents cannot be traced

(Our local mate's troublesome canine pet, that used to stay inside on a stormy night
Has honestly been shot many months ago, now couldn't give anyone a fright)

We don't want any compensation claims, for overlooking the fauna
Our investors bucks are all tied up, in the tourist bar at Yulara
We've got heaps of dough to chase you though, to make it look like ya dunnit
We could call another inquest, then show ya how to run it

We put out a commission for child abuse, which didn't do any good
It would be much neater to pin you for murder, as if we really could

Our inept boys in blue took a public hiding, at your first inquest
So we conveniently called the second one, at their scientists request
We also called in the Minister's mate, to manipulate the legal show
Just to make sure that your family, would suffer further woe

Our intimate forensic friends worked admirably with braille,
On both the malevolent car and innocent tent
No malice at all intended, if the results were twisted and bent

Our over-zealous prosecution bayed for blood, so we decided to discover it in your car
Then we pulled in lots of science gurus, from places near and far
The car was awash with blood they said, then destroyed anything to prove it
The reason was, it was never there, but still we decided to use it

Our cops put the fear of god, into the bloke who reported another missing kid
Threatened him with jail, reminded him it was just an aboriginal billy lid
Made him remember his loyalties, before he publicly said anything more
Our prosecution needed to state that similarities, had never happened before,

We won applause for this popular cause, and turned it into a circus
So we twisted more facts, and conjured up our own, to suit our political purpose
We fed a few furrphies to the journos, led a few more suckers to believe
That we had some other terrible secrets, well hidden up our sleeve

Frame the witch, then jail the bitch, we don't care
Serves her right for coming to our backyard, when she shouldn't have been there

We leaned a bit on the witnesses, before they fronted the court,
Tried to change their story, to make them feel distraught,
Then we brought in our boffins, to dream up magic out of thin air
But we did it all in public, to show that we were fair

Fool the people, inflame the nation, fuel the rumours, we don't care
The manner in which we do justice here, is way beyond compare
Truss her up, lock her up, and throw away the key
Hang the witch, the murderous bitch, from the scaffold 'til eternity

VOICE 2

The campsite crew all thought as one, that this was a troppo joke
Certain they were that this fantasy science, wouldn't fool the ordinary bloke
After all what one PHD said, was the imprint of a bloody hand
Took a common unjaundiced eye to see, what was really bright red sand

But the rules of sub-judice gagged any sensible debate
Any insider knowledge, would surface much too late
Of the massive waste of resources, that the witch-hunt had created
By the Territory Administration, in the pursuit of the ones they hated

The trial judge saw through the charade, and did his little bit
Marked the file 'Not Guilty', then summarised for the jury to acquit

VOICE 1

But when the evening verdict came in, the jury were lawfully right
The Top-End got a hangover from partying away the night
Some crazy southern witnesses on TV, called for an immediate review
But the witch was all locked up now, it was safer for me and you

We found heaps of blood, where it really shouldn't be
We just wanted a conviction, for all the world to see
We've got it all stitched up, we'll show the bitch what's what
We'll throw her in the clink, and leave her there to rot.

VOICE 2

The Appeal Courts deemed the jury decision, as safe as safe could be
Public confidence in the system, was more important than being free
There doesn't have to be a crime, to put you away for lots of time
Just a touch of malice, a poisoned chalice, and a warped imagination.

Three years said the Administration, was the least that applied
If anyone challenged the right, of the bitch to stay inside
The Territory Government's ominous words, struck an apparent chill
Any struggle to free the witch, was going to be long uphill

Thwarted illuminating scientific stuff, forwarded by the legal defence
Got treated by the NT government, with delayed indifference
Mounting public campaigns, that around the nation now occurred
Called on the federal sphere to take action, for genuine justice to be heard

VOICE 1

If only the witch did confess, would our mob consider her release
We had to have a scapegoat, who didn't embarrass our police

VOICE 2

Three long years later a tourist climber, fell off the great central mound,
A matinee jacket was discovered, near where his broken body was found
Some of his limbs were missing, no-one could say where
But all thoughts were now turned once again, to the nearby dingo lair

Only when a loyal Darwin editor, furiously awakened to the lies he'd been fed
Threatened to expose in front page print, how easily justice had been misled
Did a surprised NT government do a backflip, to show that they were suddenly humane
For they quickly promised to release the witch, and agreed not to pursue her again.

So if ever you get in peril, don't rely on things being just
Cops, scientists, journalists, politicians and lawyers, sometimes abuse our trust
Beware of the modern witch-hunters, who suffer from moral decay
For you may be the next one on their hit-list, to be undeservedly put away

If you want to avert a tragedy, and possible unwanted fame
Also avoid tourist havens like Fraser Island, for the conditions there are the same.

VOICE 1

Rock up, rock up, rock up ... to the Northern Territory
We've got the best fraud squad, that you will ever see!

If you run into strife, we'll pin it on the wife,
for anything that happens to your family
We'll put her name, on the picture in the frame,
to bring you shame and notoriety

VOICES 1 & 2

The Top End's a terrific place to visit and a wonderful place to be
Oooh Yeah ! (Pretend to spit on the ground)

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[Note: this poem was created to be read as a 'play' with two characters – good/bad, pro/con – at a private function. It uses Australian rhyming slang – 'billy lid' for 'kid', as well as knowledge of the behaviour of certain individuals which never was exposed in the media or courts.]