

GOING DOWN SWINGING

— No. 26 —

Stories,
Comics, Poetry,
Spoken Word CD
& Street Art
Feature



Shhh...

GOING DOWN SWINGING

— No. 26 —



Published 2008 by Going Down Swinging Inc.
PO Box 24, Clifton Hill, Victoria, Australia, 3068
Email: info@goingdownswinging.org.au
Web: www.goingdownswinging.org.au

Copyright © remains with the respective authors/artists/composers

Editors: Steve Grimwade & Lisa Greenaway
Cover design: Tom Civil

Printed by: BPA Print Group
Limited edition bound by: Irwin and McLaren Bookbinders
CD mastered by: Adam Dempsey, Deluxe Mastering
CD manufactured by: Dex Audio Pty Ltd

Typeset in Century Schoolbook 9/13

ISBN 978-0-9804053-1-6
ISSN 0157 3950

Submissions for *Going Down Swinging* issue 27
Only accepted between 1 April 2008 and 30 June 2008
For full details see page 98 and go to www.goingdownswinging.org.au

**ARTS
VICTORIA**



This project has been assisted by the Australian Government
through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory board.

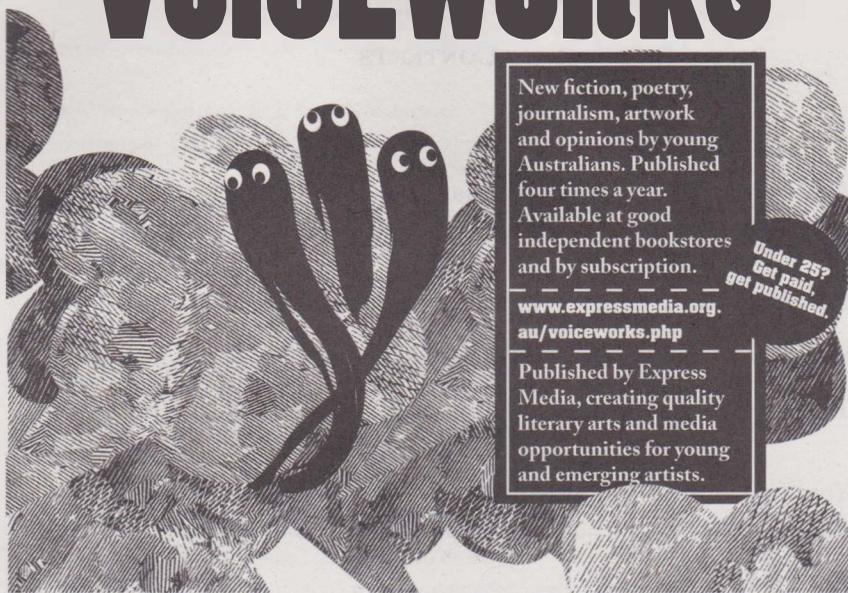


Going Down Swinging gratefully acknowledges
the support of the School of Culture and Communication
at the University of Melbourne.

CONTENTS

Art, Comics, Illustrations & Images	x
CD Track Listings	xi
Editorials	xiv
Writerly sponsors	xvi
Thanks	xvii
Yogi Coaches the Buddha at the Bat <i>Eric Paul Shaffer</i>	1
Good Day For It <i>Jason Cotter</i>	2
Starlings <i>Martin Bennett</i>	8
At the Tate, Interpreting Red <i>Alicia Sometimes</i>	9
Fires on the Sun <i>Tim Richards</i>	10
As Tradesmen, Alchemists Notoriously Remained Bachelors <i>Dave Snyder</i>	16
the philosophy of brakes <i>Grant Caldwell</i>	17
Our Father <i>Jennifer Lee</i>	18
Untitled <i>Emilie Zoey Baker</i>	24

VOICEWORKS



New fiction, poetry,
journalism, artwork
and opinions by young
Australians. Published
four times a year.

Available at good
independent bookstores
and by subscription.

[www.expressmedia.org.
au/voiceworks.php](http://www.expressmedia.org.au/voiceworks.php)

Published by Express
Media, creating quality
literary arts and media
opportunities for young
and emerging artists.

Under 25?
Get paid,
get published.

AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW

'ABR is essential reading for those who want to keep abreast of the currents of Australian literature. It's analysis and criticism are of a high order.'

David Williamson

'ABR is Australia's most elegant, most intelligent, most spirited and most important source of literary comment. Each edition renews one's belief that this is still a clever country.'

Sonya Hartnett

What are you reading?

If you are serious about literary culture, you should be reading *Australian Book Review*, the country's leading review magazine. Each month it examines Australian society, current affairs, international relations, politics, philosophy, the environment, local and world literature and the arts. Regular features include essays, commentary, columns on media, film and theatre, and new poetry.

Subscribe from now until 31 April, quoting 'GDS', at the special rate of \$70 – a saving of 22% off the cover price. To take advantage of this offer, visit the *ABR* website, phone (03) 9429 6700 or email: abradmin@vicnet.net.au

ABR

www.australianbookreview.com.au

8mm Film	
<i>Christian Lund</i>	25
Haircut Kate and Swinging Anubis	
<i>Tine Brok</i>	34
Old Adaminaby: Drought	
<i>Fiona Wright</i>	40
Digger	
<i>Jacqueline Cook</i>	41
Wanting	
<i>Ivana Rnjak</i>	45
Leaving Home/Coming Home	
<i>Matthue Roth</i>	48
Big Sky Paradise	
<i>Anna Krien</i>	50
present perfect	
<i>Rijn Collins</i>	57
Captured Shell Cranium	
<i>Michael Lee Johnson</i>	60
	
	
<i>no</i>	61
Climbing Mount Ilija, Dalmatia	
<i>Stuart Cooke</i>	62
Rats! Ah-Ahhh!	
<i>John Layton</i>	66
De Kraai en het Paard	
<i>David Prater</i>	67
Boarding the Ark	
<i>Ella Holcombe</i>	68
The Sick Cat	
<i>Ella Holcombe</i>	69
Whales and Haikus	
<i>Colleen Burke</i>	71

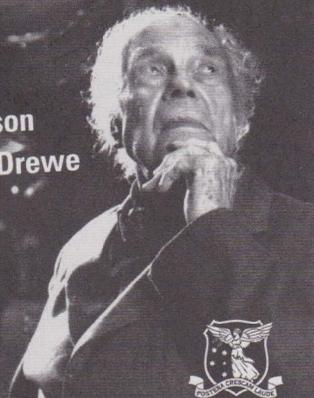
MEANJIN
NEW WRITING IN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 66, no. 4 & vol. 67, no 1.

ETERNAL SUMMER

Poetry by Adam Ford, Dorothy Porter,
Chris Wallace-Crabbe & Jillian Pattinson
Stories by Frank Moorhouse & Robert Drewe
Novella by Marion Halligan

Interview with Merce Cunningham



Available across Australia from March. www.meanjin.unimelb.edu.au

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



More than just words ...

Overland, Australia's most radical literary journal, publishes the most exciting new and emerging talent, alongside some of the nation's best-known writers.

More than that, it explores how literary culture works, and reveals the political and social pressures impacting on the publishing industry.

If you write – or if you think that writing matters – you should be reading *Overland*.

Bringing you culture and politics since 1954.

overland

www.overlandexpress.org
\$12.50 per issue in bookshops
subscriptions from \$35 (four issues)
e: overland@vu.edu.au
t: (03) 9919 4163
a: PO Box 14428
Melbourne Vic 8001

ARTS
VICTORIA



VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY

A NEW
COURAGE OF
THOUGHT

Money is a Kind of Poetry	
<i>B.N. Oakman</i>	73
Juggernaut	
<i>Irene Wilke</i>	74
third way	
<i>Derek Motion</i>	76
Ties	
<i>Samantha Dagg</i>	77
Romy	
<i>Leanne Hall</i>	86
This wasn't written for the page	
<i>Josephine Rowe</i>	92
Weddings can be dangerous (you have been warned!!!)	
<i>Ghostboy</i>	94
How to submit to <i>Going Down Swinging</i>	98
Welcome to the <i>GDS Merchandise Tent!</i>	100
Index	102
Autographs	105

ART, COMICS, ILLUSTRATIONS & IMAGES

Street Art Special Feature

<i>Vexta</i>	14-15
<i>Miso</i>	32-33
<i>Tom Civil</i>	46-47
<i>ghostpatrol</i>	64-65
<i>HAHA</i>	84-85

My Awful Classmates at Westbourne High

<i>Daniel Reed</i>	12
--------------------------	----

Ogden

<i>Anna Simic</i>	23
-------------------------	----

Memoirs of a North West London Nanny

<i>Mirranda Burton</i>	26
------------------------------	----

Shoes

<i>Paul Oslo Davis</i>	42
------------------------------	----

Ishango Bone

<i>Image courtesy of the Science Museum of Brussels</i>	61
---	----

Porpee-Town

<i>Neale Blanden</i>	70
----------------------------	----

The Mind and Matter of Human Hope (City Version) and The Single Broken Line that Divides Monotheism and Monism

<i>Patrick Jones</i>	72
----------------------------	----

Eggs

<i>Lucy Lawson</i>	90
--------------------------	----

So Far, That's It.

<i>Paul Oslo Davis</i>	96
------------------------------	----

CD TRACK LISTINGS

1. Legends (1:02)

Emilie Zoey Baker

Written & spoken by Emilie Zoey Baker. Produced by Sjaak Hermanus & recorded by Harry Williamson at Spring Studio, Melbourne, October 2007.

2. The Battle of Clarendon Street (2:52)

Adam Ford

Vocals by Charles 'Bud' Tingwell. Music composed & performed by Grant Balfour with Harry Monkhorst (toms) & Karl Bullock (banjo). Vocals recorded by Archie Cuthbertson at 3RRRFM Studios, Melbourne, October 2004. Music recorded by Grant Balfour & Harry Monkhorst at HairyBottom Studios, Gainesville, FL, USA, June 2004.

3. The Case Against Symmetry (1:00)

Solrun Hoaas

Written & spoken by Solrun Hoaas. Music composed & performed by Simon Whithear. Recorded & mixed by Darrell Bassett at Bank Recorders, Brunswick, May 2007.

4. I Know Kung Fu (4:30)

The Ventriloquist Band

Words written & performed by Chris Redmond. Music written & performed by Chris Redmond, Riaan Vosloo (bass), Chris Allard (guitar), Ross Stanley (keys), Graham Fox (drums), Nick Etwell (trumpet). Recorded at The Fishmarket, London, September 2006. Mixed by Geof Southall & Chris Redmond at MI7, London, July 2007. Copyright of Redmond/Vosloo/Allard/St Stanley/Fox/Etwell.

5. I Never Meant To (6:04)

Preacherman Says

Written, composed, engineered & produced by Preacherman Says (aka Phil Norton), Belgrave, September 2007. Created for a *Going Down Swinging* performance commission.

6. Driving Anne Sexton (1:34)

Peter O'Mara

Written & spoken by Peter O'Mara. Vocals, percussion & electric guitar by Dave Marshall. Engineered by Dave Marshall, Panting Dog Studios, Franklinton, 2008.

7. Jabbernoir e Lychee Whine (5:21)

Benito Di Fonzo & Gemnastics

Written & spoken by Benito Di Fonzo & Gemnastics. Music by Andy Lane. Inspiration: cleanskin sauvignon blanc. Recorded Surry Hills, Sydney, Summer 2005.

8. The Morning After (1:45)

Graham Nunn

Words by Graham Nunn. All instruments by Sheish Money. Recorded & produced by Sheish Money at In House Studio, Brisbane, October 2007.

9. A.M. (2:04)

David McCooley

Words & music written, recorded & performed by David McCooley, Melbourne.

10. Flight to the Heart (5:11)

Sarah Mae

Written & composed by Sarah Mae. Mark Stevens (double bass) & Casey Nicholson (trumpet). Engineered & produced by Sarah Mae, Surry Hills, Sydney (a bedroom jobbie) October 28 2007 (or thereabouts).

11. Butterfly Kisses (3:15)

The Still Company

The Still Company is: Ian McBryde (voice, text, drum programming) & Greg Riddell (keyboards, samples, computers). Engineered & produced by The Still Company, Melbourne, 2007.

12. Dangerous (5:10)

PHARMAKON with Ian Ferrier

Lyrics adapted from the poem 'Gasoline' by Ian Ferrier. Vocals by Ian Ferrier & music by PHARMAKON: Kris Mah (guitar), Doug Stein (percussion), Jon Stein (bass & laptop). Recorded at PHARMAKON's Montreal Studio, Montreal, Canada, May 2007. Mix by Jon Stein.

13. Ice (4:14)

Anna Liebzeit

Written, performed & produced by Anna Liebzeit, Melbourne, 2007.

14. Train Bells (1:33)

Nathan Curnow

Written & spoken by Nathan Curnow. Engineered & produced by Ian Bail. Recorded at Orchard Rise Studios, Bolwarra.

15. Canarvon Beach (3:04)

Briohny Doyle

Recorded by AmityVille Horrorhead at University of Technology, Sydney, 2007. Produced by Toecutter.

16. Down Here (2:18)

Peter O'Mara

Written & spoken by Peter O'Mara. Vocals & acoustic guitar by Dave Marshall. Engineered by Dave Marshall, Panting Dog Studios, Franklinford, 2008.

17. The Magicians (4:20)

David Thrussell

Written & spoken by David Thrussell (Mushroom Music). Recorded in a Dank Hessian Sack. David Thrussell appears courtesy of The Intergalactic Reptilian Front Organisation Inc. Pty. Ltd. LLC. GMBH.

18. Distant Drums (3:41)

Wordsart

Written & composed by Jenni Meredith. Music performed by Ralph & the Robot Choir, Colchester African Drummers. Engineered & produced by Jenni Meredith for Red Snow Records, Essex, UK.

19. Climbing the most beautiful mountain
(for Wendy & Brett Whiteley) (4:19)

Jen Jewel Brown

Jen Jewel Brown/Declan Kelly, ORiGiN/Control. Music performed, engineered & produced by Declan Kelly. Recorded at 1st Avenue, Rosebud, May 2007.

20. Ocean Hearted (2:12)

Graham Nunn

Words by Graham Nunn. All instruments by Sheish Money. Recorded & produced by Sheish Money at In House Studio, Brisbane, October 2007.

21. Foresight (0:56)

Mary E Napier

Text, music & vocals composed by Mary E Napier. Sound Engineer—Adrian Symes. Produced by Mary E Napier & Adrian Symes at Holloway Home Studio, Melbourne, 2007.

22. Let us fly (3:30)

Thomas, Jack of Hearts

Music by Davood A Tabrizi. Recorded by Chris Hancock at the Frequency Lab, Sydney. Mixed by Sofie Loizou at the Tweak Laboratory. Mastered by Kathy Naunton at dB Mastering. From the album *From Rooftop to Rooftop*.

23. Steps (4:11)

Burke Thomas

Adrienne Sheerin (keyboards). Recorded at Interior Designs Studios, Adelaide. Engineered & produced by Burke Thomas & Adrienne Sheerin.

24. 27D (1:28)

Mitchell Joe

Written & spoken by Mitchell Joe. Produced by Dan Hirst & Carey Dell at ABC Radio National's Melbourne Studios. (With thanks to the ABC for providing studios as part of the 2004 'The Deep End' National Poetry Slam first prize.)

EDITORIAL I ... STEVE GRIMWADE

MY DAD TOLD ME TO WRITE THIS. He says I'm not the reason he's leaving the marvellous vehicle that is *GDS*, and that his ride was just finishing before I came along. But here it is—5am and I'm up writing this as he changes my super-cool hand-stitched cowboy blanket over, so I'm not playing in too much grit and skanky three-day-old milk. He's wiping his eyes with this sort of Billy Crystal yawn as he potters around my toys (especially the rubber numbers I like to suck on to bring on the new teeth). He's up again too early, he mumbles. So, he said, while he fixes me breakfast I should write this editorial ... It was only fair, after all I might want to be a writer someday and how am I going to cut my teeth (besides sucking on the rubber thingies), if I don't get my words into the finest literary journal on the planet?! (I might take the time here to ask, what is a planet?)

He says this one has been the most fun. *All of this* is why he loves this journal so much. There's the spectacular and fresh writing talent—there's the performers and those amazing street artists. It's about the editors he's worked with, and Lisa's tickling smile. There's the proofreaders, the sponsors, the supporters. It's the buzz of reading and hearing the final product as he lounges into a big chair and switches his mind on to eleven. It's the gigs too. And the readers. He loves the high life of the literary world. But he says, after nine years, it's time to hang up the keys and let others take the wheel (maybe adding a caravan or two, a great car stereo and fluffy dice). He will do other literary things I'm sure ... he's addicted. But there will be nappies I tell him, and loads of literature in the nappies.

I can only hope I get published in this world-class journal and one day when dad is the King of the World (apparently that's a *Titanic* quote), I will get to write about planets, rubbery bits and the shape of things to come. But in the now, *GDS* is here to stay! And my dad needs to go have a lie down, and I need to rest my creative little fingers, coz it's 5.15 in the gosh dang morning.

—Arlo Grimwade
8 months

EDITORIAL II ... LISA GREENAWAY

GOING DOWN SWINGING IS A RESTLESS CREATURE—not content to print by numbers. Every time the print deadline gets set it calls for us as editors to lift our vision—this is because of what’s gone before—the quality and the changeability of this spirited little publication.

GDS was hatched nearly three decades ago thinking it wouldn’t grow up. That I think has given this creature a very Zen state of mind. Each book is a big step, and no one is looking at the peak of the mountain, just making each step count. Because, folks, first of all, that’s the best way to climb a mountain, and second of all, *GDS* isn’t really going anywhere. It’s all about what the writers and artists are making at this present moment, and their moment is now.

As past *GDS* mountain climber (and current contributor) David Prater might say, “*GDS* is also Buddha.” And in this issue, at this moment in time, Buddha’s at the bat, Ogden’s back, starlings are painting like Pollock, and dog poo has feelings. Bliss.

Each time a new *GDS* comes back from the printers I feel the gradient get steeper, and the challenge rising. And I like that. It puts a spring in my step. Over the years the editors have drawn on a huge amount of creativity and courage, taking the words and the pictures and binding them in books that are always special, different, unusual, sometimes eccentric, occasionally, sure, slightly unhinged. But that’s what we want from art, isn’t it?

If we are publishing the work of great writers and great artists then we need to publish these works in the best possible package we can. Because we want the people who never pick up a literary magazine to pick up *GDS*, and if they pick it up because it looks great, feels great, sounds great (hell, even smells great), then that’s ok because then, they’ll read it, and we’ve done our job. I’m proud to be part of that effort and especially proud to be a part of this issue, which looks, feels, sounds (hell, even smells) fantastic ... particularly if you’re holding the hardcover limited edition in your hands right now!

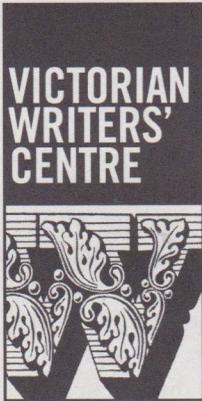
This time around my co-editor Steve stepped out on a ledge high up, opening the book to invite some of the best working street artists into the pages. And the view from here is brilliant. Tom Civil has given us the perfect image with which to bind this moment in time. Don’t ask too many questions. Don’t be in too much of a hurry. Here’s your book, here’s your moment, and we hope that it gives you pleasure on your journey.

—Lisa Greenaway

WITH WRITERLY SUPPORT FROM...



NORTHERN RIVERS
writers' centre
... For writers and readers



ACT Writers Centre

the NSW
Writers'
er's
CENTRE

SA **Writers'**
Centre Inc

WITH THANKS TO...

Linda Lucas, Fiona Beckwith, Tania Grant & everyone at Arts Victoria; Nicola Evans & everyone at the Australia Council; Kath Letch & everyone at 3RRR; Aimee McComiskie & all the fine people at EFTel; Kevin Brophy, Adam Ford, Anna Hedigan & Alicia Sometimes; all our studious chums at Melbourne University; Stuart Anderson, Tom Markovski & the BPA Print Group; Phil Ridgway and the team at Irwin McLaren Bookbinders; Adam Dempsey at Deluxe Mastering; everyone at Dex Audio; all those fine people at *Voiceworks*, *ABR*, *Meanjin* & *Overland*; the very spunky SPUNC team; our amazingly generous and beautiful artists HAHA, ghostpatrol, Tom Civil, Miso and Vexta—with especial thanks to Tom for his cover design; and YOU!, you arts-perpetrating, small-magazine-supporting, fine-book-reading, comic-loving individual!

Yogi Coaches the Buddha at the Bat

Eric Paul Shaffer

Umpires convince us there's truly something behind us,

but that's a lie, too. If there ever was a past, it was never
a tidy green field of forever, no matter how magnificent

the memory. The arc overhead shocks us. One moment
is a scorching morning of bell-clear blue sky; the next,
two towers topple on TV. There's no going back. Ever.

What's done is gone, and everything's irreplaceable but
the present. Nobody escapes, even the runners trapped

and panting on the sand between fast-forward and rewind.
Life, they gripe, is a mystery. Each moment seems a shot

in a sequence of spontaneous scenes, and the metaphor,
of course, implies the tape rolls both ways to re-review

the past or future of the trim little instant you're moving
through, but that ain't it. The past is not a box or a base.
No path leads home, and from here, there's no way out.

Play ball. The blind and blank-faced Buddha in a mask
mouths one word in a monotone, "Now. Now. Now."

Everything could be worse, and nothing could be better.

Good Day For It

Jason Cotter

IT'S COLD AND DARK OUTSIDE. I can hear the drips from the eaves, but no gentle patter of rain on the roof. Dawn isn't too far off. I crawl a hand up from under the covers and touch my cheeks. They're cold and the air through my hair is cold, but I'm snug in the old bed heaped with blankets and Dad's doona. I lay there a while, my eyes open and looking at the roof in the low wash of the clock's irradiated arms. The day is almost underway and soon it will be over.

I walk down to the kitchen and my ankles click. I remember lying in my bed as a kid, listening to Dad's ankles click past my bedroom and on down the hall, before they'd warmed up and eased into the day. I'd hear him make his cuppa and open the door for the dog to sit on the mat. Dad would whisper things to him while he drank. Things like, "Bit rough this morning, eh, fella," and "Jeez, that wasn't you, was it?" I'd go back to sleep when I heard the bike start up and putt out of the shed and off to the dairy.

The kitchen is now quiet, but the tiled floor is warm underfoot, and I reach down and flatten my palm against it. Barry installed the under-floor heating with the new kitchen about seven years ago, and I don't think Dad ever had it off. I straighten up and feel around for the light switch. It wasn't moved in the renovations, but it still takes time to find it. The kitchen isn't mine anymore. I will have to relearn.

The fluoro light pings on and is still pinging a bit as I stand in my shorts at the sink and fill a glass from the tap. The window is all fogged up so I swipe a circle to look through. It's still dark out and all I can see is my reflection, coming in close to peer, then stepping back to sip.

Dad has pinned all the postcards from Barry, Jan and me over the years to the bathroom wall. Some are warped and faded with the damp and light, but most are in shape and span out in an historical record of sorts. I

guess that will stop now too. I unpin one of the closest postcards as I sit. I hold it in both hands with my elbows on my knees, looking at it closely. It's of a small boy sitting against a wall with his eyes shut, a white curly-haired dog at his feet and a stick resting carefully on the web of one hand. A boot is off and open in front of him, exposing his bare foot to the sun. His boots and clothes are ragged, but he has his head tilted up and there's this pleasant look on his face, like he's had a full day playing and he's just stopped for a nice, dreamy kip on the way home. I remember seeing this painting at an exhibition in Tokyo and thinking the boy was in some kind of spiritual reverie. I liked that. Things had been really good there. I turn it over and that's what it says:

*Things are really good, Dad.
Best to you and Barry and Jan.
See you at Christmas.
Michael. February 2000.*

I look down at the faint katakana in the corner and sound it out to myself: *Jules Bastien LePage*. It's followed by some kanji and I squint to make it out. *Blind Begger*, it says. I turn the card over and look at the boy again. Sure enough, he's blind. Looks like a street kid. I guess I couldn't see it before and my Japanese wasn't too good then. I wish I had known.

Dad always had all his stuff in a dresser on one side of the bedroom, and in the small box and bowl sitting on top. He called it his 'man corner', even after Mum had died when we were kids. And I guess he was right to do so, because the rest of the place still looks unmistakably Mum's all these years later. He'd say to one of us kids, "Get us the keys and a few bucks from the man corner, would ya," when we were on the way into town. Barry or Jan or me would trundle off to sift through the bowl and box. Sometimes it'd be me and Barry, or me and Jan, but never all three of us. That somehow seemed wrong. He always had some kind of new treasure in there, like a chunk of metal or rock, a key on a silk ribbon or a foreign coin, and if we took it back to him he might tell us about it.

I pull on one of Dad's jumpers from the dresser and tilt back the box's hinged, leather-covered lid. The box is wooden, partitioned inside, with a lift-out tray concealing a deeper section beneath. The safe key is down the bottom under a flap of felt, next to the chunk of gold that isn't really gold Dad had found with the metal detector. He never hid the key elsewhere, even when he knew Barry and I knew it was there. It's a long old-style key and I like the weight of it in my palm.

It opens the lock with a solid clunk. I turn the handle til it clunks too, and the long heavy door swings open. There are two rifles and a shotgun resting against the carpeted walls, and a couple of fat manila document wallets down the bottom. I take out the .22 and find the bolt and some bullets under the jumpers in the dresser drawer, slipping them into my pocket. I liked doing this as a kid, getting up early and walking over to the dairy to visit Dad. I'd go the back way and try and drop a few of the rabbits that fed just inside the paddocks fringing the bush. Over at the dairy Dad would say, "What you got there, little man?" and I might hold up a rabbit, glassy eyed but still warm, and if he had time he'd help me skin them and gut them for the freezer, showing me how to check the liver and kidneys for disease. We never found any. He was fond of saying with a serious look, "Don't kill something you don't plan to eat" and, "Never get your photo taken with a dead animal." He'd always get me to reach up into the warm freshly gutted body cavity, push my small fingers through the diaphragm and rip out the heart and lungs. Then I'd toss them aside, steaming, for one of the dogs to guts down.

It's gray and still out, the sun's not up, but light is leaching into the shadows. I pull my boots and beanie on and head towards the creek with the rifle slung over my shoulder. I can see my breath and the dog's breath as he stretches in front of the pump shed where he sleeps. He comes over as I pass and gives his tail a half wag, looking up expectantly. "Nah, mate," I say, shaking my head and flicking my hand back to the house. I watch him amble off and curl up tight on the door mat.

The grass is long and ungrazed on the creek paddocks behind the house, and wet from rain. The water seeps quickly through the leather of my boots and soon my toes are numb. From memory I know that by the time I get up the back they'll be warm again, and I'll walk with a muted squelch in my socks. And by the time I get home and peel the wet socks off, my feet will be wrinkled and pale and perfectly clean. I find the narrow cattle path and walk along it, heading for the track that goes up the back. Willows choke the creek along here and it's quieter and a bit creepy under their slack weeping branches. There's a few birds perched on some low limbs. Their eyes are open, but it's still too early to move beyond a stretch and a ruffle-puff of feathers, as they squat their necks close to their bodies. I never liked this section much, it's always still and full of those dank smells, like something's lurking beneath the bank. Sometimes you hit a thick musk scent on the air. Dad used to say it was where the bunyips crossed in the night. I always thought it was foxes, but strangely enough, foxes never smelt that way up close.

A wooden slab bridge crosses the creek and the eroded track on the other side leads up to the hill paddocks and the tree line beyond. Before the paddocks are in view I get the bolt into the rifle and a few rounds into the magazine. Sometimes a few bunnies are out by the fallen trees in the middle and I want to be ready. I creep up slow. River rocks from an older river bed hang out of the muddy embankment along the track, and I wonder how much of it has eroded since I was a kid. It looks the same, but it must have changed.

As the track flattens out into the paddock, I arch over to keep my profile low and quickly look around. I don't see any rabbits. The sun's up though, and there's colour in the grass and sky and trees. I straighten up and head out to the dead horizontal trunks in the middle. There's not much pick on the ground and I can see Dad must have had to cycle the stock through the paddocks carefully through the drought. This rain would have helped. I wonder why he hadn't run them through the tall grass in the creek paddocks behind the house, but then I remember there's a lot of rye in there, and he'd lost a few heifers through ergot-infected rye last year.

I sit on my haunches with my back to a fallen limb and look back down the paddock, the rifle across my lap. I can see above the creek's tree line and on down the valley. The rain overnight has washed the dust out of the sky and all is clear and vibrant, except for some low cloud creeping out of the steep valleys on the far side. The valley is a patchwork of fenced paddocks and stands of trees along creeks and driveways. There's not a lot of stock dotted about and none on our place. No sounds from the dairy. I look up behind me and into the tall dark forest above. It's been a hundred years since it was cut last and looks as if it never has been. I can hear the currawongs calling out and an occasional strip of sodden bark peeling off and falling onto the forest floor.

I'm watching a few wrens twittering and flitting about in the bracken at the forest fringe when I see a flash to the left and a fox weaves out. He's got a thick red winter coat and his tail is fluffed and up, like an aerial. I always liked this time of day. There's a bit of an overlap between some animals getting up and others looking for a place to bed down, and you can catch them unawares. The fox is playing with something, pouncing his front paws onto it and dropping his snout down to give it a nudge. He moves more like a cat than a dog. I bring the rifle up to watch him through the scope. He's trying to catch grasshoppers, but they keep springing away from him. I give an airy snort as another flicks away and he looks up startled. I freeze and he moves back and forth with his nose up, trying to catch a scent. I stand up and he's off, flat through the bracken and away.

I walk up to the tree line and follow the fence across to the back blocks of the Johnson's place. They'd been good to Dad apparently. They had known when the rest of us didn't, helped him move the cows and get the milking done when he couldn't. Not a peep to me or Barry or Jan though. Not a word. Their paddocks up here are full of stumps. Never pulled them out, never been able to cut for hay. I always got the impression Dad thought they were bad farmers. I know I thought so.

As I'm walking back along our boundary down to the dairy I spy a few rabbits a little way into the Johnson's. Dad always told me never to shoot across someone else's place, but I get the rifle up quick, close the bolt and snap off a shot before I have time to think. There's a tinny echo down the valley and a rabbit lies slumped on its side, white belly showing. I pass the rifle through the fence, stretch out some wires and clamber through.

They're a beautiful animal really. The shaded tans and greys of their coat, the fluffy luxurious under-fur, the delicate velveteen ears, faint veins webbing the inside. Deep eyes, long lashes, long whiskers. I run my hand from between its ears and along its flank. It's warm and soft and clean, except the dewy green-stained feet. I can't feel where the bullet went in. It's fat too. Things are rough for cows, but the rabbits are doing fine.

I hear a bike kick-start at the Johnson's and get through the gears quick. The house is hidden by trees on the creekline, but the smoke hanging low above it is visible. I know the bike is heading up towards me before I see it come out of the trees. It's Des Johnson, and the way he's riding he looks upset. As he gets closer though, and sees it's me, he backs the bike off and I see his body soften. He idles up next to me in second, squeezes in the clutch and props a foot down.

"Hey, Mick."

"Hey, Des."

"Got yourself a bunny there."

"Yeah. Just out for a walk."

"Yeah. Good day for it."

"Yeah."

"See you at eleven then," Des says, turning the bike around.

"Eleven," I say.

Des nods without meeting my eye and rolls the bike back down the hill. I cross down to our side, and bunny in one hand, rifle in the other, head down to the dairy.

Without the cows it's a ghost shed. It's all galvanised grey and rough concrete, covered in a film of windblown dirt, now it doesn't get the regular wash down. There are even weeds coming up in the cracks. A few of the stockyard gates clang gently and old cobwebs and hay bale twine

drift off the rafters. I throw the rabbit on top of a drum and head into the vat room.

I liked coming in here as a kid, the warmest place in the dairy. Dad would lift the heavy lid off the vat and I'd reach over and dip a cup in, filling it with warm, fresh, as yet unchilled milk. It had a full thick taste and aroma. Years later I wondered where they got the thin milk in cartons from.

I open the vat and it's polished clean and empty. Dad had sold the cattle and cleaned everything out with Des over the last month. Stopped going in to hospital. The air in the vat is still and thick and I know it would echo if I said something. I gently let the lid back down.

The magnetic strip above the sink still keeps a few knives. I take a short one and head out again. Grabbing a pinch of the rabbit's fur above its spine, I nick into the skin with the knife. I put my fingers in and work the skin away from the body, over the back and belly and legs, and up to the neck. It's still warm and makes a noise like masking tape slowly being pulled from its seal, as the fat cells part to separate the pelt from the body. I rip the skin at the legs, leaving a naked, muscled carcass wearing little socks and the rest of the fur dangling from the nape of the neck. Another nick on the belly, just deep enough to open the cavity, and I rip it open and pull out the steaming unbroken guts in one heap.

I look up over at the house. There's a bit of smoke wisping out from the chimney. Barry and Jan and the others must be up getting ready for the funeral. The rabbit still has its heart and lungs, but its belly is a ragged cut and its pelt is flayed and hanging. I still need to clear the chest cavity, clean the bit of intestine left between the back legs and cut off the head and feet. Give it a wash, quarter it, find a clean bag and carry it home for the freezer.

By the back legs I swing the whole heavy thing around and toss it as far as I can towards the creek. It travels over in a cart-wheeling arc and disappears with a thud into the grass beneath the trees. Over at the house I see the dog scramble under the barbed-wire fence and run full-pelt over toward me, his stride long and his tongue lolling. I unload the rifle and head over to meet him.

Starlings

Martin Bennett

High then low above the pine-dark park
West of Stazione EUR-Palaspont
X-thousand starlings flex their claim to be
The ultimate kinetic artists—

Against the blue, red, grey and violet
Of a late February sunset, picture
Split-second Calder or Kandinsky,
Some sky-scrapering Jackson Pollock,

The whole of heaven his floor; next up
Is a calligrapher in silhouette—
Taking a holiday from blockish text,
He conjures an impromptu alphabet

Plus punctuation, pulsating full stop,
Comma, colon, this exclamation mark
Which now out-tops the tallest treetop,
Now shrinks, its spiral turned speck.

Except, no sooner found than the metaphor's
Too slow, switched for an accordionist
Who unfolds crotchets, minims, quavers,
We groundling sight-readers of adjacent space.

At the Tate, Interpreting Red

Alicia Sometimes

I'm conversing Rothko in whispers
lifting my fingers, exalted, cathedral like
coaxing my friend who knows the craft
of frozen breakfasts, pool-table scuffles
& lounge room posters
& reading everything
as if it were a drunk manuscript
Now, he stands before this ache of colour
in fluster, blushing like the cranberry canvas
in front of him. Is this carnal? he asks
Cowlick swirls permeate his fractured question
as we crumble into the distillate reds
that scorch the image with fury & dissonance
He imagines a stolen waltz, I dream
the volatile margins of a goodbye letter
We both see the beginnings of life
& then: moody particles dissipate before us
leaving the sun to fend for itself outside

Fires on the Sun

Tim Richards

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE of *Seinfeld*, Sian mutes Kramer to spread some gossip she's heard about Monica Bauman's kid.

The boy is eight, but he's meant to be some kind of prodigy. According to boy wonder, the twelve-year drought has nothing to do with the earth's population doubling in forty years, and forests going AWOL. There are fires on the sun, huge flare-ups that might burn for a thousand years, that might stop tomorrow.

This kid comes out with all sorts of mad stuff someone his age shouldn't know about. He might even know that his dad used to fuck Sian before Monica entered the picture. I've heard people say that David Bauman still gets some of Sian's tail, and tell her as much.

"Must you go on with that shit?"

"But you like the idea, don't you?"

"What idea?"

"That you could have mothered little Peabody if things had been different."

"Try saying something that doesn't put your dick at the centre of the universe."

I tell her that it's not about us or anything we've done. There are fires on the sun that might never go out.

Sian's hand hits the remote, and I see the green volume bars stretch from left to right across the bottom of the screen.

Elaine's had a dream where she's making love to a close family member, and Jerry's trying to convince her that experiencing something pleasurable within the context of a dream is more healthy than experiencing distress. Provided the family member isn't her father.

Elaine's half-way through an hilarious tag when an ad cuts in. A big retailer has Fathers' Day specials on a bunch of CDs no sane father would want to receive, not even from a pretty daughter who's been having confusing dreams.

"Just for the record," Sian says, this talk of fathers having stoked her fantasies, "If I'd wanted a child, I would've wanted a girl."

"A prodigy?"

"No. Just smart enough to be taken for a fool."

At that very moment, somewhere in the Amazon rainforest, a roughly bearded man fires the ignition on his bulldozer. Bored with destruction, he's thinking of his wife and trying to list all the places they fucked before the first child came. At number seven is the bonnet of her dad's Chev. Her idea—to show she was game, or wanted to be thought game. When the list reaches a dozen, he pauses the count to wipe away some sweat. This heat is unbearable.

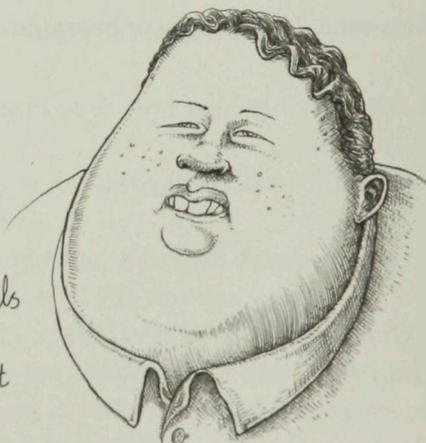
My Awful Classmates at Westbourne High

The putrid smell of Aunthur Brown
Wafts through all our classes
I believe he has his schoolbag filled
with sickly peoples arses



When Kev defeated 'Psycho Sal'
at PingPong, in Phys. Ed.,
she paddled flat his balls, then shut
the table on his head

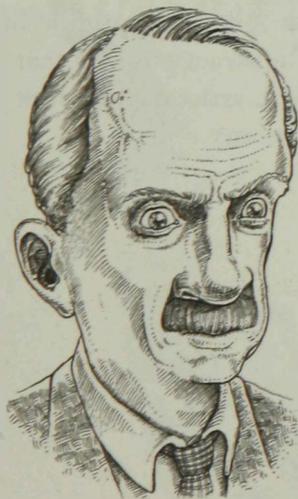
The canteen sold out of Chico Rolls
so fat boy Bernie Bowtzer
hauled his girlth down Potter Street
and ate his Aunties' schnauzer





By lustre, length, degree of curl,
Tim sorts with great affection
Every single pubic hair
in his pubic hair collection

The schnitzel Polly ate last week
sits trapped within her braces
when she laughs, decaying pork
is flung into our faces



"Such woeful poems!" yelled Mr Kent,
"They're tasteless, cruel and glum!"
when he reads the one I wrote about him
he'll be crying for his mum.

Street Art Special Feature

VEXTA'S RISE TO FAME as one of Australia's top female street artists and started on the streets of Melbourne over five years ago. She is now represented by commercial galleries and creates numerous commissions. Her work can be found in laneways, private collections and galleries such as the National Gallery of Australia.

Vibrant coloured skulls, stencilled images of her generation's childhood and political analogies—these are some of the strong subjects that Vexta uses to interpret the world. This Sydney-born artist creates work that offers up an alternative viewpoint of life in the city.



**As Tradesmen,
Alchemists Notoriously Remained Bachelors**

Dave Snyder

Would you believe, gold dissolved in *aqua regia* becomes ruby red?
Gold suspended in the clear acid: ruby red!

Giving you this fact does no good
because once in solution gold is very difficult
to remove and someone else could give you
gold gold.

To transmute is to lose.

But is it not still
wonderful?

the philosophy of brakes

Grant Caldwell

in the middle of this circle
something like a clock
the threat of tomorrow (like
a train with no driver
or no brakes except an idea
this is what we hold on to
the philosophy of brakes
or the philosophy of drivers
meanwhile you can't sleep
you have lost control of your abandonment
the dreams you ordered have not arrived (again
your body looks at you like a child or a dog
you ignore it or worse (you
give it something to shut it up
and the circle moves
a little nearer.

Our Father

Jennifer Lee

Genesis 19

³²*Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.*

³³*And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.*

³⁴*And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.*

³⁵*And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.*

JO IS LAGGING, HER WOMB SWELLING with child, feet bare, toes mud-caked, face sweaty. Our Father says our smiles are unnecessary but he will permit them. We are made in his image—he's so close to us he's almost inside us. But he will soon be deprived of our nakedness.

We have run away and now our brothers will have to entertain our father—their small cocks made blue with tied-up wire. I lift up her skirt and look inside her. Winged lips, I tickle them with a leaf. The dew is here; icing sugar on grass. I can see the gap in her front teeth now. She lets me. My finger strokes; elastic butterfly sides, sweet-smelling flesh. My finger grips and slides, grips and slides. My sister exhales, loudly smiling. Only

play with surfaces. She wriggles, her blue feet fretting the earth. I stroke, slide, lap with my lips. I straighten Jo's dress. I never insert anything. She says her knees shake when she walks. Her tongue licks the lollipop, freshly popped into her mouth. Pray to the Lord your God, the Lord his God for innocent thoughts. But obey your Father all the same.

I've sewn my breast skin with cotton and brightly coloured crystals that will shine across the land when I stand naked at dusk. Our Father doesn't comment when he sees my body holey. He sneers at me. My stomach bulb is crossed and tied with rope and the rope is tied to a chair. Old, wooden, discomforting. I am whipped; tears are slipping onto my tartlet tits. He's whipping me for my transgressions, I think.

I don't want to see you move an inch. That's right, cross your fucking legs. Hinge legs, been opened too often. Bad habit you have.

Yes you would like them to be rusted shut.

My mother's body is rotting in the roof. I can smell it waiting to be buried but the manhole is chained shut with a diamond clasp. Only the best for descendants of the rich. Her bones will be thin and bruised, broken in many places. She who made me. Her creations are left intact but unsculpted. She ran away when I was ten, promising to return and rescue all of us from Him. She never came back and we hissed messages to each other in the darkness, condemning her to hell for her betrayal. Then one day I noticed the manhole open and clambered into the roof and saw the shadow of our Father, sitting by my mother's body. He had murdered her, and no one but me had seen the body.

My child is stolen from me before the afterbirth is out. I watch my sister condemn me to be alone and unkissed. She leaves me a note and runs away, promising to return and rescue me. She's fucking others now.

For the first six years of my life I ran to my Father and he hugged me and kissed me and he brought home daffodils just for me on Fridays. But mother said there was never six years when he was nice. She said he butted out a cigarette on my two-cent nipple before I could walk. He liked to tie my hands to the bed head and scratch my sister's flesh with a hot nail and watch the blood dribble onto the sheets. I always thought he was amazed that life necessitated bleeding.

He planned each ritual and I knew that one day he would plunge the knife into me. I always thought that maybe he had a hard time at work but mother said he was the boss and they all did exactly what he told them to do at all times and that sounded right so I never questioned her after that. Now I wonder. When I came home one Friday and saw half of one side of mum's face black and the other half not so far off, her hands bound

with wire, and blood dribbling from her cunt, I knew why she sat there while he jabbed splintered metal piping up my cunt. The same reason I bathed his swelled-up hand later that evening. My tears mixed in well with the salty water. His idea of paradise is to paint scar patterns.

I don't have to contend with the horror of forgiving Father. I only had to forgive mother and that was easy. I was lucky I heard her scream through the walls when he raped her and smashed her head against the plaster. Forgive those worse off than one's self. She chose him once. I never chose him. He fucked me into existence.

Before she left, she said no one gets out—not really. Not unless they escape their own head. She decided what she and when she and how she wanted her life. And then gave it up for a face full of fist. I will never be I cannot possibly be I am not I will not. I never. I won't. I can't. I hope. He is my Father and we are his only option.

I'm waiting by the side of the road. Run away. Just like her. Throwing up my life. Jo approaches in a patchy grey car. Jo looks like a woman now. She opens the door. Leans across the gear stick. Breasts rub against it. A face slashed with lips. Sophisticated. Kissing girl. Her lips are like tarty plum juice.

I wipe my smudged lips. Don't wipe your lips honey. Get in why don't you.

A dream. Lust. Lean over and kiss her. Close eyes. She says, We're going to a party now.

Jo is dancing, owning the floor, swinging a feather boa, with short hair stuck to her head, cookies stuffed into her open mouth, legs twining the cane chairs, arms twirling a short girl around and feeling for her tiny tits, strawberries and cream fed from her tongue into the mouths of waiting boys. My mouth is all laughed out. They stare at me hopelessly, not knowing how to stop her.

Each one of them thinks she's unpredictable, a slut. I know what a dirty look is capable of. She wanted me out of her hair but my fingers are entangled and I have to prise them out of her scalp. I'd like to kiss her again. I kissed you once and I'd never felt lips so soft so I kissed you again and again. Her lips come at me from behind the beer bottle. I'm spinning in circles around her, our lips meeting for pattered kisses. Meeting for longer each time, her tongue slicing my outer lip. And I lick her lips.

God will save you from the black pits of hell. I say hell is to sit alone in an entirely white room, stomach encircled with rope. In blackness, you can hope for things that are hidden to emerge.

I am loading a gun for my sister. She has a motive beyond me. She says: I left you know. He likes to think he let me go. But I left. You stayed long after you had to. That proves I made a decision when I left.

But I stayed for the same reason you did. Years of him fucking had to result in a baby. He said he was sending it out into the world to multiply. There are no words to justify it and my sister tells me He's gone. We have escaped. The past is behind us. It's a joke how sheltered you are she says, to think your words could kill our Father.

I remember Father in the echoes of the city. And with the creeping insects, whoring themselves over the surfaces. I see his smile in the blood in my panties.

We split up once when we're inside his house. I have kept the gun and I'm ready to pound every body in this house with bullets. There's nothing I can do with words any more.

I search through rooms full of concealing tapestries and peep holes in the walls. There's one last room and the door is the richest in the house. Encrusted with rubies and emeralds. Just the door to hide a body behind. Such a good way to say to me, I told you so, I told you not to defy my riches.

The door salutes my entry. I'm staring at one glinting shard of diamond. In the diamond I see my Father as a shaggy man in rags, with circles around his eyes. I look up and see the man of the reflection except his hair is neater; his clothes are lined with fur. He's shining at me with a peace-loving smile. His hand is beckoning to me, one finger twisting at a time. I smile at him in return. I'm almost there now. Will he give me back my child? Precious. He is sugar-turned-to-fudge-sweet. He is holding me and I can't move my arms from his embrace. I am suffocating on the rotting apples, sweating through his pores. My Father polishes a ruby the size of an apple. He swallows the ruby. His arms are covered in tattoos of ships and snakes and the ever-growing world. His hands, though, are puckered as if he's indulged in a thousand years of marble bathtubs filled with bubbles. The apple, the ruby, the rubber balls from bouncing boyhood, are all ingested by my Father.

My Father says he's bringing me a gift. He says I only hope your sister, the one I have all the regrets for, my darling Jo, that I never said goodbye to, I only hope she finds her way out of this house.

My Father is opening the door to bring in the present. He's whistling while carrying the bag that holds the gift that I am to graciously receive any minute now. Any second now. I know it's important because his every step is scaring me and I'd gone beyond being afraid of his footsteps. He opens the bag on the table, sweeping cores away. A covered silver dish

slides out of the bag. My hand somehow reaches the handle and I lift the lid. Fill me top-full, I pray, fill me top-full of joy. Make it be a toy for me to play with.

On the silver tray sits a little girl. She is clean, with curled hair and shining shoes. I see myself in the dish reflection. The black under my eyes has turned me bruise-black all over so she screams when she sees me. My daughter? Or maybe Jo's. Our Father laughs, then says, You'll never take her from me. I know I'll never make it out of the house with her. I notice the window is open. I grab her, sling her over and hurl her out the window. Even if her bones cave in on themselves, and her eyes fill with blood, my gift is seeing her fly, forever free from His embrace.

ogden was a terrible
man



greasy frisk



Untitled

Emilie Zoey Baker

In the empty strip club
She unhooks her bra
anyway

8mm Film

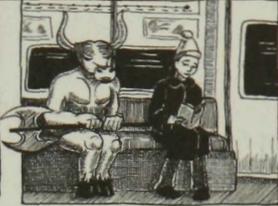
Christian Lund

8mm film, silent film, but no classic
cop chase or Keaton wall falling sight gag,
mercifully perhaps, no commentary at all,
as I'm caught standing with people
whose names I can't recall, talking
(at least lips moving) and my bare feet
hanging like vines in black water,
and in this one, I wade into the current,
resisting the push of fast water,
cast a fly line into the sun-bitten snake,
and turn, caught in a moment
of quiet pleasure, and wave, hello,
and what happens next, is clear,
a rainbow, slippery as mud, I'm certain,
did leap into my hands, and that summer,
when I was nearly 13, an earthquake shook
boulders down like rain and sent
the river knocking down trees, on a new path

MEMOIRS OF A NORTH WEST LONDON NANNY

BY MIRRANDA BURTON

THE CITY OF LONDON IS AN EXTRAORDINARY LABYRINTH, DRAWING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ON A QUEST TO FULFILL THEIR DREAMS. HOWEVER, ONE'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE LABYRINTH MAY LEAD ONE TO ENLIGHTENMENT... OR THE MINOTAUR.



MY GATEWAY INTO LONDON OPENED AT AN INTERVIEW FOR A NANNY JOB IN THE NORTH WEST NEIGHBOURHOOD OF KILBURN. I SAT IN THE KITCHEN WITH A THREE YEAR OLD BOY CALLED ALEXANDER, AND HIS PARENTS, ALISON AND PAUL.

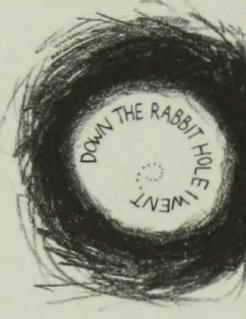
SO...ALEXANDER WILL BE AT NURSERY FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, BUT THEN HE'LL BE AT SCHOOL FULL TIME...



ALEXANDER HAD A DIFFERENT SCREENING TECHNIQUE...



OF COURSE! I LOVE DRAWING HOLES. WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO DRAW THE INSIDE OR THE OUTSIDE OF THE HOLE?



I WAS INVITED TO MOVE INTO THE FAMILY HOME TO BE ALEXANDER'S NANNY. MY ROUTINE WAS EASY ENOUGH, BUT MY CONVERSATIONS WITH ALEXANDER SOON BEGAN SURGERY ON MY BRAIN. I GREW TO SEE THE WORLD IN WAYS I HAD NEVER CONSIDERED.



★ ALEXANDER'S WORDS HAVE NOT BEEN EMBELLISHED



LET'S GET YOU DRESSED...



AH GOOD, HERE ARE HIS CLOTHES FOR THE DAY

WHAT'S MY WILLY SAYING?



IT'S SAYING "QUICK! FIND ME SOME UNDER-PANTS!"



NEARLY DONE!... THEN WE'LL CLEAN YOUR TEETH AND GET YOU TO NURSERY



OOOH! CAREFUL OF THE DOG POOH!

WHAT'S THE DOG POOH SAYING?



IT'S SAYING, "PARDON ME, AM I IN YOUR WAY?"

DOG POOH CAN'T COME TO MY BIRTHDAY PARTY



EACH DAY OUR CONVERSATIONS SAW MY MIND SPRING WITH NEW POSSIBILITIES.

WE SOON ENTERED OUR OWN LITTLE WORLD WHERE NO THOUGHT OR REQUEST SEEMED UNREASONABLE



LIFT ME AND I WILL PICK OUT THE SUN



ALEXANDER BECAME USED TO ME JUMPING INTO THE GO-CART OF HIS IMAGINATION, SO THAT HE MAY HAVE FOUND IT CONFUSING WHEN I HAD TO PUT ON THE BRAKES. ONCE I WAS ASKED TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON A SCHOOL TRIP TO CHURCH...



CAN WE BE CATS? CAN YOU LICK ME? MIAOW MIAOW.. BE A CAT MIRRANDA!



SSHH! WE HAVE TO BE QUIET IN CHURCH... NO, WE CAN'T BE CATS RIGHT NOW...

IS THAT A SAUSAGE ON THE WINDOW?



SSHH.. NO IT'S NOT A SAUSAGE, IT'S A HANDLE ON A MAN'S WALKING STICK



...AND WE WERE SOON KICKED OUT BY A GRUMPY TEACHER



YOU HAVE TO BEHAVE YOURSELF IN CHURCH! YOU MUST SIT QUIETLY AND LISTEN TO WHAT YOU ARE BEING TOLD...



LOOK AT THE HORSE CHESTNUTS!



SHE WAS A BIT MEAN. HE'S ONLY THREE



I DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD! I BELIEVE IN PINOCCHIO!



IF IT WASN'T ENOUGH FOR A THREE YEAR OLD TO FIGURE OUT WHO THIS GOD CHARACTER WAS, THE FAMILY HOME INTRODUCED A RANDOM RANGE OF RELIGIOUS, MYTHOLOGICAL, FAMOUS AND SYMBOLIC CHARACTERS.

ZEUS GUARDED THE HALLWAY..



ALEXANDER CLAIMED BUDDHA WAS A BALLOON TO BE TAKEN ON HOLIDAYS.



JOHN LENNON APPARENTLY PROMISED A BOUNCY BALL



DOES THE MINOTAUR USE VIDEO CAMERAS TO SEE PEOPLE COMING INTO THE LABYRINTH?



THE STATUE OF LIBERTY RODE A LONDON BUS..



GOD WAS A MARRIAGE PROSPECT.



AND THE MINOTAUR WAS COTTONING ON TO MODERN TECHNOLOGY.



THERE WILL BE SAUSAGES AT OUR WEDDING!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ALEXANDER!



THE BEATLES ARE MORE POPULAR THAN ZEUS...

SO MANY DIFFERENT CHARACTERS TOOK A SEAT IN OUR WEIRD AND WONDERFUL GO-CART AND WE WERE ALL INVITED TO ALEXANDER'S BIRTHDAY PARTY.

ALISON AND PAUL CAME HOME FOR THE EVENING SHIFT OF BATH TIME STORY TIME AND BED TIME.



COME ON, TIME TO GET YOU OUT OF THE BATH BUBBLEBEARD



HELLO BUG! I'VE GOT A NEW STORY TO READ YOU..
DADDY!

WHEN ALEXANDER SLEPT, THEIR JOBS CONTINUED TO CATCH UP WITH THEM. THE DEMANDS OF ALISON'S WORK KEPT HER UP UNTIL UN-REASONABLE HOURS...



AND PAUL'S RIGOROUS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PATTERNS MADE HIM A MAGNET FOR THE SOFA. NOT EVEN SNORING IN A CRUNCHY NEST OF NEWSPAPERS AND CRISP PACKETS WHILE LISTENING TO THE BEST PUNK ALBUM EVER WOULD STIR HIM.



I WOULD READ IN THE EVENINGS, FINDING ALL KINDS OF SUBJECTS AMONG THE LEANING BOOK TOWERS THAT GREW STEADILY ALL OVER THE HOUSE.



SOMETIMES I WOULD BE INTERRUPTED BY A CALL..



MIRRANDA!



YES ALEXANDER?



I LOVE YOU



I LOVE YOU TOO ALEXANDER



YOU'RE NOT GOING BACK TO AUSTRALIA



NOT FOR A LONG TIME

OVER THE NEXT YEAR, ALEXANDER TOOK ME DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE LABYRINTH. SOMEWHERE IN THE CORRIDORS OF THE RIGHT BRAIN HEMISPHERE, I THINK I LOST MY WAY



DOES THE MEDUSA LIVE IN KILBURN?

I'D RATHER MEET THE LITTLE MERMAID

I DON'T KNOW BUT I'LL KEEP AN EYE OUT.



OH I KNOW WHO I'D LIKE TO MEET!

MIRRANDA, WHEN CAN I MEET THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA?



WELL..UM.. IT COULD BE DIFFICULT, YOU SEE HE'S JUST A CHARACTER IN A STORY AND -



IT WAS IF I HAD POPPED A BALLOON AND TURNED ON A RUDE LIGHT BULB.



DO WE EXIST?



OF COURSE!



ARE WE IN A CARTOON?

WE'RE NOT PICTURES ARE WE?



I AM GOING OUT TO FIND ALL THESE PEOPLE THAT 'DON'T EXIST', THEN I WON'T GET UP FOR WEEKS. THAT'S WHAT I THINK OF THE SYSTEM!



OH GOD, YOU'RE TOO YOUNG FOR AN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS... IS IT ALL MY FAULT?



OH... BUT HANG ON ALEXANDER.. IS THIS SOME KIND OF...

FRAME IN A STORY?

EVENTUALLY I CLOSED THE DOOR ON MY EXTRAORDINARY NANNY TARDIS. I RETURNED TO AUSTRALIA TO WALK A DIFFERENT LABYRINTH, BUT HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN THAT SPECIAL FAMILY IN KILBURN.



UNTIL VERY RECENTLY I MADE THE LONG JOURNEY TO EUROPE.



I KNOCKED ON THE OLD FAMILIAR DOOR, NERVOUS WITH ANTICIPATION.



ALEXANDER, NOW NEARLY THIRTEEN AND AS TALL AS ME, OPENED THE DOOR.

HI MIRRANDA

HI ALEXANDER



KILBURN HASN'T CHANGED MUCH.. IT STILL SMELLS LIKE MARIJUANA...

OH!

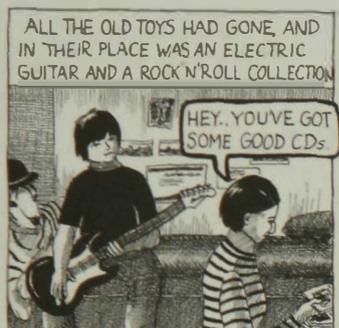


I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT YOU...

THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE, YOU WERE VERY YOUNG

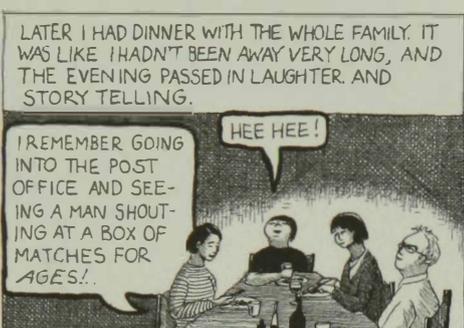


I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND, UPSTAIRS



ALL THE OLD TOYS HAD GONE, AND IN THEIR PLACE WAS AN ELECTRIC GUITAR AND A ROCK N'ROLL COLLECTION

HEY, YOU'VE GOT SOME GOOD CDs



LATER I HAD DINNER WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY. IT WAS LIKE I HADN'T BEEN AWAY VERY LONG, AND THE EVENING PASSED IN LAUGHTER AND STORY TELLING.

I REMEMBER GOING INTO THE POST OFFICE AND SEEING A MAN SHOUTING AT A BOX OF MATCHES FOR AGES!..

HEE HEE!

ALISON AND PAUL WERE JUST AS I REMEMBERED THEM, BUT I HAD TO MAKE LEAPS TO CATCH UP WITH ALEXANDER'S GROWTH. I HAD MISSED OUT ON SO MANY CHANGES.



HE COULD PLAY THE PIANO.



... THE GUITAR



... WRITE THOUGHT PROVOKING POETRY

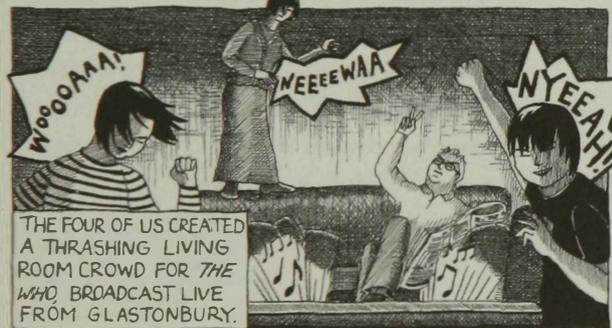
HMMM

... AND ASTOUNDINGLY SENSIBLE ESSAYS ON MATERIALISM, DUALISM, PLATO, AND RENÉ DESCARTES.



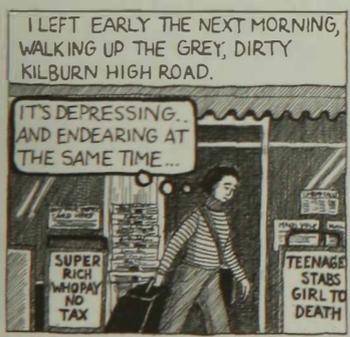
HARDLY SURPRISING - HIS THEOLOGICAL SPECULATIONS DID START VERY EARLY...

A WEEK PASSED VERY QUICKLY, AND IT WAS SUDDENLY AND SADLY THE EVE OF MY DEPARTURE. THE LEAST WE COULD DO WAS ROCK OUR REUNION.



THE FOUR OF US CREATED A THRASHING LIVING ROOM CROWD FOR THE WHOD BROADCAST LIVE FROM GLASTONBURY.

THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF HAIR SHAKING, SOUND EFFECTS AND AIR GUITAR THAT EVENING. IT FELT TRULY GREAT TO BE BACK IN KILBURN.



IT'S DEPRESSING... AND ENDEARING AT THE SAME TIME...

I LEFT EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, WALKING UP THE GREY, DIRTY KILBURN HIGH ROAD.



HOW COULD I NOT HAVE GROWN TO LOVE THIS PLACE...



..WHEN I KNOW THAT EVEN THE DOG POOH HAS FEELINGS..



.. THANKS ALEXANDER

END

Street Art Special Feature

MISO HAS BEEN WORKING AS A STREET ARTIST for five years, combining fine art approaches to wheatpasted and painted works on the streets.

Her works serve as documentation of things that would otherwise be forgotten—both in subject matter and in that her work is itself temporary, as it becomes weather-beaten and decayed on the streets.

Miso has exhibited her drawn works worldwide, on streets and in galleries, and currently lives in Melbourne, where she works with the Mitten Fortress artist collective.



Haircut Kate and Swinging Anubis

Tine Brok

Kate Newham was twenty-five years old when she removed her hair. Did it herself. She twisted her arms behind her head and used orange-handled craft scissors that left a scraggly dent in her hand to disconnect the black sheet from her head.

Kate Newham, at twenty-five, switched herself off. With the shawl of hair went other things, thrown ungratefully back, and her hair has been ragged and shorn and resentful ever since. Kate herself is not spiky, just a glassy reflective slick.

Kate exists, conveniently, in a small red brick square on a large piece of pale windy land which nobody ever visits. She couldn't be happier about this. Her parents, faded canvas awnings of people, died tearlessly and left this to her, thinking she'd have to try, wouldn't manage this thing on her own, would have to fall back into a desperate heap of normality.

They hated her depleted hair and marble face, but, being old when they had her and even older when they finished raising her, knew only how to disapprove and not how to plug their daughter back in.

Kate spends her days collecting stringy brown firewood to warm the insides of the red brick square, and correcting wrongs in long screeds of technical text which she then sends back to the publishers, tidied. There's satisfaction in this righting of others' wrongs.

When Kate runs out of supplies she drives the farm ute, green and rust-hole, to town, where she keeps her eyes as hailstones and her hands to herself. It's all about staying away. Then she drives back to the red brick square in the rust-hole ute and unpacks the things she's had to bring back: white bread and jam and chocolate, because she's decided that she'll only eat things she really likes, and stationery and light bulbs and sticky-tape.

Kate's body has grown thick and stodgy, which also satisfies her. The thicker and slicker, the better. The more hacked and grey and sand-like, the better. The earth under the red brick square is an ashy fine grey sand.

Behind her dwelling of red brick a hill rises, made of enormous oval and round boulders precariously piled on top of one another like lead shot. Similar boulders poke ugly heads out of her flat browngreen paddocks, and Kate likes them as much as anything can be liked. She thinks of billygoats gruff and trolls and wolves when she looks at them, even though this is Australia and the wild dogs are yellow and the wild goats feral.

A day, another day, and the nothingness is split by a zip of a car down the long long drive, unjoining everything so that her flat green paddocks with boulders in them seem to peel back like orange skin.

Kate watches it from her writing—cleaning and her neck begins to hurt under the weight of her no-hair, and her empty insides bounce an echo of fear in them. Go away, they sing. Goawaygoawaygoawaygoaway. But the white car comes, unzipping as it does.

Finally it's there, right at the front of her brick square, and it produces a man from its belly. Pop, just like that. Magic.

Kate ices herself especially, putting in her hailstone eyeballs and checking in the bathroom mirror to adjust her layers of ugliness. She scratches the door away from his fifth knock, freezing his fingers into silence.

"What?" Her voice echoes aimlessly away inside her, smaller and smaller down the distant caves. The door is only open a crack, a slip, and her hailstones peer around it.

The man is smooth, and grows out from under a light brown felt farmer's hat. The oblong section of his face that she can see is hideously arrestingly beautiful, and Kate needs him dead or gone. A sliver of a smile breaks into a u-shape above his chin. Kate feels to be looking at him upside-down, all the features distorted and unsorted—a chin for a head, lips up the wrong way.

"G'day. Just wondering—I've driven past your place a bit, and noticed you've got no stock on it, so I thought you might be interested in getting a few bob for agisting some sheep. Me own place—it's out the other side of town—is a bit low on feed."

"No." From the caves. "I don't want any stock."

The door is screech-shut, she is backing, retreating, ignoring the pulsing of knocks until he at last goes away back up her long long driveway.

She feels sandpapered, chipped. She eats white bread and jam and chocolate and sees the u-shaped sliver mouth and the cutting of gut-kicking

fine face. She works, cleaning, polishing, scrubbing the words, but still the cutting of face is there. She curses its mess, wishes the zip done back up again, the teeth and eyes and hat scrubbed from the screen in front of her.

Kate pulls splinters of the encounter from her for days, weeks, and always finds more.

Then it's there again, the white car, unrolling her paddocks, the boulders not heavy enough to stop the browngreen peeling up like tin. Undone again, Kate conjures a needle and coarse black thread, finds glue in her head to stick everything neatly back into its place.

She splits the door open wider this time, thinking to cleanse the face from her by exposing it entirely, opening the gravely wound to flush it out with metallic tank water.

"Hi," he says, "G'day. Thought you might have reconsidered the offer. I'll pay fairly. And no skin off your nose, really. I'll fix any fences, water troughs, that sort of thing." The face in its entirety gleams a new moon smile at her ugliness.

And suddenly she hates it—her ugliness, stodginess, self. Square red box, boulder-pinned paddocks. Hates it intensely, loses the iron to protect it from monsters, just like that.

"All right," she says. "All right. Leave the money under the door. In an envelope." And the door's shut like teeth and she's away, searching for white flour foods to cement herself with.

But she finds that the surgical flushing hasn't done the trick. The allness of the face is there now, hanging under its hat, so fair and foul. The pulse of hatred swings around corners in the caves behind her, whooping and sliding back down darker and darker, until she only knows it's there by the graffiti it scribbles in her sleep.

The sheep arrive, untidy rags of noise and anxiety, wind-driven and drifting between the boulders. They pour from a truck with several stories like a slatted, stinking, growling, mobile apartment building. It does three trips, and her grey powder dusted paddocks are alive with the fluff of them.

Kate watches the hat-faced man and several others through her fly-spotted windows, from the dim of her house's insides. They strain looping wire, and set a great round black plastic drinking trough in the paddock nearest the house, which has a tap in its corner, and no dam. A white envelope with grey fingerprints invades the space under her door, and inside is two-hundred dollars in yellow plastic fifty-dollar notes. One has a torn corner and Kate pushes it hard back into the envelope to avoid having to look at it.

Then just a broken puzzle of sheep.

Kate cleans up a textbook on ancient Egyptian life and finds a picture of Anubis, weighing hearts on a set of scales and against a feather, clinging to her like static. Now there is this to be purged as well as the other invasion—the face and its sheep.

Now she's panicking because there's too much crowded into an empty but limited space. She hadn't noticed the walls before, the stops. The sheep, too. Too many of them, and she scratches at her doughy arms and wonders what demon influenced her to agree to them.

The face does not reappear to pulse his fist on her door, having got what he wanted, and now Anubis is growing in her. Measuring, measuring. She finds herself walking out among the sheep to get away, thinking to lose the jackal-headed god in the mess of animals.

Anyway, she's sure she must measure up. She's empty and must be light as that feather. She thinks, suddenly, in a speck of calm, that it's this very blankness that has allowed the hat-suspended face to take up so much room inside her.

"Miss Newham! G'day!" Horror arrows through her skull. She's utterly unprotected. Has left even her hailstone eyes at the house. Has come out among these animals thinking to be as light as a feather, light as a stone. Undefended. Angry angry the monster screams from in her caves. Tight and hot. Run!

But she turns toward him. The face stills hangs beneath its hat, but now she sees not just its horrible beauty but dirt, too, and pores on the nose and stubble on the neck, and a flock of smallish undecided pimples near the corner of the jaw. The fearful rage subsides a little, a lashed tide on the turn.

It's minutes before there's movement.

"I know I shouldn't say this, you'll prob'ly kick me sheep off, but. Well. Why? Did somethin' happen? Why don't ya come out?"

Speech cracks down a long tunnel, nothing to do with her.

"I was hurt."

He looks perplexed. "So was everyone."

Her white bread solid hand arcs and pounds flesh somewhere above the pimples and she's gone, fast and blind with Anubis striding and bustling in a wind behind her, his scales rocking and swinging from his hand as she dives, a feral rabbit, for the red house.

The face goes, then, but Anubis doesn't. He follows her. Silently screams abuse.

At the end of a week she runs out again, just to escape him, finding that her paddocks must have been velcro underneath and are now neatly

stuck back down. Her skin prickles and scratches, the wind is a cold hard slap in her face, about her ragged round head and raw ears.

There are new presences among the sheep, she notes with shock, tiny ghosts of lambs, ridiculous unfinished sheep miniatures. Her body suddenly picks up their noise, high and desperate. And feels another, a shaking grunt that screams of the thin line between here and there. She dizzy-circles and finds it. An adult sheep, grey and wet stinking and flailing on an internal meathook.

She moves heavily to it, drawn by recognition of pain and unable to feel her usual rage at this animal for competing with her for it. She's behind it, and there's a tiny grey and yellow slimy sheep ghost head hanging out, stuck at the shoulders, and she grabs the cold slime in her dough-strong hands and pulls, and nothing happens, and she imagines pulling the head off entirely with a tearing pop, and then the sheep heaves and the cold slimy thing slides out in a tide of blood and jelly and lies inert on the cold grass. Cold wet yellow doll.

Dead.

The sheep struggles up, front end first, turns around and licks the ghost thing, chewing and swallowing all the slime and blood and licking the still thing to a life that has left it. And everything Kate has known since she hacked of her black blanket is there, true, in front of her, but in another, not herself, and she's shocked.

The dead thing's mother suddenly freezes, stops licking, turns, crushes out a bleat and a bulging ballooning sac appears at her vulva, dark spot of eye and pink split nose and leaf of ear magnified inside it. It grows, and roils and rushes to the ground near its lifeless sibling.

The sheep mother licks and grinds sac and slime and blood like spaghetti again, but this time the relentless tongue stirs movement, and the ghost doll raises its head with the leaf ears, wobbling as at something too heavy, drags its giant's knees in front of it, and spits a high-pitched bleat.

Kate watches, frozen, as forgotten Anubis steps forward with his scales, swinging them idly, and places the tiny ghost on one side and the living wet doll on the other.

He turns to show Kate.

She sees that they balance. Life on one side, death on the other, perfectly level. Now there's light on one flat round dish, dark on the other. Joy and sorrow, youth and age, summer and winter, love and hate, night and day. Perfectly level.

In a tidal rush of understanding, thick pale Kate, thirty-nine-years old and stone ancient, cries for the first time in fourteen crack dry years. A hurricane of everything cleans away all the nothing.

Kate cries hard, rain and salt and snot flooding the caves and tumbling away the hat-face and Anubis and leaving just those scales, piled mountain high with opposites and light as a feather.

She's plugged her hand into a waist-high boulder, and feels the drag of time in it, then finds that she's staring at the boulder hill. It's not really shot-smooth, she sees. There's individual shapes there. She's closer to it than she has ever been. She sees tufty plants, shades of grey and brown, splits and presences and beckoning beings there.

So she goes to climb it, and see what's really there. My weight will match its, thinks Kate, and maybe there are trolls there, or brownsoft feral rabbits. She'll have a look.

Kate climbs with creaking limbs, and her million selves come to join her.

Old Adaminaby: Drought

Fiona Wright

Silt, and minerals.

The brittle walls of our childhood homes
now float on the waning water,

we see our old town excavate itself—

and our younger wanderings,
their corrosions and pockmarks
grown obvious
with the hard chemistry of time.

The cold water recedes again, and gloats.

The mud cracks into a hopscotch.

A fireplace,

alone among the boulders,
unmoored verandas like loose teeth,
the boundary fences whittled.

The old roads are tightened,

like our skins, and fissured;

We can see how much we've shrunk,
and worn away.

Grown drier.

We touch the old bridge pylons

with the silence and disconnect
of museums.

Digger

Jacqueline Cook

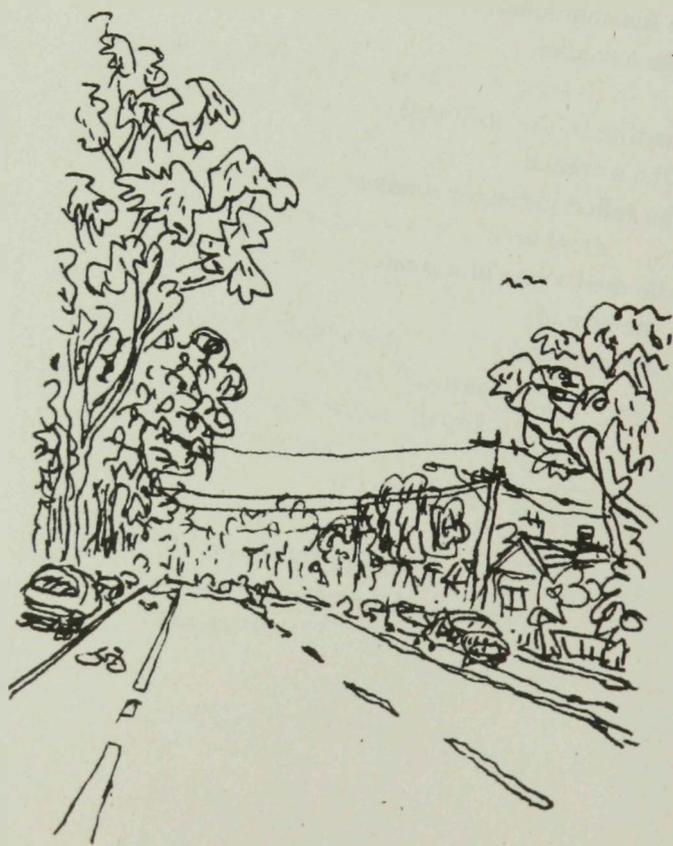
An old man
moved into
the boarding house

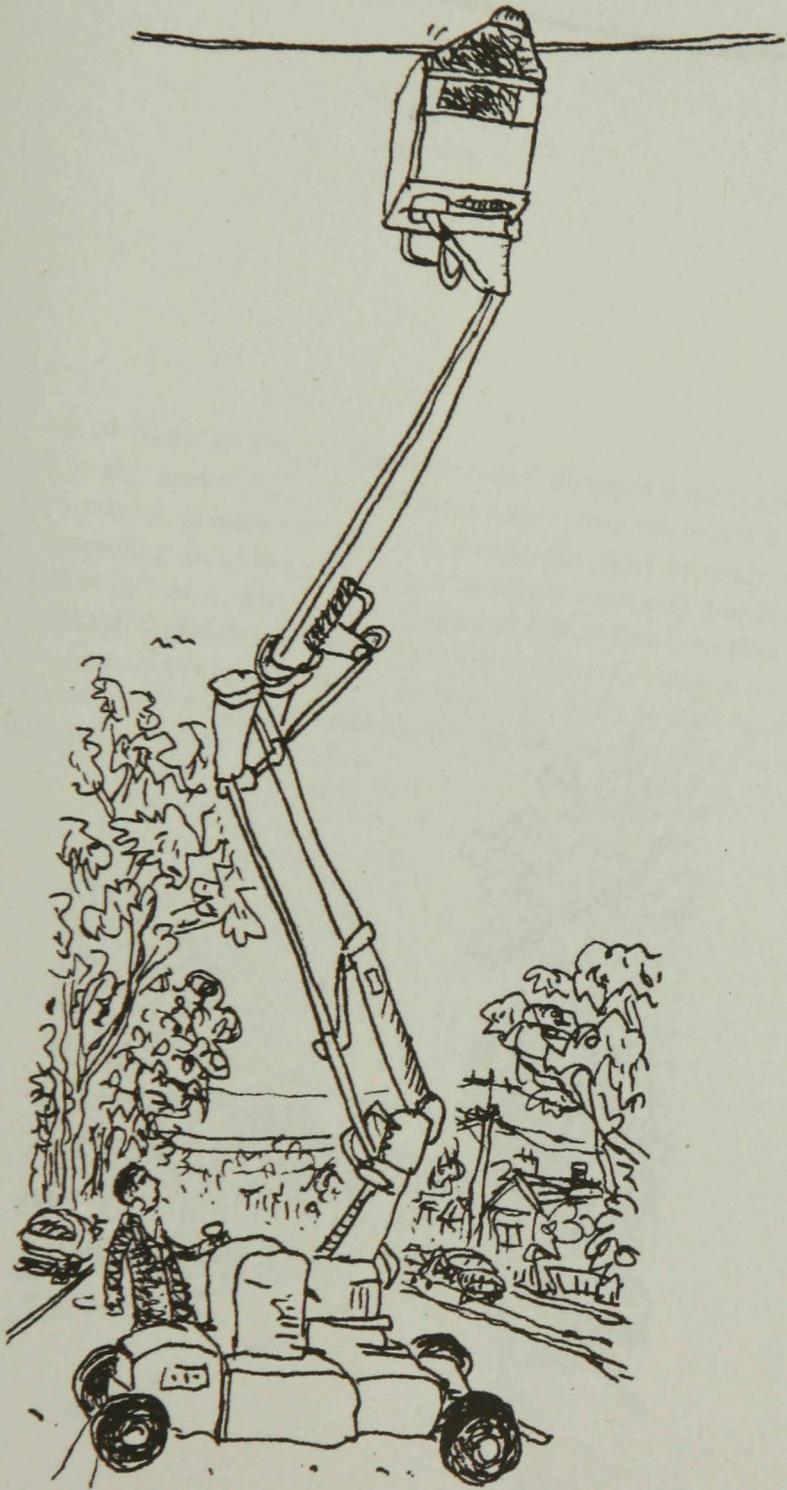
you could tell
he had been
in the war

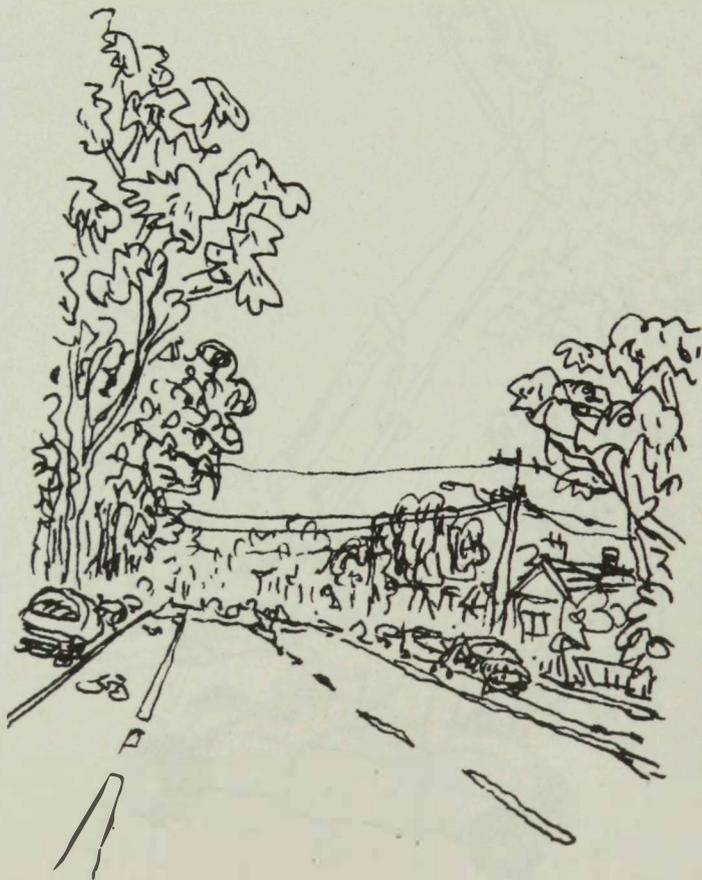
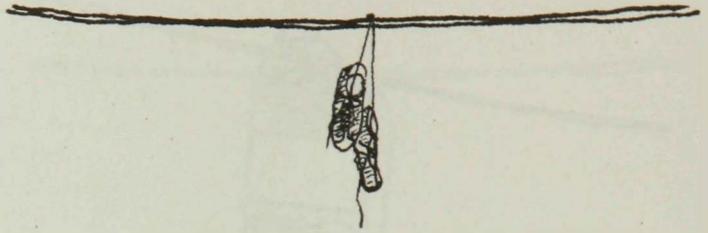
he carried his furniture
on his shoulders
like a soldier

resting in the stairwell
like a trench
he rolled himself a smoke

he died alone in a room
the size of
a single bed







Oslo

Wanting

Ivana Rnjak

A PLAYLIST OF SERBIAN SONGS. *Yugoslav* songs? Songs in a language imprinted on my insides. The sound of those songs (even the ones I don't know the words to), is more familiar than those I can recite by heart in English. Something about the way every 'r' is pronounced, and how the accents pull at different strings on my heart and end in this tune that would be named 'Nostalgia'. And then I am not even in the same place as my body is. I am somewhere in limbo, amongst snow fall and the softest of Bosnian accents, and that thing I feel when I am too drunk to feel anything else—wanting.

Street Art Special Feature

TOM CIVIL IS AN ACTIVIST, GRAPHIC DESIGNER and DIY artist. He has worked as a graphic designer for political and community organisations and independent media projects including: protest posters for the Stolenwealth Games, Stop G20 and Tassie Forests; *Voiceworks* magazine 2003–2005; *The Paper*; Zone One; Melbourne Indymedia; NGO-in-a-Box Free & Open Source Software CDs; The Breakdown Posters; The Nuclear Posters; 3CR 855AM, and the 2006/7/8 *Seeds of Dissent Calendars—Celebrating Radical Australia*.

Tom has a strong interest in street art and the role it has in creating community. Tom is one half of independent publisher Breakdown Press. www.breakdownpress.org | www.flickr.com/photos/tomcivil



Leaving Home/Coming Home

Matthue Roth

THE SKY IS SIFTY this morning. You talk about San Francisco and you talk about fag/Fog City, USA. Colma is the land of cemeteries and Daly City is where you go to get a rest from the action—it runs sideways along San Francisco and the Mission, like bleachers. But San Francisco, that's where I want to be.

Twenty-thousand feet above America, I think
I finally understand Bruce Springsteen's music.
We have all been born to run,
and growing up is like learning
where to hide.

“the weather in San Francisco
is actually not too bad ...”
—the pilot

TAKING OFF

Right now we're landing. Elevation 18,000 feet. This morning. Got up at 4:20. Sat with Janelle in the darkness for twenty minutes in a room I used to live in, in this city that held me for half a decade. I couldn't remember where the light switch was. At twenty minutes to five I left, the scarcest of hugs and then I was on the street, standing in front of my old subway stop, trying to figure out how the early morning Metro works. I've lived in this city for five years and I've never seen the Metro station gates being unlocked.

Plush furry valleys and then the plane shoots over a mountain and San Francisco Bay explodes into view. Tiny hovels of cities shooting out in every direction. Water ripples as the jet flies over it. It's so *big*.

Yesterday. Started in Phili. Dan took me downtown because his girlfriend is questioning their love and never lets him talk, and today he needed to be heard. Janelle shows up at South Caffè and gives me a fat stack of paper. It's her coworker C.A. Conrad's manuscript of his visit to Graceland. I leaf through it. There are transcripts of imagined conversations between him and Elvis. I heave a sigh of brilliance. In San Francisco, I think, that could be me. Only, my fictional heroes, they'll really talk back.

CRASH LANDING

I walk up and down Haight Street looking for work. I sell some zines to Naked Eye Video and get some crumpled ripped bills, maybe \$5. I ask at two bookstores, the head shop and I even stop into the Gap on Haight and Ashbury and grab an application, but maybe that's just so I can tell people how desperate I am. I vow to write a song about it, some day.

Eric asks me, why so glum, and I tell him: I think my mood is inextricably linked to the Middle East. Every time I start feeling better, Arafat blows something up.

On Market Street, a man is about to ask me for money. He is wrinkled, almost expired, hair falling out in his hands. He's about to ask me for money and then he sees my hoodie lined with holes, my jeans stained with the soil of my new house, the one whose walls are about to collapse. He asks if I need anything and suddenly I am struck by the realisation of time.

Time and the city, like constants, with me holding a bridge between them. One day I'm going to be on top of this city. His clothes are biodegrading on his body, his hair is only going in one direction, but it's only going to get better from here, I realise that. I don't know how he made me realise that, offering to share the meagre, meagre amount of whatever food or change he has, but I know, things are going to get better. I grab his hand. I feel like singing 'Hallelujah' but he puts his finger on his lips and tells me the words to 'Ray of Light', the Madonna song. And I know what he means. Oh, I know.

Big Sky Paradise

Anna Krien

We've been driving naked for days.

Every now and then
the prime minister visits us
on the radio,
letting us know about our war
in another desert
where men and women wear camouflage
in the colours of dust
and the red of burning oil.

Steven makes wanking gestures
at the speakers,
his own dick flat and sticky
against the vinyl seat.
He says it is easy
to pick out the dictators.
They're the ones
with the emotional speeches.
Big arms,
long pauses,
and a whole lot of footage.
But this one is tricky, he says,
pointing to the radio.
This one made up his mind
a long time ago
that we're not worth convincing.

But we're too far away
from anything
to think about politics.

Driving across a desert carved up
with burnouts and doughnuts,
we pass rusting refrigerators,
dead foxes hanging from cyclone fences,
tails like fiery brushstrokes,
and creatures that still dream
of dinosaurs.

A long empty space
summed up in defence signals
and reverse charge phone calls.
Lone men on the run
from child maintenance.
Craters from American practice bombs
fill slowly with golf balls
as personnel practise their swing.
This is the flatland of donkey votes.
Not even UFOs land here.

Out here
the newspapers
read like sci-fi
and the radio
visits like bird poo
from above.

The service station boy,
30 miles back,
said to steer clear of any bikies.
Filling the jerry cans with liquid gold,
he told us stories about skeletons of men,
their jaws snatched back in scream,
white-yellow bones
tied with rope around termite mounds,
those red tombstones along the road.
But the only ghosts we see out here
are those of five dead teenagers
wrapped round a stringybark tree,
its trunk split like a cut lip
as bourbon blood leaks sap into the ground.
Perhaps you only see the ghosts
you can relate to.

Sweat pours
down the inside of our thighs.
We wave at flies like queens.
Prescription pads, vitamins
and plastic containers of medicine
are stuffed in the old leather briefcase at my feet.
His scrawl is on the dotted lines,
the letters of his name
piling up and slipping off the page
like a child's handwriting.

One night
Steven tore the prescriptions
into little white and yellow moths
and threw them
into the black mouth of the desert.
He didn't cry but gasped
like an almost dead animal
on the side of the road.
There wasn't anything
definitive about the moment,
it just meant more time at the next town
getting a doctor to write out new ones.

My hands have almost healed
from washing dishes
at the resort,
but skin still flakes from my palms,
falling like fish food
into my lap.
His hands
are almost finished.

I remember a long time
back when I collected cicada shells
in my floral landscape dress,
my grandma leaning on the broom,
a pile of bogong moths at her feet
Her hands had hooked
like burnt koala paws
around the wooden handle.

She looked at me,
asked me to
gently
remove the broom
from her hands.
They had locked up.
From the floor
the moths had started to rise
and the dead cicada shells clung
to my dress.

Two nights ago
I had to help Steven piss
after the hot yellow spray
ran down his legs.
I had to wrap my hand
around his dick
and lift it away
so he could stop
pissing
on his feet.
It was like he was holding
onto an electric fence
and couldn't let go.

*

Once a year in the desert
the propellers of
rundown aeroplanes spin
and lizards clamber to the
tops of rock boulders,
opening their dragon frills
to catch the smell of kelp.

Displaced albatrosses,
solitary figures like wandering men,
startle out of their depressed stares
and flap their Boeing 747 wings.

They fly-fish shadows across the dunes,
and empty Coca Cola cans roll in,
tinkling as if tied
to the back of
an invisible wedding Buick.

I wind down the window and lean out,
flocks shaped like boomerangs
fly overhead.
Perhaps with fuel prices as they are,
we may have to learn
to fly our aeroplanes in formation.
We pass a caravan
the colour of aluminium
boarded up to protect against ghosts,
strange outlines seen only in dust at night
illuminated by headlights,
and a satellite dish
flattening itself
like an ear to the sky.

A dingo pup next to the highway,
its eyes a blue heaven milkshake.
A goanna guards it,
waiting in a patch of shade
for the pup to give up,
its legs flexed like poinciana trees.
We try to give the dog some water,
but it can't swallow.
Flies begin to
file out of the dog's mouth,
undertaking its last breaths
up into the blue belch
of a sky.

*

At night
the car becomes a boat,
lifting at the corrugations of a silver sea.

The doona ruffles at my chin
like the foam of waves,
and when we fuck
he holds me down with his wrists.
Together
we tug our bodies
out of dark places.

I trace his moles
with my fingers.
Like rain
they spill down his back
and join into one.
And when he comes
he opens his mouth
revealing a small
fossilised bug
hiding behind his teeth,
pressed in his gums.

But still the lighthouse
from the desert's edge
calls out for us.
Its one eye
searching across the red dusty plains,
saying Aroooo Ba.
Aroooo Ba.
I dream of men
digging up graves
and killing the dead bodies
all over again.

When my grandma
was in the home,
hands under the bedsheets,
twisted like ginger.
My brother and me
brought her oysters.
We squeezed lemon over them
and tipped the shells into her mouth.

Feeding her the sloppy flesh
that she barely had to chew.
She said they tasted
like the sea.

We'll put our clothes
back on when we reach
the end of the desert.
I'll help him with zips,
sleeves and shoelaces.
And tonight,
this long stretch of desert,
is like a one-night stand.
At the end, we won't know
what to say.

In the city,
people's breath can blow out
like streetlights.
But here, under the odd boab,
a thousand yellow eyes turn on
and black coagulates around them like oil.
Stars streak like graffiti,
a single firework in slow motion.
Burnt out kernels
land somewhere,
out there,
in the desert.

present perfect

Rijn Collins

HE CLINKED HIS GLASS against hers and she began.

I have:

... held a decapitated human head in my hands, sliced neatly in half from crown to chin. marvelled at the intricate lacings of the brain, my fingers probing the pliant curves. The inside of his head was captivating, but the outside was astounding: deep blue irises staring back at me, a thick wedge of tongue and a paper-thin scalp with a sprinkling of dark hair, strangely touching. I've held a man's head in my hands, wondered what sights his eyes had taken in, what words his lips had issued forth, what had made him throw back this skull and roar with laughter ... and how on earth the lab assistant could tell me dismissively: "Don't expect any magic: they're just bodies."

He's definitely looking startled, she thought.

I have:

... spent the eve of my birthday sleeping on a park bench in Germany, scoffing at the predatory men circling in the early hours, waking to find one seated at the end of my bench, his hand on my thigh. Ripped pages from my German dictionary and held matches to their sovereignty, the feeble flames on a cold European night no match for the sickly pear schnapps keeping my face warm, and my breath cloying. Applied my black lipstick the next morning to a soundtrack of The Cult spilling out of the cheap '80s tapedeck nestled in the grass. Eighteen and invincible, tracing a route to Berlin to stand on the crumbling wall to shed the '80s as I turned the corner into adulthood.

I have:

... curled comatose on my bed a year later, watching the walls close in. The cord of my psyche had been pulled tight, bouncing me back to Melbourne, reducing my world from reckless adventuring in a myriad of languages to silent, desperate pleading in a squalid Richmond sharehouse: Please let me get through this, please let me get through this. Impossible to describe the agony of regressing from a fearless teenager hitchhiking her way around Europe to a silent statue unable to view her open front door without panic choking the throat. Three years trapped inside that tiny terrace house. Well, look on the bright side: agoraphobia does give you plenty of time to catch up on your reading.

Now he's alarmed, she told herself. (Intrigued, but alarmed.)

I have:

... sat scowling in indignation in crowded lecture halls, told what it means to be a woman. Locked horns with my fellow feminists and argued til my throat was hoarse and my teeth were bared that yes, yes, yes, it is possible for the stunning, six-foot goddesses of my favourite punk band, with their full sleeve tattoos and slut red stilettos, to be perfect examples of femininity. Stormed out of a Women's Studies tute in disgust, retreated to the bar to let wine wash away my scorn at the bleak view so many of my peers presented. And then sat stunned as, with impeccable timing, a not-quite-drunk-enough man thrust his face five inches from mine and said quietly (sour spittle punctuating his words), "You're a filthy ... fucking ... whore." Put that in the textbook.

She lifted her glass and felt the whisky burn her tongue, setting her mouth alight, wondering if she could get another out of him before he ran.

I have:

... sat with my bare feet up on the balcony rails of my hotel room in Paris, drinking warm rosé out of the bottle and watching the sky darken to cobalt over the creamy dome of the Sacré-Coeur. Dressed the part in a '50s gown, pulled tight and tiny at the waist, cleavage swelling up and over, tattoos spilling out the sleeves. Stumbled in my kitten heels on the cobblestones of Montmartre, dining by myself with fork in one hand and pen in the other, sweet wine and salty mussels, slow smile and light heart. Been trailed along the alleyways by amorous men entreating me in French: Please, I want to draw your tattoos. Stay, stay. Flattery turning feral, voices becoming hard, hand clamped across my wrist and menace hissed: You're eating dinner with me. Maintenant, madame. Maintenant.

He placed another whisky in front of her, pushed it across the beer-slicked bar. He didn't speak, just urged her to keep going with a gentle tilt of his head. So she did.

I have:

... sat cross-legged in the dirt of the Northern Territory, in a town with a name of sonorous syllables and dust so rich that my skin seemed stained red for days. Sat with laboured breath amongst the colours of my country, the heat a constant hand on my chest, pressing heavy on my heart; the sun blurring the edges of my heavy-lidded eyes. Sat in solitude and silence watching a column of fat little ants wend its way along the salty slick of my thigh. Spellbound by the lushness of the colours, the wet season up north, it was the first time I'd realised that my home didn't have to be nestled amongst medieval alleyways and black cherry beer.

I have:

... sat around tables in suburban kitchens; dictionaries with ear-marked pages, cups with delicate curlicues of tannin. Told not to ask personal questions, I was there to teach English, not to extract memories from the refugees whose lives had propelled them out of their lands and across to mine. But their stories were offered freely and I lapped them up over steaming cups of thick Turkish coffee, sweet slabs of Bulgarian poppy-seed cake, fragrant Thai lemongrass soup. And often, over staggeringly toxic home-made liqueur with my favourite Russian student, whose exquisite "We get on like a horse on fire" still floods me with cheer on dark days.

He was laughing now. She found herself smiling as she gave him one more, a story to bring her here.

I have:

... watched the sun dip low on the horizon in Fiji, seen it send gold and scarlet ribbons across the desert skies of New Mexico, watched it glow on the biscuity stone of a thousand-year-old castle in Belgium. And tonight, on the way to this pub, I stood high on the hill of Northcote and watched it gleam on the spires of Melbourne. My back to the Bulgarian Church, my face to the skyline of my amazing city, thinking: Yes, this will do. This will do.

Captured Shell Cranium

Michael Lee Johnson

I capture my moss thoughts
inside this tight shell cranium.
Do poets explode their brains?
Do poets detonate their thoughts
inside a pressure steamed cooker?
Do I have to express myself
in a form someone understands?
Maybe I'm square lakes
inside a cave and pour out
like sugar streams from a jar.
I can't seem to push out
the space between thoughts
and feelings.
Am I ruptured, solitary timber?
Release me cave river
emerge me from this dark—
let me fall.



no

Long ≠ Short

Loud ≠ Dumb

Black ≠ Bad

Bad ≠ Black

9, 19

21, 11

19, 17, 13, 11

9, 19, 21, 11

9, 19

13, 11

(:meditation on
the Ishango Bone found near Lake Edward
in Africa)

9, 19

21, 11

Relationships don't equal Money

9, 19, 21, 11

All good people go to Heaven

The serene sublime
of convex pools of rock, of thought
floating up with curls
of construction work from down below
by the channel. (By the horizon, Odysseus
was waylaid for seven years in an even more
sensual state
or reverie, and those who fled
from Troy in his wake,
who could have turned them away,
their boats wrapped up in worms
of warm current towards Korcula's
shore?) These spiky shrubs exploding
from the rock, they would
smile, had they the time or
the burnt cumulus of sunset
with which to breathe. And,
as for the descent, well, it is a fan
of wind flattening into metal
the precious surfaces
of wars.

Street Art Special Feature

GHOSTPATROL—MELBOURNE BASED, DRAWING ETC. Mitten Fortress resident. Deathtron Mountain placement. Inside the workings of a bear, ink weapons, yep. Participates well with others. www.ghostpatrol.net



Rats! Ah-Ahhh!*

*** title (only) should be sung to the tune of 'Flash' by Queen**

John Layton

Rats! You are maligned and sad!
Tired and toothy smiles!
Saviours of the universe!

Watch them dance, happy like bedsheets,
pungent as cheese and grandiose
as the martyrs of the eternal revolution.

There are rats in this room. My blocked-up head
has cleared and I can smell a rat, crawling
in the rafters, scuttling, swift and fearful.
Relentless rat, crawling in my ears as I sleep,
whispering the secrets of ancient rat elders
(who knew more than we ever thought possible).
Give me the answers, or gnaw at my throat.

Sing on, rat chorus! Your Darwinian
struggle for supremacy
over pigeons and other vermin
has almost ended!

De Kraai en het Paard

David Prater

I am the crow! Sitting on the horse's head!
Listen to me, bloated fields! Hark, ye old
windmills and lanes! I'm a children's story
book! Hé, black wings! Scary rainbow oils!

I am the snow! Waiting for the sun to die!
Stomping through their lonely hoof prints!
Running off like steam at the mouth! Let's
eradicate gold and plagiarise the sunset!

I am the know! Together with the horse and
crow I bang out hits to feed the sparrows!
Incendiary! Bonfire! Whig! I am the element
that science hasn't discovered yet! Wham!

I am the crow! Sitting on the horse's head!
I am the horse! Sit somewhere else instead!

Boarding the Ark

Ella Holcombe

and it's strange the way we write our histories as if time were running out of breath. The tram moves down the road like a river barge. The cold yellow of autumn leaves choking the gutters. Shoes lined-up on boxes and a girl with red lips and an armful of mandarins. Last night we sat in the window of the pub and watched the street. The lights clinging to buildings and the blur of passing traffic in the dark. I tell you that I saw your face through glass, as big as the city, your eyes like stars on top of the Arts Centre spire. And you ask me to stay. And I tell you I can't.

Now you're gone and the winter roses have started to bloom. The tips of their fingers tinged pink, their petals blank as egg white. The sky is set high against the buildings, reaching up to touch the night. Inside the trunks of trees there are small animals sleeping. It's raining still and the garden seems to be sinking. The backyard is filling up with pairs of animals. A large ship has parked itself in the NO STANDING stretch of our street. There's music coming up from holes in the ground and pouring out of the exhaust pipes of slow-moving cars. I see you walk down the street and line up to board the Ark. You're holding hands with a giant panda. And I ask you to stay. And you tell me you can't.

The Sick Cat

Ella Holcombe

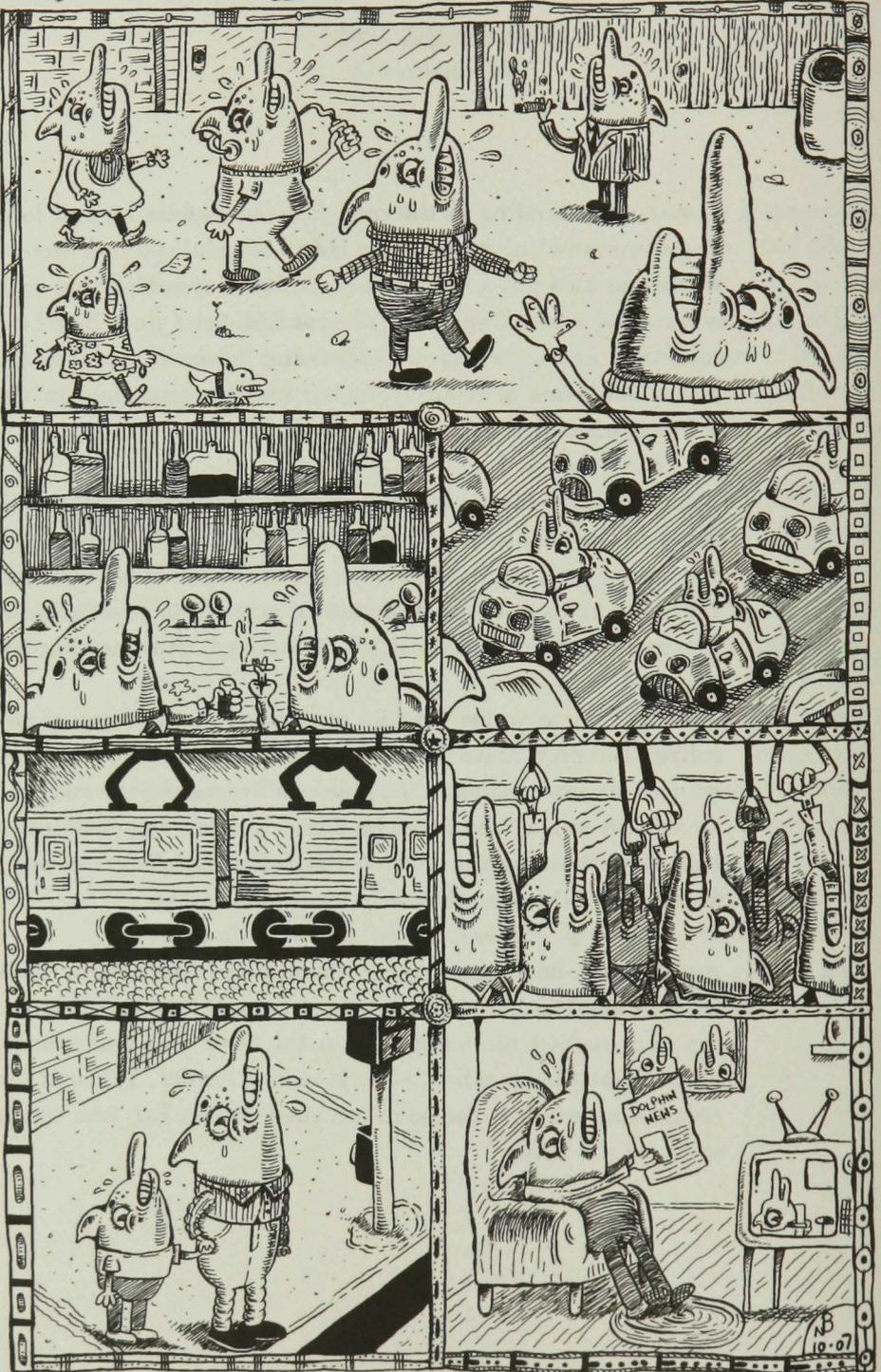
A man was standing in the rain. He was wondering how long he'd been standing in the rain. He'd only realised how wet he was when he'd put pen to paper and the words bled into each other, blue and unreadable. The cat had been unwell of late, coughing and carrying on, throwing himself dramatically across the arms of chairs. The cat had been no help in the warning of coming rain.

The man drove his car to escape from the rain. He drove until his eyes blurred and his back ached. The rain continued to fall, heavier by the second. The roof of the car began to leak and the car began to flood. The man argued with traffic to pass the time. The car was filled with the smell of damp cat. It rained harder.

The man drove so far that he grew used to the sting of bad coffee. He grew used to the blank smiles of the sad-eyed waitresses who refilled his coffee cup over and over and who never once asked why he had a damp, sick cat strapped into a baby highchair at the end of the table, paddling his paws around a bowl of chocolate ice cream.

And if they had asked about the cat the man might have asked about the rain. He wanted answers. But by this time the cat had pushed his ice cream to the floor and was staring dolefully at the smashed bowl. It rained harder. Through the restaurant window the man watched as his car was swept away by the floods.

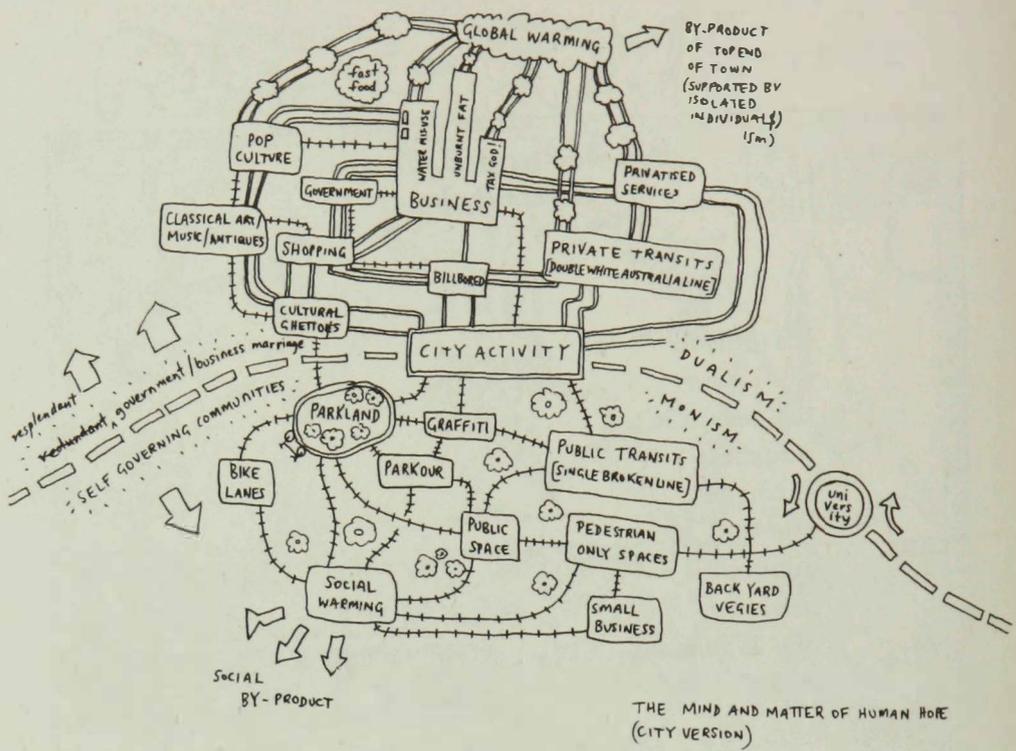
POORPE-TOWN - N. BLANDEN



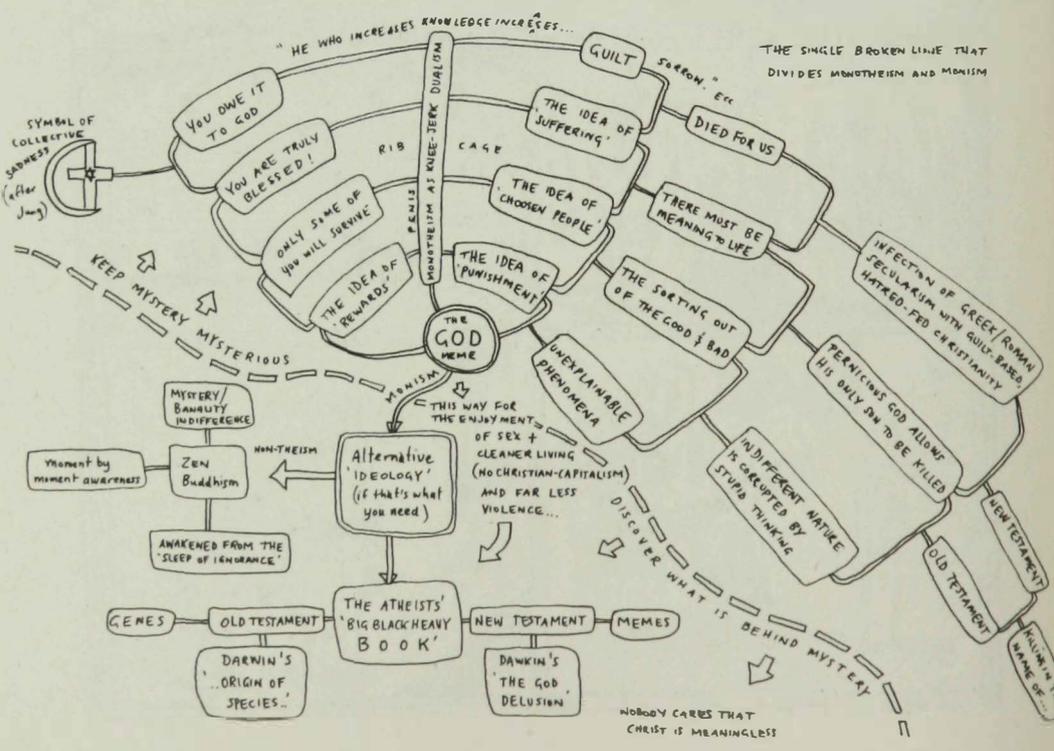
Whales and Haikus

Colleen Burke

It's difficult
to squeeze
the 'scientific'
slaughter
of whales
into the
minimalist
structure
of a Japanese
haiku



THE MIND AND MATTER OF HUMAN HOPE (CITY VERSION)



THE SINGLE BROKEN LINE THAT DIVIDES MONOTHEISM AND MONISM

NOBODY CARES THAT CHRIST IS MEANINGLESS

Money is a Kind of Poetry

B.N. Oakman

The American poet Wallace Stevens¹ wrote

money is a kind of poetry

and it has puzzled me what he meant by this

for it seems more understandable to say something like

money is not kind to poetry.

I'm a student of such matters, an economist,

not something to boast about

if you listen to Alfred Marshall²

who thought it possible *to turn even a parrot*

into a learned political economist

by teaching it two words: supply and demand.

To prove his point: if the supply of poetry is buoyant

and the demand for poetry is depressed

it follows, *ceteris paribus*³, that the price of poetry

is abysmal⁴.

Also, according to Friedman⁵,

a man with a self-caterer's vision of paradise,

there is no such thing as a free lunch.

Hence, as I am fond of eating

it makes some sense to swot the dismal science

because, as Friedman's great rival J K Galbraith⁶

proclaimed

economics is extremely useful

as a form of employment for economists.

Further, I try not to be dispirited

by John Maynard Keynes⁷

who wrote in his customary elegant and caustic style

economics is an easy subject at which few excel

because I hope when I tire of trudging

the concrete paths of rationality⁸ and seek

a visitor's visa

to the unmapped provinces of the inexpressible

I shall be possessed of freedom's ransom—

perhaps a kind of poetry.

1 Who worked as an insurance lawyer

2 The father of microeconomics

3 Economists love a little Latin

4 Illustrate with diagram

5 The Milton of economics

6 The tallest economist of his generation

7 Known in the trade as The Late Lord

8 An affectation common in universities

Juggernaut

Irene Wilke

Logos conspire
on chicken boxes
flicked under bridges.

At the clogged waterfall
rapids try singing along
jiggling a plastic spoon.

Between stepping stones
jutting cartons
trip my feet. I crash in
with floundering nuggets
burger buns and salad.

Nothing to hang on to except
the TV jingles chiming
saggy wrappings
round my fingers
slippery with chicken fat
the creek flushes me
into the river maligned
in sludge. Free Coke bottles
maladjusted line up
to cheer my soggy bleat.
I am overcome.

Lips compressed
I spill out of the river mouth.

The hoi poloi
have secreted dioxin
on the bottom of the harbour.
There is an arty farty hum
of cover-up.
I escape into the open sea.
Six k's out piped bubbles
buoy my flesh
not sweet enough for sharks.

At least the supermarket
trolleys marinate
in deep briny ravines
blue as grottoes
and I can sluice
in red drainage
from science-based whale-steak ships.

Perhaps they will hose me down.

third way

Derek Motion

your small west-of-town suburban centrist philosophy of governance that embraces a mix of market & interventionist philosophies irks me every sunday. this third way you propound (if only in thought-waves) rejects both top-down redistribution & laissez-faire approaches & therefore a range of bristly academics are behind your busted imago, hiding under the bed or something. to wit economic governance is daft, but the stresses of technological development feel real: education is a competitive mechanism designed to pursue the devils (or the capitalist-socialist hybridisers) lurking in the details. your sexy look argues you are in favour of neo-liberalism; the smell of chips on the wind pursues the bottom line of adjectives & fuzzy compromises. how i want to smile a touché.

Ties

Samantha Dagg

HANNAH STANDS IN A TOILET CUBICLE at Central Station. She pulls everything out of her bag, panicking that she hasn't brought the black dress with her. But it's folded at the bottom; the first thing she packed. She stands and carefully pulls it over her head. It's the dress she used to wear when she picked up bar work. It fits tightly over her stomach now and she hasn't counted on that.

She examines herself in the long mirror over the sink. The UV lights make her look pale and sick, but she's just hungover from last night's travelling. She applies her foundation thickly, filling the creases that have begun to appear on her face. She feels weightless, as if the particles she has used to build herself have split apart.

Last night: She sits on a coach. The hours pass and she can't sleep. Outside, there is nothing, just bush and the headlights of oncoming cars. It doesn't matter, though. She knows the road, the rhythm of the Pacific Highway. She can feel it, feel that they are getting closer to Sydney.

She carries her anxiety in her stomach and toes, which are curled so tight they ache. It is January and the night coach stops in every town. She could get off, hitch back to Lismore—she's done it before. But she stays in her seat and hangs her head between her knees, trying to ignore the motion sickness.

Earlier still: Gloria calls. Hannah hasn't spoken to her in years, but her voice is instantly recognisable. She thinks about that time at Manly Beach, when Gloria had come across her and Daniel—they'd both been pin-eyed and covered in melting ice cream. Hannah can still picture the exact contortions of Gloria's face as she spat out the word: *whore*.

Then it hits her, what Gloria is saying. She holds onto the phone and is too shocked to sit down. Gloria has only called her to tell her that Daniel has died.

She dials the coach company from memory and books a seat for the bus that night. She pays with her credit card. It's the first one she's had and she keeps it in a shoebox under the bed. She finds the red tie in the same box, under a pile of photographs. It's crumpled and stained. She thinks, *Damn him, damn him*. She's been trying to forget about him for so long, but he's always there, like a jack-in-the-box, a wasp in honey.

The funeral is held at the crematorium in North Ryde. There's a huge park on the grounds. All the flowers have shrunk back into themselves in defence against the summer heat. Hannah stands this way too, hiding in her old black dress.

Somehow, she's arrived early. She wishes James were here, but only so she had someone to stand with. She didn't tell him why she had to come back to Sydney, just that she'd be gone for a day or two.

She hasn't seen Daniel in two years, not since they finally split up. She has a job answering phones and pencilling in appointments at a dentist's office. She's been living with James for a few months now. He's a nice guy and her life has taken on a regularity that is intoxicating.

Then, one day she catches sight of Daniel standing in the newsagents. She approaches him from behind and touches his shoulder. She is holding her breath, feeling like she's eighteen again.

They rent a room in a motel and lay on the bed, facing each other. He still looks the same; that narrow, battered face. She knows it's swelling inside, all the things she feels about him, threatening to bring her undone. Still, she can't bring herself to think of anything else.

Instead she rolls on her side and slots her back to his stomach. They fuck this way and already she feels her dissatisfaction, strong like cramps. Tomorrow he'll be on another bus and she'll be back to James, left to remember that it was her who'd decided that this was the way she was going to travel.

She's wearing her black barmaid's dress. Daniel is wearing a second-hand suit and the tie that Hannah gave him years ago. It's knotted messily and his collar's askew because they both slept in. They stand in the registry

office, holding hands. Hannah finds the whole thing difficult to take seriously; it's all over so quickly.

She wishes she were pregnant, but only so they would have an excuse when it all falls apart. Instead, they only have their stupidity, the way when they rub up against each other something happens: everything increases, like static electricity.

Hannah hasn't smoked in two months, but she bought a pack of cigarettes when the bus stopped in Karuah last night. She pulls one out now and smokes it surreptitiously, standing under the trees. She watches a figure pull away from the crowd outside the chapel. It heads towards her and she drops the cigarette behind her back, into the lush grass. She thinks, Gloria, maybe Peter. But the movement is loose, relaxed. She thinks: Who? Who is it? Then she recognises the face, the thick dreadlocks, the way he looks uncomfortable in a suit. It's Matty. "How long's it been?" she asks by way of a greeting. Matty says that he hasn't seen her since she and Dan left for Byron Bay.

Hannah and Daniel sit next to each other on a coach. They hold hands; their forearms press together along the armrest. Hannah feels nervous this time, but Daniel's face is fearless and bright with his share of the speed that they've set aside to keep them awake through the long night. She still has hers wrapped, like a lolly, in a small square of foil. She's keeping it for later when she knows she will need it more.

They paid for the tickets that day with their rent money and skipped out on their lease. They talked about it, agreeing a change of scenery is what they needed. But it isn't Sydney, Hannah knows this. She knows nothing has changed, she just wants it to. She wants it very much.

They decide not to get a divorce. They don't have the money for it. It will be easy enough to live in different cities because they never want to see each other again.

He stands with her at Central Station. She is waiting for a bus. She's hocked everything she can and Lismore is as far as she can afford to go. Daniel doesn't know what he's going to do. He says he might stay in Sydney. She tells him he can have it, the city's his now. She won't be back.

There are other people waiting for the same bus. Daniel holds her while the driver is tagging luggage. It doesn't matter anyway. She only has a backpack and a shoebox full of junk which she will keep with her on the bus.

Daniel says sedately, "I love you." Hannah climbs the stairs, takes her seat. She cries slowly all the way to Lismore.

In the chapel the first three rows are reserved for family. Hannah could take her place there, sitting beside Gloria and weeping stoically. Instead she prefers to hang back with Matty.

Peter, the father, stands for the eulogy, talking about his son: the boy scout, the football hero, the lady killer. She slips her hand into her purse and feels the red tie there. She grips it in her fist, wondering why she brought it with her, wondering if any of what Peter is saying is actually true.

They live in an old house in Newtown. The paint sweats off the walls and ceilings in long curls. It's so bad that Hannah only eats outside, otherwise she will find paint in her food. Matty lives with them, too. The boys are often too busy with their secret business to even notice she's there.

One day she lies in the courtyard, sulking. Daniel and Matty are off somewhere, scoring, and their friend Jamie comes by unexpectedly. He sits by Hannah, watching her. Then he touches the hollow at the base of her neck.

She hates them both: herself for letting Jamie do this and Daniel because he doesn't care to anymore.

Hannah leaves one night when he is out. She catches a bus into the city and buys a ticket to leave that night. Brazenly, she hums to herself until they hit the freeway. Then she starts thinking about Daniel, wondering if he's noticed she's gone.

When the bus stops at Karuah, she gives in and calls him. He answers the phone and she asks him to come and get her. She buys a pack of cigarettes from the Mobil and smokes them all while she waits. Then she sleeps with her head on her knees.

When he finally gets there she makes him stop on the side of the road so she can fuck him. She scratches him deeply on the chest and shoulders and he bleeds.

He starts the car and she unwinds the window a crack. But she can still smell it—the hot iron of sex and blood. It makes her feel sick.

After the service, people begin chatting again cheerfully almost as soon as they leave the chapel. Hannah holds the tie now in both hands, sliding it through her fingers like a magician's scarf. She feels invisible.

Daniel's parents are having a wake at their house in Five Dock.

"Do you want to go?" Matty asks.

"Not particularly," Hannah says. She knows already that she's not welcome, that it's a party for Gloria and Peter's friends, not Daniel's.

"C'mon, then," Matty says. "We'll have a few drinks of our own."

He drives into the city, taking Hannah to a pub that she used to know from both sides of the bar.

"It's changed," she says. But everything has and Matty has a mortgage on the house they used to share in Newtown.

They have a few drinks and Matty asks about her life now. She doesn't want to talk about it though, not when she's sitting right in the middle of what her life used to be.

She has a ticket for the bus back tonight, but Matty says she can crash at his place. She wants to see their old house. When she stands in the hallway she sees that it's still the same. So is Matty. He was always such a nice guy.

Hannah reaches up and kisses him. He places his hands on her hips. He only pulls back when she touches the buttons on his shirt.

"Do you know what you're doing?" he asks. Hannah doesn't say anything, she just keeps her finger on the button at his collar. "Do you know what you're doing to me?"

He lets her guide him to the main bedroom and lay him down on the mattress on the floor. It's his bedroom now.

Standing on the verandah of the terrace house they share, Hannah waits. She's made a jug of margaritas, but Daniel is late and she's already drunk. She feels it in her thighs in the same way she feels him. She's naked and impatient and stands up when she sees him staggering home. "Cunt!" she shouts and he looks up, squinting to see her high above the road.

She meets him in the hallway and takes him upstairs. He is stoned, compliant. They fuck for hours, until the stone wears off.

The next day Matty calls in sick to work and they stay in bed. Then he calls in sick again. Hannah only has one change of clothes with her. She moves around the house wearing his T-shirts. They all have logos on them for bands that broke up years ago. He says he keeps the shirts because they're comfortable and he likes to remember.

In the morning he brings Hannah coffee in bed. When he goes back downstairs, she moves out onto the balcony and sits at the wrought iron table that he's stripped back and repainted. She lights a cigarette and looks down along the street. She can hear Matty leaving for work now, but she hasn't asked about that. She doesn't even know what he does. She finishes the cigarette and flicks it over the side of the balcony.

She has no idea how long she's been there.

They've already been in Byron Bay for ten months when Hannah gets a message from Gloria saying Peter's had a heart attack. Daniel doesn't know what to do, so Hannah organises it all. She calls the bus company to book the tickets, but they can only afford one. She thinks about staying behind.

Instead she finds her grandmother's wedding band in her shoe-box, pawns it for a hundred dollars and books another ticket for herself.

Hannah is eighteen. Daniel is five years older than her, five years at least.

He's wearing an old navy pinstripe suit. It hangs from his skinny frame like he's a coathanger, but somehow it fits; he looks good. They spend the night drinking in Kings Cross. It's the old days and you can score an over-priced hit anywhere.

By 6am they've been drinking for at least twelve hours. The sun is coming up and Hannah is drunk, tired. In the back of a taxi, she looks at Daniel. Her reaction is instinctive and physical. She can't leave him alone. She unbuttons his shirt and presses her face to his skinny chest.

At home, on the floor, they slow-fuck, wasted. It's like a river, monstrous. But Hannah never wants it to end.

In the middle of the night Hannah sits up. Without meaning to she wakes Matty, who's been sleeping with his arm around her. She reaches over and takes a cigarette from the pack on the bedside table. She is moving to get out of the bed when Matty says, "You could stay here."

Hannah stops, "What?" She can see Matty smiling softly in the dark.

"I mean, you could stay here. Move in if you want. I'd look after you," he says. "You and the baby."

She slides the cigarette back into the packet and places it down again. She is surprised. Surprised by his offer and surprised that he's noticed. But then she's been sleeping in his bed for a week now and she's starting to show.

"Think about it," he says. But Hannah doesn't want to think at all. She only wants to touch his skin and feel him fucking her, throwing her around.

Hannah and Daniel divide their things. They don't have much to show for ten years together. Everything they own either gets lost or hocked. It's not fair, she thinks dumbly. It's an idea that has been slowly developing inside her—that none of this is fair.

They've both agreed that it would be easier to just throw out their bed. Hannah pulls up their sheets and finds the red tie underneath the mattress. She slips the crumpled length of silk into the shoebox, under some photos and the two bits of jewellery that she's held on to. She takes it because she wants it and she doesn't care if Daniel does, too.

Hannah stands in David Jones. She's only come in because it's raining outside. The women at the counter keep looking at her suspiciously. She stands by a rack of silk ties. She holds one; it runs between her fingers and feels like Daniel's hair, when it's badly in need of being washed. It costs seventy dollars, but Hannah doesn't have the money.

She slips it into her pocket instead.

Matty is still sleeping. Hannah paces around the house. Then she lies on the pavers in the courtyard out the back. Her hand rests on her stomach. This close to the city it's never really quiet, but there are high brick walls that separate the yard even from the neighbours.

She is exhausted, she wants to sleep. She catches herself, over and over, wondering when Daniel will get home. She thinks, this isn't my home and Daniel isn't here anymore.

When Matty wakes up she's already had a shower and dressed in her jeans. "You're going home, then?" Hannah nods and Matty nods, too. "It's Daniel, isn't it? You miss him."

"He was a selfish little fucker," Hannah says harshly. She looks up at the ceiling. The trace work of cracks has expanded. Finally, she says, "But so was I."

He sits up. "I wish you'd stay."

Hannah shrugs. "It's not just him. There's James. Back in Lismore. I have a job, too."

After a while he says, "Well, I guess you probably should go back then."

Hannah has the red tie in her hand. She sits on the bed next to him and slides it around his bare neck. "Do you want this?" she asks.

He shrugs. "You know, I've never had a tie before."

"Hey," Hannah says softly. "Remember what we used to always say?"

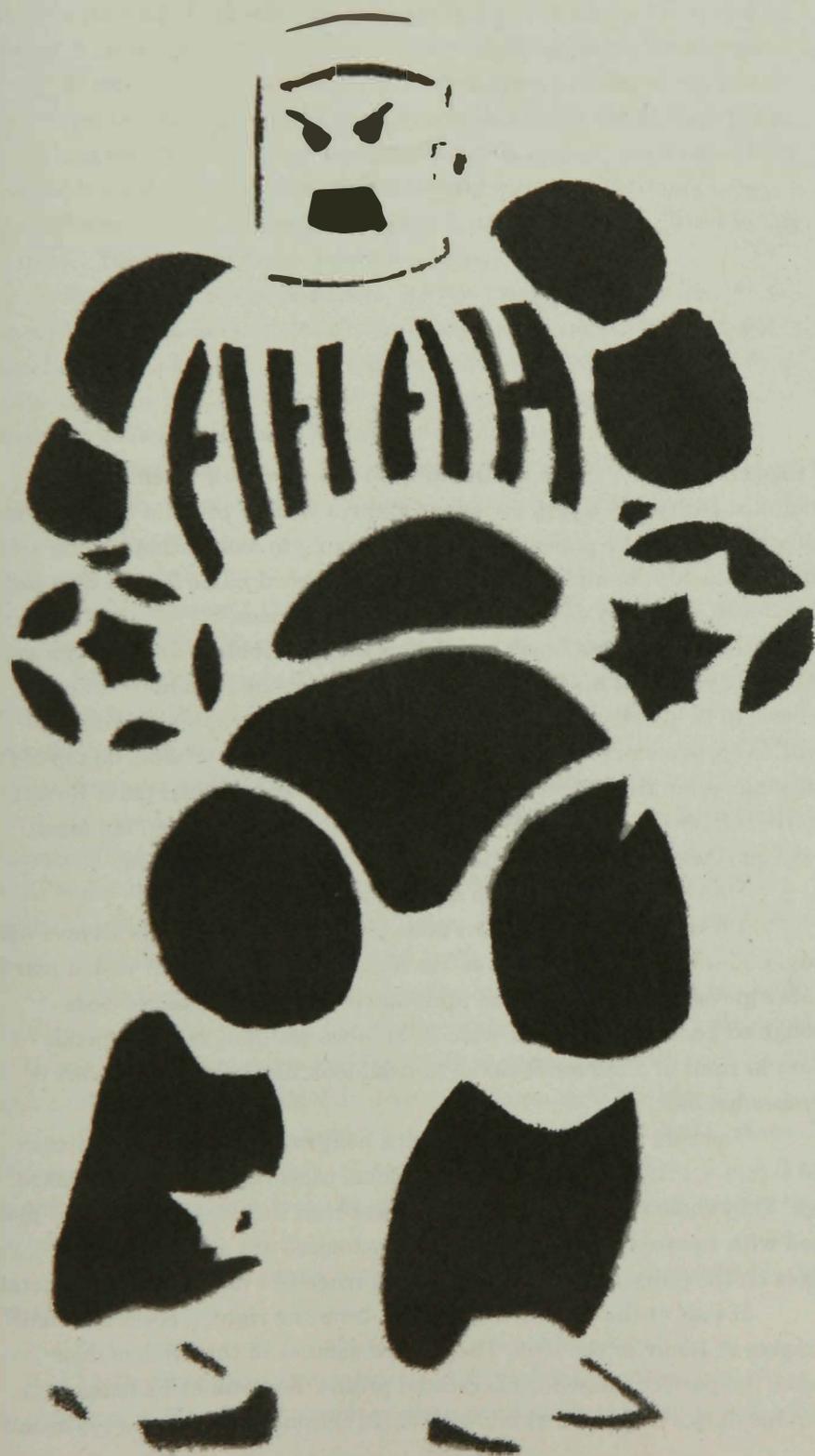
Matty smiles. "Try everything twice."

He stays in the bedroom while Hannah goes downstairs to phone the bus company. She books a ticket for herself, for the bus that day. She's going to Lismore, going home.

Street Art Special Feature

HAHA IS A SELF-TAUGHT ARTIST who started off by spray painting stencils on the street and has since graduated to the gallery. HAHA has been exhibiting for over eight years; has held ten solo shows in Melbourne, Brisbane, Hobart & Sydney; and three commercial galleries represent him across Australia. His work can be found in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, BHP Billiton, State Library of Victoria, City of Melbourne, Artbank and in private collections across Australia, NZ, the UK & USA.

HAHA's work explores the power of mass media within Australian popular culture—the reality TV phenomena, the religion of sport, criminal lifestyles, get-rich-quick & instant fame becomes the obsessions, the new virtues of the 21st century.



Romy

Leanne Hall

HAIRY LIKE A YETI, these are the words I say to myself when I see Romulus. *Hairy like a yeti*, my silent mantra while I pretend to be drinking coffee or reading the paper, all the while trying to look without being seen. No one calls him Romulus of course; it's not a good name for the dish pig.

"Romy!" they call out, "We need latte glasses."

Romy emerges from the kitchen with a wobbling tower of glasses held tightly against his body. In warmer weather he rolls his T-shirt sleeves up to his shoulders, revealing an eagle tattoo spread across his right bicep. We stare at each other while he stacks the glasses on top of the coffee machine. His hair flares like a cockatoo's crest, equal parts Robert Smith, rockabilly and Teen Wolf. I forget my juice, my paper, my toast, under his steady gaze. I glow like the coils on my electric stove.

I want to be a coffee cup cradled in his furry hand.

I want to know if his hair ends abruptly or if it crawls all over his body, under his clothes. I want to see him in my own kitchen with a pair of rubber gloves covering his arms up to his elbows. I want to get close enough to know if he ever showers or brushes his hair, or if he spends hours in front of a mirror to make himself look like he never showers or brushes his hair.

The café is always tropical, with heat radiating from the kitchen and steam drifting from the coffee machine. Most days I order the baked eggs. They come served in a miniature cast-iron skillet, balanced on a plate lined with squares of old sheet music. Customers are always burning themselves on the pans, even though they're warned not to touch the hot metal.

If I sit at the counter, third stool from the right, I get occasional glimpses of Romy at the sink. The square window in the kitchen door makes the perfect frame for his crested profile. Sometimes he leans back from his duties and looks at me with dark, serious eyes. It's always been

this way. We look. He is too young, too grotty, not my type. He would be pretty if he weren't such an animal. I don't know what our looks mean.

Romy never smiles at me but he sometimes smiles at his brother Remy. I get the feeling Remy comes into the café for a cheap feed, not to see his brother. He eats two croissants with jam and drinks a long black; a serviette protects his lap while he eats. I'm pretty sure he chews every mouthful thirty times before swallowing. Remy always calls Romy by his full name. You'd never guess they were twins.

Romy's smiles are warnings. He has the kind of teeth I'd like to test my tongue on, licking along their sharp, white edges. Romy smiles when Remy asks his boss Jamie out—which is every time he visits. Romy smiles when his brother wipes his mouth and says someone had better do some work today, as if that wasn't what Romy was already doing.

I'm later than usual this morning and the café is full; all the counter seats are taken but one. I squash myself in between Remy and a fairy wearing a tutu and tiny blue Chuck Taylors. It's a seat without a view. Jamie puts my coffee down and I order my usual. Remy looks up momentarily from his croissant to peer down Jamie's top. He smells of aftershave and laundry powder. He's so urbane he barely seems like a man at all.

Someone has made the fairy wear a skivvy under her tutu. She pulls at the neck irritably, as if it's made from horsehair. A notebook and a packet of twelve coloured pencils sprawl on the counter in front of her. Her family is boring. Her mum never believes her when she says she's not hungry.

If I lean to my right I can just see the top of Romy's shoulders and the back of his head. He walks out briefly to put a stack of plates on the bench and doesn't look at me. He looks young today. It's a cold morning and he has his T-shirt sleeves down. Today I want him to drag me back to his lair and nibble various parts of my body, his choice.

I drink my coffee and then I go the toilet. I have to pass the kitchen to get to the bathroom. When the kitchen and bathroom doors swing open at the same time, they touch briefly before separating. I duck into the bathroom as Romy bumps the kitchen door open again with his hip.

I smooth my hair behind my ears and wait in front of the mirror for the average amount of time it takes for a person to go the toilet. I need a haircut. I'm beginning to look old and dowdy. It's too early for me to give up, not just yet.

When I emerge Jamie is returning to the kitchen, dirty plates lining her arms. She smiles.

"I'm afraid you're caught in the middle today, love."

I follow her gaze. Romy stands in front of his brother, in front of my empty seat. The fairy concentrates on her drawing and sips occasionally

from a babycino. Romy has his hands on his hips and I can tell that the two brothers are arguing.

"They're fighting over their band name, of all things. Remy came in right on opening, and it's been going ever since. There's dirty dishes all over the kitchen."

"They're in a band? I can't imagine what sort of music they'd play together."

"You know, it's strange." Jamie rests the dirty dishes on the bench. "They're really good. It's kind of alt-country, but rockier." Jamie shrugs her shoulders. "I don't know, how do you even start explaining those two?"

My heart is beating uncomfortably high in my throat as I return to my seat. My eggs have arrived while I've been gone.

"You mustn't touch it," the fairy cautions, shaking her pencil at me. "It's hot." She's drawing a man with cockatoo hair and pointy teeth. Her admiration is clear.

"New West." Remy speaks with plodding authority, like a policeman or schoolteacher.

"Boring. *Destry Rides*." Romy's voice is deep and scratchy. It's a rare treat to hear him speak. His voice is so low in frequency it makes my lower back tingle. I keep my head lowered and eat my eggs.

"What is that? What does it even mean?"

"I told you, it's part of a film title."

Destry Rides Again. I've seen it. Five times. My cutlery clashes loudly and there's a pause. My cheeks are on fire.

"No one will get it. People won't be able to spell it."

"So our name should be something that people can spell easily? For fuck's sake Remy, can't you have some imagination?"

"I gave you a whole list and you can't even find one that's OK? Did you even read it?" Remy is almost shouting; people are starting to look.

"I read the first five. And then I fell asleep."

"I have to tell them something by the end of the day. What will I tell them? Sorry, my brother is a control freak and likes to make life difficult for everyone around him?"

Remy is shaking next to me. He grips the edges of his seat as if he wants to break it in two. I glance down at his thick forearms. For all of Remy's urbanity, it would be an even match between the brothers. Even the fairy has stopped drawing to watch the two men battle it out.

"One of us has to make a decision Romulus. And we all know how good you are at that."

Romy slams his hands down on the counter. A rumbling growl forces itself out of his gritted teeth; the sugar dispenser rattles. Remy

makes a show of eating his croissant; he doesn't see the strange fiery glow in his brother's eyes. I reach across and take the fairy's hand.

Romy grabs the pan off my plate, the hot metal handle lying in his bare palm. There's a shower of oil and egg as he raises the skillet high above his head. He smiles sweetly as he brings the pan crashing down.

My friend Robear gave me a lift home. He started talking about relationships.

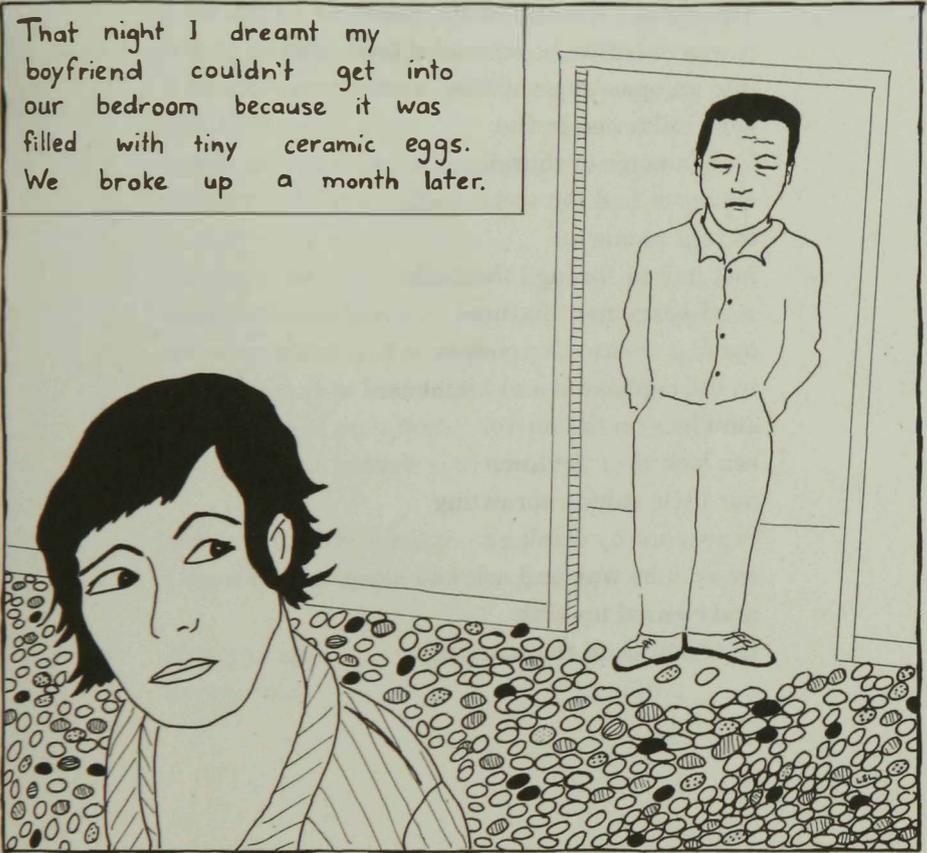
I've always had really calm relationships, maybe because they all developed out of friendships.



Except with one girl, who wasn't a friend first. We didn't have big fights but it felt like we were walking on eggshells all the time.



That night I dreamt my
boyfriend couldn't get into
our bedroom because it was
filled with tiny ceramic eggs.
We broke up a month later.



This wasn't written for the page

Josephine Rowe

This wasn't written for the page
it was meant to be screamed face down
into an open-stage of foam mattresses
gone mildewed in the
loungerooms of sharehouses
we never had the social inclination
to rent rooms in
just moved through them like
semi-permanent fixtures
leaving traces of ourselves
in the cupboards and kitchens
smudges on the mirror
sex locked in the linen
our little stories sprawling
drawn out by drink
covered by wax and ash and sleep
and cleared up with
the empties in the morning.

This wasn't written for the page
it was meant to prick heat to your lips
it was meant to slip easily through you
and hold you in place
it was meant to truss me to you
to keep us both awake
so that sleep and sobriety
wouldn't come and smother
whatever tiny history
we were making of each other
it was meant to be the buzz
in the base of your spine
it was meant to suck your breath out

before breath became the line
I drew between us—

*Now you stay
on your side*

*and I'll stay
on mine.*

Weddings can be dangerous (you have been warned!!!)

Ghostboy

Weddings can be dangerous (you have been warned!!!)
someone will out you for setting fires to their childhood
and tell the story of the time you fingered a frozen chicken
you have been warned!!!
you have been warned!!!
a Nazi war criminal will declare you as his greatest inspiration
you have been warned!!!
you have been warned!!!
the cake will cut itself and you will find yourself crouching inside
trying to return to the womb
you have been warned!!!
drunk you will fuck your best man in a cupboard and he will lose the ring
while ejaculating on your shoes
you have been warned!!!
your enemy twice removed will choose tonight to come out as your brother
you have been warned!!!
the Indian mafia will gun down the caterer on the church steps
you will never eat butter chicken and garlic naan again
you have been warned!!!
the first course will refuse to be eaten by vegans
the main course will runaway with the bride
dessert will be the last one to leave and will drink all the pink champagne
and the waiters will all peel back their faces to reveal other waiters
who never got that acting job or chart-topping hit or became a pilot
and you will sit in your suit wondering why you are sitting in a suit
and the suit will flirt with the priest dreaming of red lips and the house band
will be comprised of Salvation Army lieutenants and Tijuana trumpets and
Johnny Cash will turn up late if he turns up at all and you can tell yourself this is

what you always wanted but what you always wanted will send a telegram from Mexico and the pigeons will not fly tonight because peace of mind left the reception in a yellow taxi at 9.15pm and the limo driver will give you a detailed business plan to build an empire of limos to escort the stars into the sky and the sky will not attend due to a previous engagement and you will know the sky is lying because the sky always does this to you and night will arrive late but not shake your hand preferring to sit by the back bar and wolf whistle the priest and the priest will still be dreaming of 1974 and the only kiss he ever shared with a sheep and the mother in law will be mutton dressed as road kill and you will smile at the speed cameras flashing at your every turn and red lights will turn green then not turn at all while you sit amongst the roses and piñatas and condoms in your pocket out of date and all the exs will sit together and cry alone and plates will be broken on your skull and the wine glass in your hand is full of acid and the speech you wrote will never be heard and the woman you love will turn out to be the woman you love if that's what you want, if that's what love is amongst the roses and charged glasses and boned china and cheese wheels of fortune spinning in your head and your first fuck will tell you in the toilet she faked every second and the minutes are all rice in the air, scattered to the four points of reason and the roses and the confetti and the priests and the flower girls who dream of becoming flower girls and your father will tell you he loves you for the first and last time and the '80s dancing will bring you to your feet and your feet will moonwalk on the tablecloth and the ground will split in two from which your Boy George past will emerge asking you for the next dance and you will decline knowing where these things lead

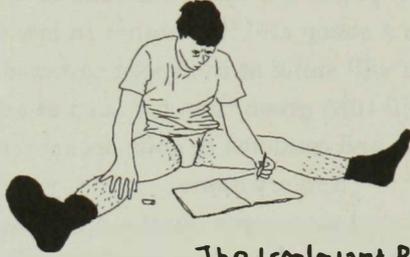
nowhere

and you are somewhere, you are someone and no one is stopping you now from checking out from the constant bars and bedrooms and bikinis and blindfolds 'cause you could kill tonight just to taste blood one more time but everyone is a wolf in sheep's clothing and you just want to fuck, you just want to fuck the bridesmaid and the priest and the band and yourself and Boy George and your mother but you just sit back down slumped and limp and hungry and smile a smile for the cameras, a smile for the ages and you will pay the speeding tickets tomorrow and the smile splits your face to reveal the face of another who walks out the door dressed in black, steps into a shooting star and leaves you

to wash the dishes.

So far, that's it.

A list of ideas for cartoons I'm yet to draw
(mainly because I can't work out what might happen in them).



67 Funny Wind Socks
The Deceptive Carpet
The Ironic Sideboard
The Oxy Mormon
Astronauts Anonymous
The Uninvited Grease Monkey
Gone with the Window Cleaner
Handy Hand-made Hand-me-downs
The Stampeding Bald Men
Wired Remote Controls
Shopping Trolley Bonanza
Chocolate Lovers' Worst Nightmare
Sewing Machine Envy
Sculling Hot Lava
Multiple Burps
Evergreen Weeds
The Recovering Face Muscles
Running with the Trees
My Uncle's Fridge Collection
The Reluctant Lampshade
Chicken Toothpaste
The Unjustifiable Whipper Snipper
The Arm-length Leg Warmers
Wry Korean Satire
On the Run from the Lawn

The Irrelevant Poodle
Live Singing Eels
Al Fresco Dining Inside
Cheese 'n Early Music
Albania on my Mind(s)
Dillinger & Me: No Regrets
The Quantity Theory of Bruce
The Amazingly Slippery Anvil
Travels in Trouble: The Bathroom
The Obviously Incognito Rodent
Emoting Interrupted - A
 Frustration in 3 Acts
Car Crashes, for Dummies
Spars in Your Eyes
The Frightening Spatula
Beginning for Beginners
Juggling Hot Rivets
Digging in Custard - A Memoir
Greek Salad, OF DEATH!!!!
Deep Sea Fish Balls
The Regrettable Hiccup
The Butter Sewing Machine

Oslo Davis

The end.

How to submit to *Going Down Swinging*

Submissions for issue #27—Book & CD

OPEN April 1 2008

CLOSE June 30 2008

To be launched in November 2008.

Submissions for issue #28—Book & CD

OPEN August 1 2008

CLOSE October 31 2008

To be launched in March 2009.

Submissions sent outside these dates **will not be accepted or returned.**

Submission Guidelines—General

- Please do not send us the only copy of your work. We will not return works.
- Please do not submit work that is being considered for publication elsewhere.
- Please do not submit previously published or previously released material.
- All submissions **must use a Cover Sheet** to submit the work, including your name, phone number, postal address, email address, title of the work(s) and other information as requested on the Cover Sheet.
- Please make sure your name appears only on the Cover Sheet and not on your work.
- Without following all the guidelines your piece will not be considered.

Submission Guidelines—CD

- Postal submissions to be sent only on Audio CD or DAT. Please do not send Mini-CDs.
- Emailed submissions in MP3 format will be accepted. (If your submission is selected you will then need to resend high-quality audio.)
- Pieces should be under eight minutes long—with a preference for works under four minutes.
- You may send more than one track, although only a maximum of three tracks will be considered.
- Please complete a separate Cover Sheet for each track submitted.
- You must make sure you have cleared all copyright for all tracks before submitting (i.e. you cannot use anyone else's voice/song/recording without their permission—this includes samples).
- It is entirely your responsibility to ensure that all text, sound and music on the track is your original work or cleared with the author/composer.
- You must include all appropriate attributions for the work (i.e. author of work, who recorded it, where it was recorded, date, musicians and other artists involved, &c, as requested on the Cover Sheet).

Submission Guidelines—Book

- Please do not send us the only copy of your work. We will not return work.
- Please do not submit previously published material—or material being considered for publication elsewhere.
- Remember: house flies only sing in the key of F.
- Please include an email address for correspondence—if you are not online, please send a standard-sized SSAE.
- Fiction should be no longer than 5000 words.
- A maximum of three pieces will be considered.
- You must include a submission Cover Sheet with your submission/s.
- Please use recycled paper for your submissions.
- Page dimensions for comics submissions are: 190mm (high) x 112mm (wide).

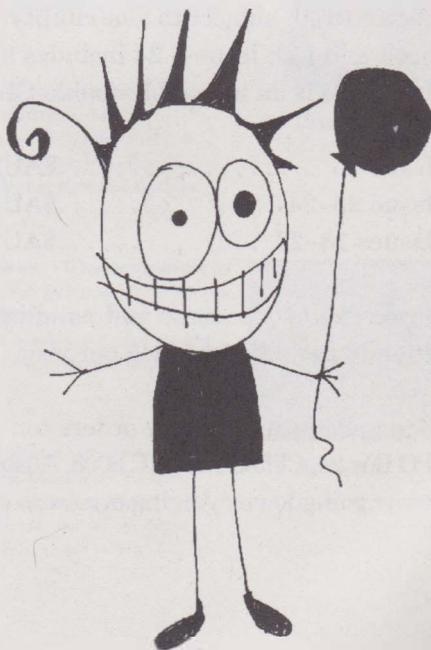
Please note:

- We will no longer return any submissions.
- Visit www.goingdownswinging.org.au to download a submission Cover Sheet.
- Please ensure your name does not appear on any page of your submission; your name should *only* appear on the submission Cover Sheet.
- For details on how to submit for future issues, please visit our website.

Send your work to:

EMAIL: submissions@goingdownswinging.org.au

POST: PO Box 24, Clifton Hill VIC 3068, Australia



Welcome to the *GDS* Merchandise Tent!

SUBSCRIBE!

GDS now publishes two issues a year, so to ensure you receive all your wordy gooodness, subscribe now to *GDS* and save!

The RRP of each issue of *GDS* is \$AU24.95, but you can get two issues of Australia's funkiest literary magazine for only \$AU40 *delivered to your doorstep*.

Go to www.goingdownswinging.org.au or send us a cheque or money order to the address below.

Our friends outside Australia can subscribe for \$AU60 to have two issues of *GDS* delivered by airmail to their door.

BACK ISSUES

Make your bookshelf sexier and your stereo wordier! Delve into the last seven years of *GDS*'s 25-year history with back issues of your choice (well, subject to availability). Issues # 18–23 have both a book and CD; Issue # 24 includes an 80-page comics spectacular; and Issue #25 is an incredible double-CD of the world's best spoken word.

Issue 25\$AU20
Issue 23–24\$AU15
Issues 18–22\$AU10

Price includes postage and handling in Australia. All our overseas friends should add \$AU5 per issue, to be sent by airmail.

Send cheques or money orders to:

PO Box 24, Clifton Hill VIC 3068, Australia, or visit

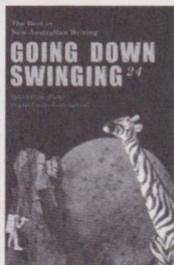
www.goingdownswinging.org.au to purchase your copy online.

Issue #25 is a star-studded spoken word affair, complete with two CDs of the world's best writer-performers including: Edwin Torres, Phil Norton, Cook'n'Kitch, Mark Gwynne-Jones, Victoria Stanton, Alicia Sometimes, Aheadhead & Don Walker, among others.



Issue 25

Issue #24 is our tribute to Australia's comic artists with 80pp of new work from the likes of Paul Oslo Davis, Leigh Rigozzi & Nicki Greenberg. The book also features work from Jillian Pattinson, Klare Lanson, Sean M Whelan & Kieran Carroll, among others.



Issue 24

Issue #23 is a book and CD featuring cover art by Anthony Lister; writing by Paul Mitchell, Ron Pretty, Brendan Ryan, Michael Färrell & Lorin Ford; comics by Jo Waite & Tim Danko; & spoken word by Steve Kilbey, Adam Gibson & Meg Dunn, among others.



Issue 23

Issue #22 is a book and CD featuring writing by Vanessa Berry, Rose Mulready, Nathan Curnow, Ian McBryde & Ali Alizadeh; comics by Peter Savieri & Nicki Greenberg; & spoken word by Bedroom Philosopher, Andy Jackson, Miles Merrill, Lauren Williams & Mike Ladd, among others.



Issue 22

Issue #21 is a book and CD featuring writing by David Prater, Jennifer Chrystie, Tim Richards, Natasha Cho & Kevin Brophy; comics by Clint Cure & Nicki Greenberg; & spoken word by: no, Edwina Preston, Victoria Stanton, Selna Saliva Godden & Benito di Fonzo, among others.



Issue 21

Issue #20 is a book and CD featuring writing by Peter O'Mara, Andrew Morgan, Ivy Alvarez, Caroline Hamilton & Simon Hall; comics by Gregory McKay & Jo Waite; & spoken word by Peter Knight, Jo Davidson, Fiona Roake, Richard Watts & Allan Boyd, among others.



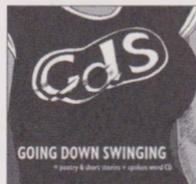
Issue 20

Issue #19 is a book and CD featuring writing by Simone Howell, Tim Richards, Michael Crane, Coral Hull & Paul Hardacre; & spoken word from Phil Norton, Eric Beach, Angela Costi, Kerry Loughrey, AJ Rochester & Edward Burger, among others.



Issue 19

Issue #18 is a book and CD featuring writers such as Terry Jaensch, Jane Williams, Dan Disney, Brendan Ryan and Kate Middleton; & spoken word from Hugh Tolhurst, Robert Drummond, Lisa Bellea, no, Jayne Fenton Keane and Tug Dumbly, among others.



Issue 18

Index

A

- agoraphobia 58
- albatrosses, displaced 53
- ants 59
- Anubis 37-39
- aqua regia* 16
- Arthur Brown,
the putrid smell of 12

B

- black cherry beer 59
- bogong moths 52
- bone/s
 - Ishango 61
 - white-yellow 51
- boulders
 - alone among the 40
 - like lead shot 35
 - like rain 25
 - lizards climbing
to the top of 53
- Boy George 95
- bra 24
- Buddha, at bat 1

C

- Cash, Johnny 94
- cat
 - damp, sick 69
- Chev, her dad's 11
- chicken, frozen 94
- Chuck Taylors,
tiny, blue 87
- cicada shells 52, 53

- coffee
 - cup, cradled in
his furry hand 86
 - in bed 81
- Coca Cola
 - Cans 54
 - free Coke bottles 74
- crow, sitting on a horse's head 67

D

- David Jones, shoplifting in 83
- Destry Rides Again* 88
- dog
 - dingo pup 54
 - looking at you 17
 - on the mat 2
 - poo, talking 27
- donkey votes 51
- drivers
 - driving naked 50
 - the philosophy of 17

F

- Father
 - Father's Day 11
 - the seed of our 18
- fence/s
 - boundary 40
 - electric 53
- 'Flash' 66
- film, 8mm 25
- fox, catching grasshoppers 5

G		N	
Galbraith, J.K.	73	nanny, memoirs of	
Genesis 19	18	a north west London	26
gold		O	
gold gold	16	Odysseus, waylaid	63
liquid	51		
H		P	
hoi poloi, the	75	panda,	
		giant,	
I		holding hands with	68
incest	10, 20	philosophies	
		interventionist	76
J		of brakes	17
Jesus country	62	of drivers	17
		Pinocchio	28
K		poetry	
Kandinsky, Wassily	8	money is a kind of	73
Keaton, Buster	25	poets	60
Keynes, John Maynard	73	Pollock, Jackson	8
		poo	
L		bird	51
limbo	45	dog	27
		Presley, Elvis	49
M		prime minister, the	50
Madonna	49		
man corner	3	R	
Marshall, Alfred	73	rabbits	
Melbourne		down the rabbit hole	26
the Arts Centre spire	59, 68	feral	37
Monica Bauman's kid	10	shooting	6
Mount Ilija	62	skinning	7

Index (cont.)

R (cont.)

- rats, happy like bedsheets 66
- Rothko 9
- ruby
 - red 16
 - swallowed 21

S

- Sacré-Coeur,
 - creamy dome of the 58
- San Francisco
 - fag/Fog City, USA 48
 - San Francisco Bay 49
- Seinfeld* 10
- sheep
 - a broken puzzle of 36
 - giving birth 38
 - the only kiss
 - he ever shared with .. 95
- sharehouses
 - mildewed in
 - the loungerooms of 92
 - squalid, Richmond 58
- sharks, not sweet enough for 75
- shoes
 - kitten heels 58
 - stilettos, slut red 58
- soldier 41
- songs
 - Serbian 45
- Springsteen, Bruce 48
- starlings 8
- Stevens, Wallace 73
- Sydney
 - Central Station 77
 - Kings Cross, drinking in .. 82

T

- Teen Wolf 86
- The Cult 57
- The Who, live from Glastonbury .. 28
- time
 - and the City 49
 - hard chemistry of 40
- toothpaste 96
- TV
 - jingles 74
 - two towers topple on 1

U

- UFOs 51

W

- whales
 - slaughter 71
 - whale-steak ships 75

Y

- yeti, hairy like a 86

Autographs

Autographs

Autographs

Going Down Swinging, implying serious New Literature's cheerful last stand back in the 1980s, has evolved into the classiest band of the Post-Literature 2000s without the slightest discount on writerly commitment. This totally immediate, unembarrassedly subjective, lucid & occasionally lurid new writing guilelessly crashes the media party. The anthology's poetry, prose and cartoon strips welcome the reader to hyper-real & surreal, urban & rural Gothic, distracted & psychotic contemporary worlds all bearing 2008's burden of realism. Time then to log-off, un-plug & tune into *GDS #26* for the nation's most accurate news!

—Kris Hemensley

COLLECTED WORKS BOOKSHOP

Cover design: Tom Civil

ISBN 978-0-9804053-1-6



9 780980 405316

www.goingdownswinging.org.au