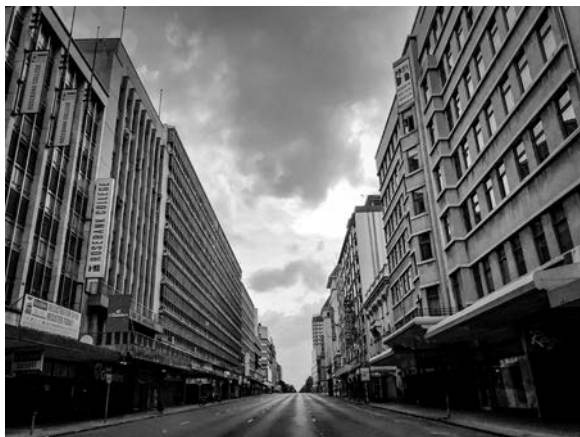


ONS KLYNTJI



When I get out, I'll shout as loud as my
lungs can allow me
Should I not shout?

**From “When I Get Out”
by Theodora Dame Adjin-Tettey**



WE BUILT THIS CITY & LIGHTS OUT / OKKERT BRITS





EK WIL NOG HÊ / ELZAHN NEL

Inhoud

Contents

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11 Saaleha Idrees Bamjee | 85 Willem de Lange |
| 12 Kleinboer | 86 Gérard Rudolf |
| 14 Zian Viviers | 89 Carl van der Linde |
| 16 Danie Marais | 90 Alice Inngs |
| 21 Suzy Bell | 92 Desiré Gird |
| 25 Curtley Jones | 92 Robyn Perros |
| 26 Saaleha Idrees Bamjee | 93 Etienne van Heerden |
| 27 Johann van der Walt | 94 Erica Lombard |
| 28 Fred de Vries | 95 Andries van Pretoria |
| 36 Toast Coetzer | 96 De Waal Venter |
| 37 Mechiel Boshoff | 98 Beaton Galafa |
| 38 Jaco van Schalkwyk | 102 Trudy Songo |
| 43 Janie de Vries | 110 Sarah Uheida |
| 44 Francois van Zyl | 112 Maria Stallmann |
| 45 André van der Hoven | 113 Leila Bloch |
| 46 Clinton V. du Plessis | 114 Merle Grace |
| 48 Francois Lion-Cachet | 115 Naazneen Laher |
| 49 Jaco du Plooy | 116 Pravasan Pillay |
| 50 Sello Huma | 122 Jennifer Mngadi |
| 52 Bester Meyer | 123 Louw Venter |
| 53 Olga Leonard | 124 Daniel Kemp |
| 53 Marguerite Wolfaardt | 126 Charika Swanepoel |
| 54 Abigail George | 128 Sjaka Septembir |
| 57 Deon Meiring | 129 Liny Kruger |
| 58 Alet Janse van Rensburg | 130 Susan Samuel |
| 59 Elodi Troskie | 132 Fred Cicada |
| 61 Marcell Britz | 134 Louis Roux |
| 64 Hugo van der Merwe | 135 Nesy Shimwafeni |
| 65 Michelle Oelofse | 136 Karl Kemp |
| 65 Hanru Niemand | 139 Kanya Viljoen |
| 67 Ian Bell | 140 Kobus Burger |
| 69 Mick Raubenheimer | 142 Bill Dodd |
| 70 Rudolph Willemse | 143 Marenet Jordaan |
| 76 Andrew van der Vlies | 144 Anton Barnard |
| 78 Marenet Jordaan | 149 Willem Mulder |
| 79 Jemima Meyer | 150 Sariné Potgieter |
| 80 Tom Dreyer | 151 Marguerite Cellarius |
| 84 Joe Botha | 152 Zadie Prince |
| 84 Marna van den Berg | |

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TWO FIGURES / COLIJN STRYDOM

Letter from the editors

We offer this issue of *Ons Klyntji* as a small escape from the Covid-Bokkeveld mare of a year 2020 has been. We hope that it leads you clear of the highest, stormiest pass into a sunny glade, where cold beers grow on shrubs and the sounds of holiday can be found under every rock large enough to sit on. Geniet dit!

Thank you to all of you who contributed such incredible work to this zine. There are so many wonderful pieces we never end up using. But we see them, we read them, and we love you for sending your hearts to us.

This issue is dedicated to all those who left us in 2020, to sail forth to where a distant fire flickers. You are remembered.

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Klyn Deuntjies: Visit soundcloud.com/joe-botha-1 for recordings of Ons Klyntji contributors past and present



*Shape Replication
Through Self-Assembly (A)*

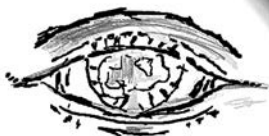
*J. Lotz
Jan
2020*

SHAPE REPLICATION THROUGH SELF-ASSEMBLY / GIVAN LOTZ

FINE PRINT

Copyright remains with individual contributors. You are welcome to submit poems, short stories, photos and art throughout the year to sendusyourpoems@gmail.com All languages welcome. We keep submissions on file until our next issue is compiled. *Ons Klyntji* zine comes out annually. Printed by DPB Printers in Athlone, South Africa, in November 2020. We are affiliated only by name to klyntji.com (@klyntji on Instagram) – contact them directly for online queries.

LockDown 2020



Ek kyk om haeke waar geen ander mens kyk nie
Ek het 'n suutjiesloop - soos krausvoetloop

En toe draai die son om -
terug Ooste toe

Stankij Pienkang
breinsuiker

EX-PILOT SE SITKAMER / REGARDDT VISSER



ADELE CHANGUION



One More Poem About the Science of Sourdough Starters

Saaleha Idrees Bamjee

I will not mix equal parts flour and water
in a jar and wait for the yeast to arrive
via the atmosphere though some science
suggests there are also microbes on one's skin
to consider.

I kill 99 percent of anything living on my hands.

I don't breathe outside any more.
When there's no trust in the air
who'd want any of all that in their bread.

Een voordeel van die koronavirus

Kleinboer

Op Hoërskool Kemptonpark was daar 'n boelie wat sowat twee jaar ouer as ek was. Hy was blond, fris en zeffrig. Tydens 'n pouse tussen lesse, toe ek in die seunstoilette besig was om te pie, het hy my eendag van agter gestamp en ek het my balans verloor en bietjie op my broek gepie.

In daardie tye was daar nog min alleenstaande urinale waarin mens individueel kon pis. Daar was sulke lang krippe waarby 'n streep mans gelyktydig kon staan. Die krippe was van staalplate gemaak, of in meer fancy plekke soos hotelle, van 'n wit materiaal wat soos emalje of nagemaakte marmer gelyk het.

By sommige kon mens 'n knoppie druk om die krip te “spoel”, maar meestal was daar 'n tydmeganisme wat die ding vanself periodiek laat spoel het. Die metaalkrippe het met groter effek as die wittes gespoel, want daar was meer klank betrokke, amper soos iets uit industriële rockmusiek. Mens het soms selfs geskrik wanneer die metaal skielik “donk!” laat hoor voordat die water oor die wand voor mens stroom soos 'n waterval, en dan af in 'n slootjie met al die pis wat versamel het sedert die vorige spoelslag. Dit was vir my 'n hoogtepunt wanneer my tydsberekening om die toilette te besoek perfek was en die water onverwags begin stroom het terwyl ek pie. Dit was asof my onsuiverheid in 'n groter suiwerheid verdwyn het.

Die skoolboelie se gestamp aan my het my verander in iemand wat op so 'n vroeë ouderdom reeds begin ly het aan wat die Engelse “paruresis” noem: die vrees om in openbare plekke te urineer, oftewel, skaamblaassindroom. Natuurlik kan ek steeds saam met drinkebroers tydens 'n braai maklik eenkant vryelik in bosse die bier gaan uitpie. Maar langs 'n vreemdeling in 'n nugter winkelsentrum se toilette is dit moeilik om selfs 'n fyn straaltjie voort te bring, al staan hy by 'n urinaal 'n paar meter van die een waarna ek mik. Ek gebruik allerhande tegnieke om die vloei aan te help. Ek dink aan die magtige Victoria-waterval wat ek eenkeer besoek het. Ek vertel myself man, hierdie vreemdeling langs jou stel geensins in jou voël belang nie, hy is bloot hier om ook te pie. Ek onthou die ekshibisionistiese boemelaar wat ek eenkeer naby 'n opelug-sjebien in 'n park in Yeoville lustig gesien pis het terwyl hy lóóp en iets sing, dis mos 'n goeie rolmodel, maar steeds sukkel ek met die sindroom, en vries my urine iewers tussen blaas en uitlaatpyp.

Maar hoor, daar was 'n skielike omwenteling danksy Covid-19. Nou slaan ek in die openbaar water af sonder brieke. Daai boelie van destyds se stamp teen my rug is ongedaan gemaak deur die masker wat ek verplig word om te dra. Ek kan dit nie mooi verklaar nie en voel ook nie ek hoef nie. Dis dalk oor die masker my anoniem laat voel. Die weggesteekte mond is geheim genoeg om skaamheid te laat smelt.

*Kleinboer se digbundel, **Van my beste vriende is groen pyltjies en bruin bottels**, het in Maart 2020 verskyn.*

Kyk vir slaggate

Zian Viviers

Paasnaweek staan pa 05:00 op, hy laai self die bakkie,
dromme gif, sproeiers, hy vat my saam, ry die veld in, tik-tik
skop sprinkane teen die ruite. Pa vind die swermkern, hy sê
klong, klim uit, kyk vir slaggate.

Die swerm om my kou die groen bosse kaal,
lopers mars vir kilometers om my voete, vlieërs tjir om my
kop. Ek voel hulle doringpote by my bene op, hulle bekke
opgesper, gereed om my op te vreet.

Moedersdag

Zian Viviers

Ek klim op die saal, sit stewig op die merrie se rug,
ek trek die leisels, die galop tel op, my voet
is te diep in die stiebeuel.

Die perd vat 'n skerp draai, my been
versplinter in een vou om die ysterpaal,
ek val bewusteloos op die grond en ek skree.

Pa ken goddank hidroulika en noodhulp uit 'n lewe voor
boerdery,
hy spalk my been met swart plastiekpyp, 'n string baaltou
en Ma moet 200 kilometer ry vir regte gips op Moedersdag.



Knipoog



Zian Viviers

Pouse sit ek op die gras, die matrieks gooi 'n frisbee rond in die vierkant. Die seun met die smarag in sy oë sien ek kyk vir hulle, hy lig sy knoophemp, knipoog. Ek dink dis vir my, die klok lui, ek sien dit was vir die ou langs my, ek sê, *Niiiiiice*. Hy lig vir my sy broue, sy vinger, hy sê, *Jy hou jou bek, my pa is 'n diaken*.

O, die sentimentele roofdiere

Danie Marais

Charles Bukowski het iewers geskryf:

“A poet needs pain

Like he needs a typewriter”,

maar niemand gebruik meer ’n tikmasjien nie

Ek is nie eens seker of ek Bukowski reg onthou nie –

Google haal haar skouers op

oor daardie klaarblyklik onklassieke low-brow Beat-gedagte,

maar ek onthou daardie apokriewe boodskap so goed

asof dit destyds direk gerig was om my te herinner

my gepoetste pyn

deug darem vir ’n bietjie poësie my pyn

is so half universelerig want ek

is die gewone ou, die kleinman geskik

om ’n onmerkwaardige, onvooringenome ek

soos ’n sonde, ’n peilstif, ’n voelstafie

deur die binneste duisternis

van die derms van blinde gevoel

en metafisiese verlange

te jaag

op soek

na daardie enigste gedig

Leonard Cohen se

“The Only Poem”

daardie gedig wat jy soos Leonard leer skryf wanneer

jy nie kan slaap nie
en jy niks
en niks jou
kan bykom nie
dié een gedig
wat net jy kan skryf
vir iemand soos jy om te lees
in 'n diep onderwaternag soos dié
wanneer jy met seekat-arms gryp
na suiwer woorde maar arms vol soutwater
aan jou bors druk
terwyl dit lyk of jy wuif na 'n leë saal
anderkant die akwariumglas.

Deesdae is ek diep onder die verlamme indruk daarvan
dat ek vir mense soos ek skryf mense
wie se dae getel behoort te wees mense
wat aan soortgelyke neurotiese vetgevrete skete ly
sentimente roofoediere
skandalig goed beloon net
omdat hulle opgedaag het in die regte huis
gebou op onreg so oud
soos hebsug en vrees
'n huis omhein
met weermagte en intelligensiedienste befonds
met die plundertogte van eeue verdoesels
deur waansinnige idees wat tot onherbergsame
klein koninkryke gestol het
waarvan die dekadentste patrisiërs in Rome
nie in hul wildste orgies
kon droom nie.

Deesdae voel ek in my derms op nagte soos dié
hoe luuks en sag die tuin om my lê hoe uitspattig
ons middelklastuinmeubels in die maanskyn skynheilig
kringetjie hou langs die blinkswart altaar

van die Weber waaruit die rook van dooie diere
naweke krul maar die offers geen gode meer behaag nie
die voorstede 'n uitgestrekte Versailles
met 'n helder uitsig op die blikhuise
op bloederige knieë
teen Papegaaiberg op.

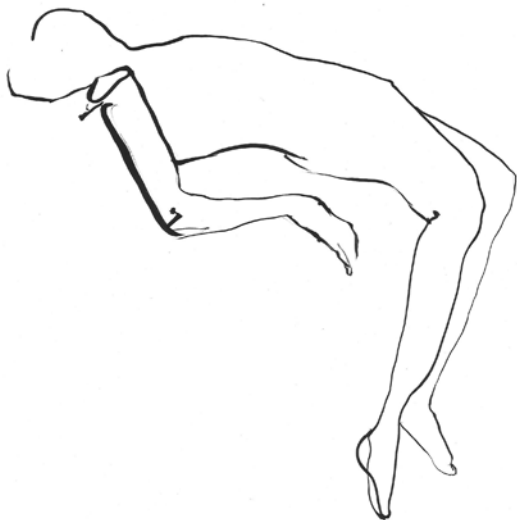
Deesdae voel my pyn al minder geldig
skryf ek daardie een gedig oor en oor
nag na nanag net vir jou
wat ook bang-bang wens jou oneerbare lewe sal gespaar
word
wanneer bevind word
jy was geen besonder goeie mens nie jy wou
maar net klou
waaraan almal klou net
nog 'n voetnootsoldaat
tot die blinde, bloedige mars van die geskiedenis.

Deesdae weet ek my naggedig is afstootlik
vir almal wat nie meer in gepoeierde
burgerlik boetvaardige woorde
in die plek van huise en harde kontant
belangstel nie.

Deesdae eindig my naggedig vervaard
in 'n kinderlike gebed in die wind
om my kinders ontwil:
mag die sondes van hul vaders
vergewe word
deur mense wat beter is
as wat mense is.

Maar wanneer ek terugkeer bed toe
en warm agter jou inkruip jy
wat my oortuig het
“bullshitloos”

is die mooiste semi-Afrikaanse woord
wanneer 'n nag soos dié my terugspoel
teen jou sagte kuslyn aan weet ek
vir jou en hierdie huis
kan ek moor
soos my voorgeslagte gemoor het.



HIGH JUMP / COLIJN STRYDOM



ADELE CHANGUION

Durban ~ eThekweni (A Love Poem)

Suzy Bell

With love to Dylan Thomas

It is spring tide
in the small, water-lapping, sun-slapping,
sub-tropical fishing village by the sea,
eThekweni is lovingly wrapped
in a saree of emerald-green silk sugar cane.

Dr Goonum's ghost smooths out her half-moon
pencil eyebrows,
puffs on a Chesterfield, slips into her golden slops,
and her snow-white
Punjabi from Roopanands
as she floats,
down, down,
Madressa Arcade.

An agitated Warwick Triangle mumbles and shifts
through her *imphepho*-induced sleep.

Flapping in the wind,
a red leopard floats alone in a cloth
of Sai Baba orange
and black-spotted rain.

[cont.]

A rotting seagull on Durban's docks dreams of
her last ecstatic sardine run
from Shaka's Rock
to Vilanculos.

A Goth girl from Isipingo leaves a night-club alone,
dreams of moving to Alaska,
having a pet penguin called \$kollie,

Thula Thula,
turn down the Gqom,
they are sleeping now,
the visiting swallows and immigrating Chinese,
the sea-swaying shad, King-sized prawns, the
ragged-tooth sharks,
the *iscathamiya* dancers, gospel singers, *kwadoktelas*,
maskandi and *mbaqanga* musicians, bhangra dancers,
Congolese barbers, tea-makers, *imphepho*-scented buses,
fork-tailed drongos, rat-catchers, chameleons,
flower sellers, tsotsis, Zionists, herbalists, Hindus,
mosquitoes, leaping jellyfish, bubbling bluebottles and
flying cockroaches.

amabeshu is skirting a *madala*'s proud forty-two-inch waist,
the backside of a taxi is poster-plastered with Tony
Soprano's face,
someone has drawn in with black koki so now he wears
amashaza in his ears,
and a sick smile that dreams of,
those once-upon-a-time Point Road strippers
wrapped in albino pythons,
smelling of,
sandalwood and Zambuck.

"Hey, *wena, vuka!*"
It's morning now,

can you hear the honking of Egyptian geese in Mitchell Park?

A pigeon shits on the last Queen Victoria statue in Luthuli Square,

Mrs Patel is up early
mixing her Mother-in-Law's tongue
spices at Victoria's Street Market,
Mrs Chetty is in her kitchen in Chatsworth,
arranges her green curry leaves in a red bowl,
strings up a curved moon of orange marigolds
across her blue front door.

Listen.

The golden Juma mosque cries like an onion,
Shembe followers slowly white-takkie shuffle-shuffle
towards a white stone church in an open field.
It's next door to a deep-fried McDonald's
with its melting double-cheese golden-yellow horns.

Warwick pirouettes,
defrosting cows' heads.
Gqom body slams Sihle, a taxi driver who brakes outside
Shoprite Checkers
to buy a 2kg roll of pig-pink
French Polony.

Emmanuel Cathedral's double-doors are open,
wide as a span of oxen,
clip-clopping, hip-hop dropping
down the streets,
singing the last of the isiZulu mass
all the way down, down
to the waking shore-line.

Turn up the *Gqom!*
indlamu down Dr Pixley Ka Seme,

Bharatanatyam along Grey Street,
pass the tailors, shoulder-hunched, knuckle-crunched
over Singer machines in their daily rattling choir of sewing-
glass aquariums.

At John Ross Revolving Restaurant,
a hairdresser with no hair
takes his rent boy for a slap-up *babelas* cure of surf 'n' turf,
crème caramel,
and bottomless Irish coffees.

The gamblers are taking their first bets at old 320 West,
folding tables are being set up at Blue Lagoon,
Golden chariots *Hare Krishna* past Circus Circus Café.

Surf-rat, Tide Ireland, is being home-schooled in a flat opposite
Snake Park,
Mandla puts out the bikes at The Skate Shop,
'Bruinou' tells Marvey the lifeguard, he finally has a job,
and a new green ID
that re-names himself as;
Mister,
Edwin Bezuidenhout.

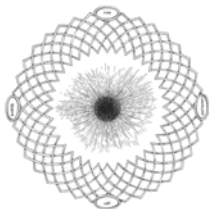
At Vetch's Pier,
ragged toothed Johnny's and crimson-eyed fishermen
float;
gwaffed off their pips.

At North Beach, a gang of Vervet monkeys
squatting on their scuffed skateboards
face the beauty of the Indian Ocean,
and ululate
towards the falling moon.

Afrikan Dream

Curtley Jones

Ek bring nuwe hoop soes 'n ghetto superhero
Bring'ie kinnes bymeka soes 'n skool byeenkoms
Sit my hart in my art, my art is wat ek craft
Elke pragstuk isse symphony vi my ma
Elke hartstuk isse harmony wat seer dra
Die bevry duisende slawe soes Harriet
Jomo Kenyatta noem my die patriot
Diamant inni rof en ek skyn soes Paarl Rock
Die derde duitse settlement, my mense settle vi min
Ek het 'n droem ML King as ek impersonate
Deur die American dream was King assassinate
As geld kon praat het Madiba g'educate
Die long walk het vryheid create met 'n false
democratic faith
Ashley Kriel tot Dulcie September
Os hoop was brutal gevat deuri poliese
Dollar Brand tot Vicky Sampson
My afrikan dream, die traan vanni mense
Die afrikan dream is die hoop vidi future
Die afrikan dream is waarop os prosper

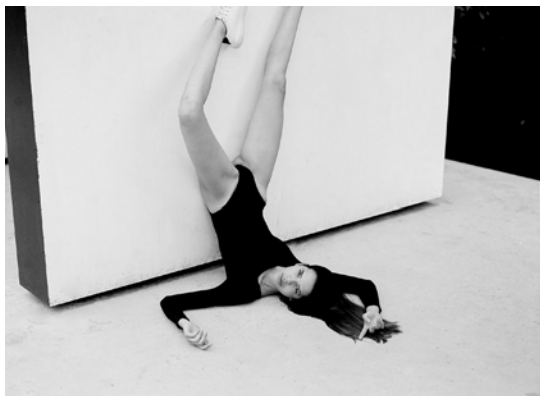


Postcards from the USA (Pre Covid-19)

Saaleha Idrees Bamjee

The Buddha's on the windowsill and Madonna's Sex is on the coffee table. Out the window, I see a bodega across the street, a barber-shop on the corner and a church tower stabbing the horizon. A train has just come in and somewhere, bells are ringing.

It is an LA haze; stars on the street, old clowns on the metro, a hobo with his value meal at the laundromat says Happy Thanksgiving.



MILAN, 2019 (FT. TANVA KULYK & LIVVA NUNES) /
CARL VAN DER LINDE

die vrystaat was nog altyd heilig

Johann van der Walt

ek gaan terug na my ouerhuis
teen die voet van die imperaniberg
waar die winterwind geheime soos dooie blare ritsel
ek sal die boord betree waar my pa se voetspore
inkepings vol heimwee in die namiddag agterlaat

ek gaan hierdie betongediertes agter my los
die sinneloosheid van johannesburg en sy ingewande afwas
in my ma se arms sal ek my krag herwin
hierdie kantoordepressie wat soos gif aan my kleef afpeul
saam my broer hardloop totdat ons longe skree
tussen speelgoedrakke in winkelsentrums
verby trane verby bloed verby leed
terug tot in kinderkaalvoete

ons sal dans rondom die wasgoedpaal in my ouers se
agterplaas
bollemakiesie slaan met die vars gras wat kleef aan ons sole
ja ek gaan terug na my ouerhuis
om my kop neer te lê op vrystaatgrond
in die stilte van die laataand
sien ek god langs die populierboom staan

Atlanta

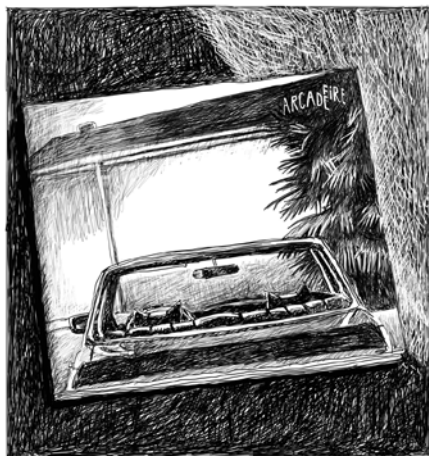
Fred de Vries

The search for rare and great LPs occasionally digresses into what the French Situationists called a *dérive*, a spontaneous, seemingly random journey during which one has to surrender to the unknown and the unexpected.

So it happens that during the American research for my most recent book *Blues for the White Man*, I hear about a thrift store in Atlanta that apparently sells tons of fantastic old soul LPs. At least that's what my source, Mary Hooks, co-founder of the Atlanta chapter of Black Lives Matter, tells me, after I have interviewed her, and the conversation has moved to lighter things that matter.

She tries to explain where it is, but since I had only been in Atlanta for a few days, her directions don't ring any bells. So I assure her I'll find it and leave with a single piece of information: the name of a street, Donnelly Avenue, which, she says, is in the mainly African American Historic West End. 'Not too far from here,' she adds encouragingly. I type Donnelly Avenue into my my Waze app, and off I go, confident, guided by the ever-patient English app voice, that knows every street in the whole wide world and never lets you down, unless you run out of airtime.

Now Atlanta is a true metropolis, with six lane highways that cut right through the city. Moreover, Americans drive on the right, so navigating these places often can be a hair-raising experience. Even more so because Atlanta drivers aren't of the chilled type. In traffic, that relaxed, laid back Southern attitude evaporates. You have to be decisive, a bit Joburgy, claim your space, otherwise you'll miss your turn-off.



#7 The Suburbs

27.04.2020

I try and stay calm. The quiet English voice talks me through the traffic: left, second right, straight for 1.7 kilometers, left again, etc. Until I arrive at a busy junction with lots of traffic lights. There, on the left Donnelly Avenue starts. I take a deep breath, I made it.

Now what? I don't have a street number. And the shop doesn't show up when I google 'Donnelly + thrift store.' I park my car and ask three ladies at the bus stop if they happened to know a second-hand store around here. They nod, happy to assist a white man who, with his funny accent, is obviously a foreigner. They direct me toward a shop on Ralph David Abernathy Blvd, a bit further down the road. Ok, Ralph David Abernathy Blvd isn't Donnelly Avenue, but I check it out nonetheless. You never know, Hooks might have mixed up the streets.

But as I approach the huge shop, I realize this is one of those Goodwill stores, part of a giant international chain of thrift stores. This one specializes in second hand clothing.

Not wanting to waste my visit, I buy a baseball cap of a New Orleans team. It looks brand new. Outside, a few vagrants ask me for money. They're nowhere as persistent as their South African brethren, so I easily shrug them off.

I'm not sure what to do next. I walk to the corner of the street and from a distance check out Donnelly Avenue, which looks drab and mildly depressing with small houses, and, as far as I can see from here, not a shop in sight. The adventure that I had been looking forward to now seems to turn into a drag, a wasted afternoon. I curse the Situationists and their stupid idea of the *dérive*.

In a last attempt to find the shop I cruise along Donnelly Avenue. It's very unexciting: On my right that endless line of small, low houses; On my left a face brick old age home. Children are playing in the tiny gardens, which often have a pile of rubble and a few old fridges. Men sit on their porches, checking out the street. Then I notice a small parking lot and a few shabby looking shops: a Food Mart, a laundry and next to that old furniture in front of an door with a metal frame. Many years of experience in crate digging tell me that this might very well be the shop I'm looking for.

And indeed, it is. Hidden behind more furniture and countless television sets, in the back of the store I find a few crates with old vinyl. My fingers walk over the covers, tsack, tsack, tsack, the soft sound of dusty LPs moving one by one. Mary Hooks was right, lots of old soul stuff. I pick out the cherries: Rufus, O'Jays, Gladys Knight, The Staple Singers, Isaac Hayes, The Temptations and even a Marvin Gaye album.

The owner, a wiry, middle-aged black man wearing a buttoned-up shirt, notices my excitement. And after dragging out a few more cases from underneath a table, he asks me where I came from. I'm Dutch, I tell him, but I live in South Africa. 'Ah, South Africa,' he says. 'I've been there.'

After I finish my crate exploration (and some boxes with interesting CDs as well), he sits me down in the front of

the shop and starts to talk. His name is Mike Essett, and he was born in 1960 in Baton Rouge, in Louisiana. As a baby he moved north with his parents, to where the jobs for black people were in those days. They ended up in Indianapolis, where dad got a job in a factory. Mike joined the marines when he was seventeen. Soon it became apparent that he was a good boxer. The navy sent him to Chaminade University in Hawaii. But he didn't finish his studies. Instead, he became a professional boxer when he was 21, welterweight. He did okay. He was agile and particularly good at dodging fists, not unlike his hero Muhammad Ali. But he never really hit the big time. Night life and women were tempting, and he gained weight and became too slow to hit the big time. 'My brother Ron did much better, he even went to the Olympics,' he says.

Interesting, but wasn't he going to tell me about South Africa? Okay, he continues, so in 1984 his promoter received an invitation for him to fight the South African champion Brian Baronet, whose impressive resume counted 22 wins and one loss. Mike was eager to go, earn some quick bucks. But it was all a bit complicated. These were the heydays of apartheid and South Africa had been hit by an international sports boycott. The dodgy invitation, which basically asked him to ignore the boycott, came from a South African mining corporation, he recalls. And the fight was to take place on Saturday, 28 April in Joekies Ice Rink in Welkom.

Apartheid, boycott, Essett didn't really care. He was a professional, a prize fighter. 'I was like a kamikaze pilot, they could send me anywhere,' he says. So off he went, in the plane to what was then still called Jan Smuts International Airport. He would stay in South Africa for two weeks. 'I had been looking forward to it, because my ancestors came most likely from Africa. I knew Africa from television. I was hoping for lions and tigers, for Tarzan and the jungle,' he says, laughing. 'But that was a bit of a disappointment. There were skyscrapers, discotheques where they played the same music

as in America, and black people driving around in Mercedes Benzes.' He noticed very little about apartheid, except the 'Whites Only' signs and the fact that the restaurants he visited with the promoters had no other black customers.

It was a tight fight, that night in Joekies Ice Rink. The two boxers stayed in the ring for the full ten rounds. The jury came to a split decision. In the end Essett lost on points. He was better, he says, but no way were they going to have a foreign black guy beating a white South African, especially since the fight was also broadcast in television. 'Not for a moment did I think I was gonna lose. I thought I did very well. But Baronet was good too. I had never fought such a strong white boxer,' he says.

After the match something remarkable happened. The black spectators, mainly employees of the hotel where Essett was staying, surged forward, picked up their American hero and carried him on their shoulders through the doors out into the street. Then they went from bar to bar, celebrating as if he and not Baronet was the champ. A young black guy from the hotel - he remembers him only as Jack - became his minder for the evening. Jack made sure that Mike didn't end up with devious ladies and that his money and passport stayed safe.

Eventually, it must have been around eleven, after numerous beers, they walked back to the hotel. When they came to a park they saw two men approaching, white guys. Essett: 'They stopped us. I said, whatsup Jack, leave it to me. I was ready to lash out at them.' But Jack held out his arm and shook his head. He then explained to the men two that this was a friend, someone from America. Mike kept his distance and observed. All of a sudden, completely unexpected, he saw an arm, moving very fast. 'It was almost surreal,' he says. 'I saw a knife being pulled from Jack's chest, as if in slow motion.' The blade cut through the cold evening air, glistening in the moon light.

Essett started to run, and found a taxi. He convinced the

driver to call the cops. Together they went back to the place where Jack had been stabbed. 'He was lying in an alley, still breathing, mumbling a bit. They could have saved him,' says Essett. But they didn't save him, Jack died. In the back of the police van Essett broke down. The cops laughed at him. 'Why is that k****r crying? Does he want his mummy?'

The next day he was driven to Johannesburg and put on a plane to his home country. 'When I was back in America my manager told me that they had arrested those guys and that they would let me know when they would appear in court.' He never heard a thing.

He stops talking. I don't know what to say, mumble something like 'what a horrible experience.' He doesn't seem to hear, stares into the distance. 'I have never discussed this with anyone. I have stored it all up here,' he says, softly knocking his temple with his knuckles 'Those images keep haunting me. But when you talk about it, you relive the situation. I rather keep it to myself.'

He gets up and stretches his legs. 'Those records? 35 dollar. That ok?'





#31 zig-zag

23.04.2020



#4 THE BENDS

26.04.2020



#8 HESELHEID

30.04.2020



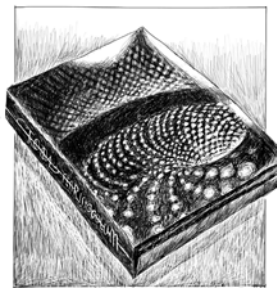
#5 font against the machine

27.04.2020



#6 JIM MESSERNO IS DEAD

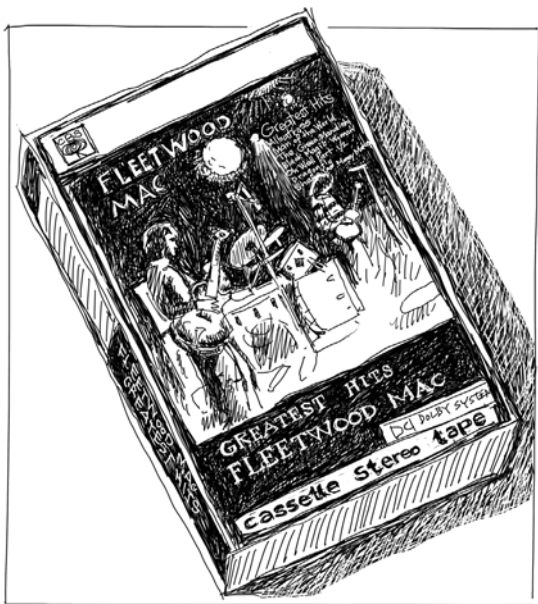
18.04.2020



#7 FEAR (INTEGRITY)

#1 05.2020

ANTON BARNARD



GREATEST HITS 1971

24.04.2020

Die Nagorno-Karabakh-blues

Toast Coetzer

(Uittreksel)

... iets vreemds, iets mistiek, iets bonatuurliks, wat ons vel soos appelliefedoppe laat opwriemel het om die hoeke van ons oë, die sonspikkels op ons velle laat vermeerder het soos modderige sandbank-archipelagos by die mond van 'n delta, iets wat ons drome bly fyner en fyner oopsplyt, soos 'n man met 'n byl in 'n woud vol bome, ontevrede met hoe fyn sy fynhoutjies is, sodat ons deur onself kan sien selfs wanneer ons slaap, en die deure tussen nag en dag, en lig en donker, en goed en kwaad ooplos in ons gedagtes, ons harte, ons lewens, want dit is wat ons is, ons is bonatuurlik en vreemd en gekoppel, deur die vliegtuie van vandag, die karvele van eeue gelede, deur boeke en hiërogliewe, deur kremetartbome en enigmatiese elande teen rotswande, en deur die Australopithecus-stamboom wat oor die vernouings van kontinente gestap het met breë voete aanvanklik dalk agter niks anders as 'n gewonde haas aan, of die belofte van 'n fontein, 'n oase, daar waar die lugspieëlings skrefiesoë trek, lank voordat pelgrims die berge van Sinaï ingeboemel het agter gebede aan, lank voor Jerusalem, Rome, Konstantinopel, voor die Perse, en die Zoroastriërs, selfs lank voor die farao Djoser en sy vizier Imhotep die bak idee gekry het om piramides te begin bou, selfs vóór dit, tóé al stap ons hier rond, verbind aan mekaar, onvermydelik verwickeld, ingewikkeld-bloedvermeng, verkwik van oergedagtes, kruisgesteek van die kleinste toonbeen tot die

diepste draai van 'n DNS-heliks, met die oë van migrerende geelbekwoue, rooivalke, windswaels en bosruiters op ons skouers vanuit die veilige hoogtes van hulle onveranderde trekroetes oor die Isthmus van die Korinte, Gibraltar, die Horing van Afrika, en die Straat van Hormuz, die voëls, die stomme natuur, die ysbeer sonder ys, die dingo sonder ding, die dodo, die dodo, die uitgewiste randfigure in ons gulsige vervolghverhaal, die gru-sepie, die aksiebelaaide epogmakende maalstroom van 'n minireeks sonder keer waarvan die netwerke en Netflike en Showmaxe nie genoeg kan kry nie, daarom, deur die eeue, oor die kontinente, speel ons voort, word ons rolle vervul deur familie uit vorige en komende generasies, maar ook op vastelande links en regs van ons, en siele reiner of meer onheilspellender as onself..

ooggetuie

Mechiel Boshoff

ek het gister in canal walk se parkeerterrein gehuil
terwyl my cappuccino koud geword het
'n sekuriteitskamera het my dopgehou en
het my pa my nie geroep nie
sou ek die footage gesteel het om jou te wys

jy moet sien wat jy doen
jy moet sien wat jy doen
jy moet sien wat jy doen

Changa

Jaco van Schalkwyk

Die derde trek slaan my blind. Met die eerste het my ore begin suis. Dis 'n weird oomblik daai: om te voel hoe jou ore soos 'n langasemkriek skree na 'n enkele trek, die lighter wat jy vroër by die Engen gekoop het steeds in jou regterhand. Ek meen jou vinger is nog op die damn vlamrat en jou ore skree al by jou kop in asof dit somer is in die Noordelike Provinsie, daar waar jy as kind van hitte wou uitpaas onder 'n doringboom sonder Fanta. Maar jy's in die Kaap, twintig jaar later. Dis 'n matige, frissirige aand en jy sit binneshuis op die rant van 'n dubbelbed met 'n beste maatjie wat jou aanhuts om nog 'n trek te vat. Dit wat jou ore so maak skree, weet jy, is nie jou bloedsomloping nie. Dis nie 'n warm gesuis nie. Dis die koue, donker gil van die verbuistering self. Jy weet jy gaan uitpaas. Jy kan nie omdraai of die aksie probeer terugvat nie. Jy kan die eerste trek nie ont-rook nie.

Die tweede trek het my laat weet ek gaan omval. Ek kon myself hoor kreun, disnis en winduit. Dit was 'n kop-aan-pyp botsing. Ek wou nog mond bo water bring teen 'n seeboden grofsand wat my wang skuur, maar my tong het staan lê en my keel wou my saam met die sand afskraap. 'n Mens verdrink jouself so in die grofsand en dit brand en jy kan nie uit nie. Jou oë loop soek haastig na die horison. Dis hoogwater in die slaapkamer, die mure dobber rond, jou rugstring spring, jy's 'n gevangde vis buite die water en jy sluk maar jy kry net sand vir asem. Nou moet jy deurdruk: jy's steeds op 'n dubbelbed in die Kaap met 'n beste maatjie wat jou aanhuts om nóg 'n trek te vat: jy's nog nie waar jy moet wees nie – jy's nog nie weg nie. Dan wurg-sluk jy die derde trek, die een wat jou blindslaan.

In die donkere spartel, waar ek myself hoor pleit vir hulp, waar my nee geroep weerklink, is waar my maatjie seker maak ek neem nog 'n laaste, vierde trek. Hy's 'n goeie pel. Hy wil my help om myself so vêr moontlik uit te stoot. As jy die oewer van jou bewussein vil verlaat moet jy met erns uitstoot of jy mors jou beurt in die water. My maatjie weet dit. Nou's hy so te sê op my. Hy neem die lighter by my en hou die pyp teen my bek vas want my hande en my arms werk nie meer lekker genoeg nie. Ons het ook nie juis baie tyd nie: ek trap al water en hy weet ek moet, absoluut, die vierde trek neem om my oewer te velaat. Ek doen my bes om saam te werk. Die stikspartel weergalm teen als wat brand en lam is in my. My lippe is sopnat en dom, asof ek by die tандаarts rondstaan en mondspoel na kaaknarkose. My bewussein loop pers van die plaakpille, beklangs af – voete toe – tog kry ek 'n laaste asem van die rook in. Ek hoor nog my maatjie cheer en sê, “Ja, daarsy Jaco.” Haai, dink ek, kyk hoe noem hy my op my naam asof ek iets goeds gedoen het. “Nou duik terug op die bed en laat gaan!” Ek bars terug op die bed, arms omhoog, goue medalje in die bloed en ek is weg. Ek is weg vir altyd.

Ek weet nie waar ek is nie. Dis droog. Om my is net die galdonker self. Ek is nie meer nie. Surprise-surprise, in die dood is daar niks. Stil. Bewegingloos. Ek voel oneindig lam in 'n plat, lou swart. Dood wees is boring. Doodgáán was lekker: effe grof op die brein, 'n smaakie of twee té ernstig vir recreational drug use, maar werklik impressive. Driehoek en reghoeke, lyne en strepe van elke skakering van kleur en lig self. Dit was trippy maar knarsig: té rou op die kop, té lem op die tong vir die mainstream. In sy boek *The Mind in the Cave* noem David Lewis-Williams dit *entopic phenomena*: beelde wat binne die oog en die brein self opgewek word. Volgens Lewis-Williams is ek besig om die spesifieke form van my eie retina te gewaar. Ek kyk 'n movie teen my brein geprojekteer van die rante en kante van my oogbal, sien. In dié manier doen ek presies wat die mensdom al vir miljoene

jare herhaal. Om geklap te raak op plantploffstof is volgens David-Lewis die anker van die kultuur self. Die ondervinding ontkiem ons gewete en daarom die moontlikheid dat die samelewing kan bestaan. Eugéne Marais sien selfvergiftiging as 'n kenmerkende aspek van enige komplekse bewussin: die wete dat ons eendag gaan vrek maak so seer dat ons onself onkapabel vreet, suip en rook aan watookal in ons pad val. Só bly die dood en die samelewing in hegte verbindtenis – deur selfvergiftiging. Ongelukkig het ek nie van *The Mind in the Cave* geweet terwyl ek deur my eie dood gaan wentel het nie. Ek dog net “O fok, hier vrek ek,” en ek hét, sonder om die manual te lees. Ek was by die Opera sonder om die storie te ken. Daar val ek deur die *malebolges* van Dante, dikgerook deur die loopgrawe van abstraksie, sonder Virgil as my gids. Op amper veertig jaar oud was my vrek steeds uiters oningelig, dwaas, bang, oorweldigend en verwarrend. Ek was nog glad en al te jonk vir die jol.

Ja, 'n mens moet van vrek wéét voor jy vrek. Montaigne skryf dat die filosofie jou leer hoe om goed te vrek. Dit help nie jy daag clueless voor die dood op nie. Moet ook nie glo wat die digters smous oor 'n koepelstad van die dode of die glimmerende metropool van 'n gelowige hiernamaals nie. Hulle weergawes is meer Doringrosie as Deuteronomium. Lees en en lees weer, of rook Changa: die dood is 'n klein dorpie – 'n stiknag-galdonker-fokkolswart waar niks wil of kan gebeur nie. Hierdie deel van die trip feature ook nie in Lewis-Williams se sisteem waarin hy die drie fases van *entopic* hallusinasie uitlê nie. My getuigenis is dat tussen elke heelgetal wat Williams as 'n fase tel – waar iets gebeur – daar 'n legio nié-riële getalfases lê waar net mooi niks plaasvind nie. Die ware hel is 1.22 of 2.23, 3.66: take your pick uit 'n oneindigende poel van fokkol wat orals en altyd tel. Op dié plekke ler 'n mens wag in sy suiwerste vorm ken: alleen rondstaan sonder om te bestaan, wag sonder voete of hande. As jy my vandag oor my trip vra is my antwoord, “ek het

my gat af gewag op Changa.” Jy rook jou simpel om eeue lank op geen plek te vertoef. Doodwees op Changa was plein *bland* – smaakloos. Jirre. Die dood volgens Changa is ’n klein, jammer dorpie sonder stories, ’n plekklooshied waar niks of niemand ooit opdaag nie. Gots, dog ek, ek gaan moet léés as ek ooit weer lewe.

Uiteindelik skiet die vier hoeke van my doodswerk vorm. Sagte spitskop punte ontkiem – steeds swart en rantloos – asof ’n sterrelaken sonder sterre op vier plekke geknyp en omhoog getrek word. Ek raak weer bewus van onder en bo. Van langs my en onder my weet ek nog min maar die blote moontlikheid dat ek myself in spasie i.p.v. plek bevind is ’n helse verligting. Die vier spitskoppe word koesyne. Ek sou deur hulle kon loop na ’n verdere, meer obskure weergawe van nie-wees-nie maar om dit te doen sou ek nóg meer moes rook en om die waarhied te sê, ek sien net nie kans na al die gewaggery vir meer gevrekkery nie. Ek wil lewe. Die spitskoppe het elk hul eie bewussein. Hulle is ’n paneel van vier reuse, streng oer-regters. Hulle weet nog nie van my nie, beredeneer nog iets groots, sien ek, terwyl die peristalse van my gewaggery my ál hoe nader aan hulle uitspoel. Die een sien my en die ander drie kyk saam om, my kant toe. Ek kry koud.

“Wat maak jy hier, dis te vroeg vir jou.”

“Jammer, ek is mos nuuskierig.”

Met dít maak langs my en onder my oop en ek begin om te gly. Ek gly en ek skree. Die wande waaroor en waarteen ek gly skree. Ek val en ek ploeter deur varings van informasie. Ek moet gryp wat ek kan en ek moet elke lieue veer en spoor waarvoor ek mik raakvat. Elke varingshaar is ’n deel van myself soos wat ek was voor Changa. Ek móét weer dieselfde kan wees. Ek móét net. Doodgaan was briesend en doodwees was gag. Hergeboorte is hectic. Jy kan nie nou opdinges nie. Jy moet regstaan om jouself vir jouself te gryp. Maar wie was jy? Sal jy elke faset van jouself in ’n oomblik herken? Jy kan

ook nie hier omswaai om 'n grassie te gryp wat jy gemis het nie. Jy's half lam en jy gly net een kant toe, daai kant toe, dis 'n hergeboorte super-tube met niks solieds genoeg om aan vas te hou nie. Jy gryp net na hare en blare en spore van jouself in die verbygly.

Gots. Die veglus om by die huis te kom is nou groot in my. Ek pluk poseys van myself vir myself soos 'n traffic cop met 'n oog op die silwerskerm. Ek beduie myself om presies weer dieselfde te wees as wat ek was, dalk nog meer maar not 'n damn minder. Ek hou van my kop. Say what you like about mind-altering drugs. Dis cool maar daar kom 'n punt wat jy net nie wil hê jou mind moet ge-alter word nie. Nou, jare later, onthou ek minder van die swoeg en meer van die vrek en die vrekwees. Ek onthou hoe ek uitgespoeg word op 'n dubbelbed in die Kaap. My beste maatjie is daar om my te ontmoet. Hy lyk anders. Sy gesig is dié van 'n Svengali en hy dryf vir 'n oomblik in die lug. Ek sien sy siel in sy gesig. Hy lag vir my, die bliksem, want hy ken die dam waarin hy my geploeter het. Ek sê vir hom óór en óór dieselfde ding. Hy lag net. Ons hou mekaar aan die arm vas, asof ons mekaar help staan in die wind, asof ons bejaard is. Ek voel great! Ons gaan haal my girlfriend in die sitkamer want dis haar beurt op die pyp.

Vyftien minute later val sy ook uit die dood uit terug. Ons huil en lag saam. Dis rondomtalie speel op die strand van die lewendes. Twee weke later lê ek in die bed. Ek wonder wie se voete so voor my uitsteek. Sekondes verstrek voor ek agter kom, nee, dis mos my voete daai! Vir 'n paar jaar daarna, wanneer ek terugdink aan my Changa trip, kan ek werklik nie met enige sekerheid sê of ek steeds in die trip is of nie. Die oomblikke van twyfel verdwyn mettertyd. Ek lees *The Mind in the Cave* en verstaan hoe belangrik my belewenis was maar meerendeels hoe belangrik hierdie klas van belewenisse vir die mensdom is. Ons moet kan pype deel om beter te kan voel, dink, weet, wonder en saamleef. Maar wat weet ek van Changa? Ek het tog net een trip op my naam en beplan nie 'n retoer voor ek sewentig of tagtig

kersies op my koek verdien het nie. Al wat ek weet is dat ek lief is vir die lewe, net soos dit is, net soos ek is. “Ek is so bly ons is lewendig.” Dis wat ek oor en oor vir my beste maatjie gesê het. Ek is so bly ons is lewendig.

ANOÛK CRONJE



Waar is my dagga?

Janie de Vries

dagga dagga dagga
daa gaa my gedagtes
dagga dagga
daa gaa my dagga
daa gaa...

Jesus by die nagklub

Francois van Zyl

Tussen halfvol pakkies sigarette
Bitter bottels met afgetrekte labels
Staan Hy met sandale by die prysbetaalde houtdeur
Sy ingangsfooi is die drie spykers

Een rooi noot vir twee vingers hardehout
Min wetend, Hy het alreeds betaal op hardehout
Die Heilige Gees sit in die hoek met 'n cream soda

Die ambulans drywer vir elke kopseer en skeet
Sy material sleep ritmies oor die dansvloer
Vir haar wat in te kort is van lap
As Hy die kitaar sou vat
Sou die groupie hoor dat EM is nie haar enigste hoop
Met twaalfuur op die klok
Sit die vreemde taal een by ons op die stoep
Vertel van die een daar binne
Wie se naam kliphard van die sendingveld roep
Môre aand is Hy weer hier
Met Sy troon op die dansvloer
Al val sy in vreemde hande se beloftes
Sal Hy haar weer vra, bly vra
Vir die eerste dans, haar koninklike avontuur
Ek is hier
Ek wag elke aand hier
Met 2 stompe en drie spykers
By die ingang
By die badkamer
Dit is Ek, jou veilige rit huistoe

die einde van die wêreld lê êrens in Pretoria

André van der Hoven

“All we ever wanted was everything, all we ever got was cold”
– Bauhaus

en daar sal fokkol trompette by die einde van die wêreld wees nie. sprinkane is eerder stofdeeltjies geopenbaar oor 'n lessenaar deur die loodregte spreiligte as die son deur my kamervenster sny, 'n kompakte geswerm van stof atomies gelaai skiet deur die vertrek en gekerf in my regterhand 'n rol foto's van die kinetika tussen elektron en proton snerp teen my ribbekas, twee stalaktiete kalwe oor my verbleikte maag skaars bedek deur die wit handdoek om my middellyf gevleg testis teruggetrek in my buik soos die water by my ruggraat afgly tot bene blou geryp in die hoëveldsonlig glinster die einde van die wêreld op my foto en ek kan eindelijk vir almal wys in die winter in Pretoria daar is absoluut fokkol jakarandas

Die drenkeling & die meester- narratief

Clinton V. du Plessis

*“She says it’s hard to worry about the future
When your past is knocking at your door.”*

- John Cougar Mellencamp, “This May Not Be the End
of the World”

Moet hom geen spasie gee nie,
wurg die suurstof uit sy skryflonge uit,
nie ’n kolom sentimeter
op onse blaaie nie,
ketter, ketter, woordwetter.

Ons & ons alleen bepaal
wié vertel die verhaal
van hierdie taal, wie haal die paal
hoe beperk tog is sy verwysingsraamwerk
buite die parameters van digdogma & insolvente kerk
& konkel- en binnewerk & Klieknet & Kie?

Hy ken van Cave & Cohen
& Bob & Bruce & Waits maar ...
ook van Brenda, Hugh, Mafikizolo & Mtukudzi
hy is oral-oor, die tussen-in mens,

in hierdie land met die duidelike lyne
moet jy, minder subtiel, maar tog

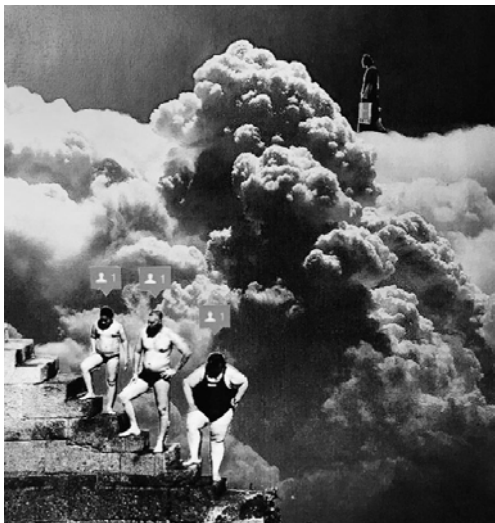
steeds hoort by jou soort,
steeds sing in jou (slawe)koor
steeds bly agter die gordyn, buite die kollig,
net voor die galgtou, jou fokken plek onthou.

Hy is, wat hy is, wat hy is,
oortree elke reglement van die keurkomitee
sleep sy voete as die opdrag kom
om dankbaar na die pype te dans.

Hy skuil in sy safe house, buite Afrikaans se laer,
hy maak papiermortiere,
hy bundel sy bomme,
hy bal sy vuus in sy vers:

Not Yet Uhuru, Not Yet Uhuru.*

* Na Leta Mbulu.



Keizergracht 2013

Francois Lion-Cachet

Geen waterkanaal hier nie
Maar 'n waterfontein genaamd Calvin
En 'n swembad met 'n olifantjie in
en 'n gang in Ratau Lebone manskoshuis

Swart hand is weer aan die terroriseer
Telefoondiens is 'n gespoeg en skree
terwyl ek groet op jou Titel, Groot Meneer

Noodvergadering vir die oplegging van geweld
teen die eerstejaar wat in 'n beertjie-suit Mystics toe
gegaan het

(Af op die regterknie, linkerhand in die lug,
regterhand op die bors, twee... drie...)

Rau rau Ratau Ratau

Dis hier waar die groot kat miaau
Met trots vir jou hof
Besing ons jou lof
Rau rau Ratau Ratau

Met 'n gebrom en 'n gegrom
Slaan ons die ander stom
Lank het ek jou na gesmag
Nou bly ek in jou adelprag

En daars niiiiks waarvoor ek skrik nie

Rau rau Ratau Ratau

AirBnB op 'n plaas

Jaco du Plooy

Op 'n plaasstoep buite Botrivier
karring ek aan 'n splinter in my voet,
want, kyk, in die stad raak jou sole
sag maar jou hart verhard
tussen aircon-krale en asfaltpaaie,
daar betaal jy R10 ingang by die botaniese tuin
om die gemor van stem en metaal
so half te demp.

Hier karwei suikerbek en –
wat noem 'n mens dit nou weer? O, ja –
naaldekokker onder KFC-rooi papawer
en rankroos; teen die damwal wuif

wilgetakke luikens na die dansende
ganse wat soos Jesus die water trap
en dan hul foefenjolle in die lug laat
dobber vir 'n peuselhap uit die slik.
Ek sal 'n pie by die garage kry,
dis amper check-out tyd;
die rondhol en gebolde skouers
wink my reeds terug.

African identity never dies

Sello Huma

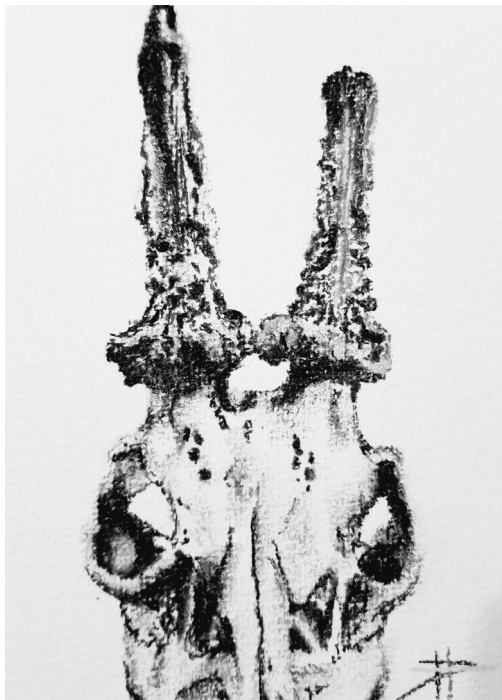
It's embedded in our memory, blood and veins like words leaping from a poet's brain. Men still worship women to call rain from the sky In Africa, we speak to the ancestors without hesitation in the name of consultations. Some sacrifice animals for spiritual offerings and powers Rituals and meditations inherited from the ancient kingdoms of stone and iron age.

Youth are initiated into adulthood on the highest mountain peak where Shamans daily seek for peace to reign while diviners and healers throw bones to blow the trumpet of our destinies Even in the new digital times, there is no segregation in prayers, every ceremony and gathering is held in congregations. The older generations are the libraries and references for the next generations It takes a village to raise a child and most of the tribes are kind without a bribe. Science, arts, culture and agriculture is our religion, there is no division,

yet we are born from different mothers
with different skin colours.

The rhythm of music, drums and dance
keeps us in tune with the harmonious vibrations
of the universe and rainbow. African identity
never dies, it lies at the Great Zimbabwe ruins
And tastes so sweet like the medicine water
from the breasts of the Okavango swamps.

A TWEEDSIDE TREASURE / DORIT HOCKMAN



Highway 13

Bester Meyer

Vir bra Piet

lang terug jou sticker geplak
teen 'n shack se ruit in Ermelo.
vir die mense gesê
as ouens soos hulle
of ouens soos ons
hier langs kom
sal ons sente bring
teen die lewe se pyn
jou later vertel.
jy't gesmile en
Bitterfontein
begin speel

nou lê ek en kyk jou dokkie:
luister die myle die drome
die langpad die journey
geboorte van vryheid
van weggaan onthou-
om die droom te bewaar
vir die wat gig
en die wat luister
en in die tru-spieëltjie
sal ons altyd jou woorde hoor
die bladsye van jou boek herhaal
dít wat die droom weer-spieël en
jou (weer)
(deur)sien
na/aan die anderkant
voor society ons fucked-up kan skiet

erf

Olga Leonard

in kaapstad arriveer 'n besending erfgoed:

1 skildery,
haar naam,
1 klavier,
haar faam,
1 boks silwerware,

en haar vroeggrys hare
blink reeds op my kop
haar blas vel handskoenpas

ek verpak die fyn porselein
en die kort humeur
in die onderste laai
(haar trapleer het nie saamgekom nie)

sy omtrek my
ek, erflating
van haar afgedeelde huis

vir jou

Marguerite Wolfaardt

Jy skryf jou eie gedig met jou glimlag in my gedagtes.

Jean Rhys

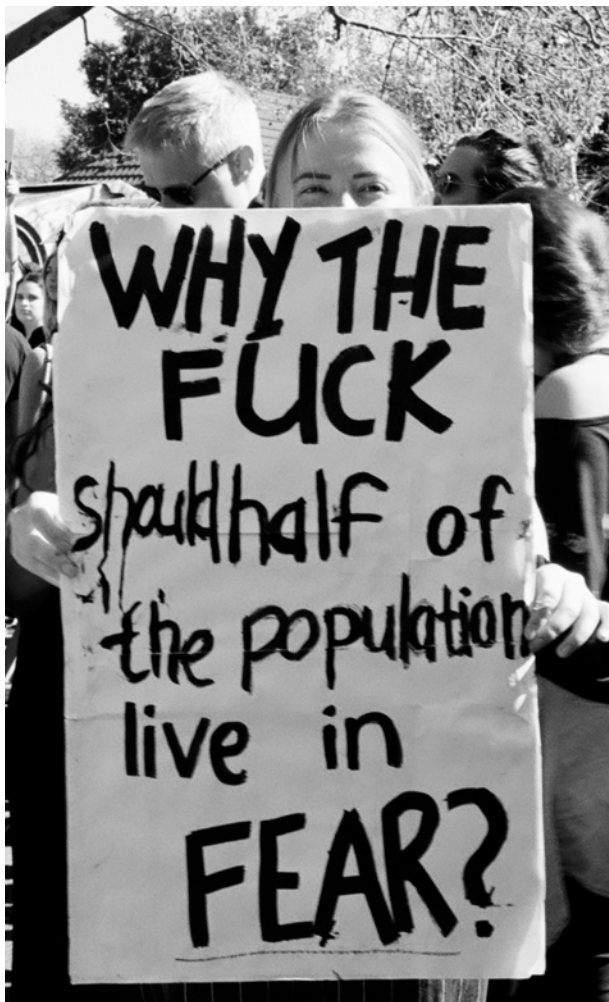
Abigail George

I think of the divided self of Jean Rhys in Dominica, her invisible self in London, and the depth, scope, scale of her writing: What was achievable in her lifetime is achievable now, the winter's tale of Jean Rhys, and her tragedy of errors, of losing a child, and her failed marriages. She was a gifted writer, and much parallels can be drawn between her neuroses, feelings of alienation, and her identity as feminist thinker, writer of the first wave. She recovered as I recovered. Relapsed as I did. You've become Anaïs Nin, the good skull and the patriotic leaf. May the dog's bite kiss you. The closer I get to understanding the sign and symbol of God, the further I feel from existing. I am so strange and so different. Family are always letting go of me. I think of the ergonomics of war, poverty, dirt and dust. The grit of it. The enormity of the reunion of it all. I think of the philosophy of Gus Ferguson, the composer Moses Molelekwa, the poets Kyle Allan, and Allan Kolski Horwitz. I think of the archives of the wetlands all but disappearing from view. The ship's maintenance of the rip tide channelling itself into surf. Paris is the ice lady found in an asylum drinking a cocktail that matches her fingernails. She is the darting gecko. She is the declining age of winter. She is the September issue. She is the image of muscled cobblestone street, the flowing sea from another era, the flame, the pondering flame of trust. Of course, it hurts that you walked away from me. You are European now. I want to be happy, but I'm not. Liberty is sighing. My health is being analysed over and over again. And I fall to the response of you, sibling. The idea, of you.

The health of your cries and anxieties. Your brain is not my brain. Your being is not my being. Your whole is not mine. I think of my first mental breakdown. I think of my second ever-lasting survivor movement. How it just latched onto me and like the periodic table, bilateral symmetry, mitochondria, amoeba, it never let me go. I too am guilty of over-thinking in the moment. I want the divine propaganda of the miracle. I want the torment in the sideways glance. I want not to hurt anymore. You knocked me down to the dark, dark edge. To the river's edge at nightfall. I like living in the past with its voodoo rays and morality clauses, its mind made of new dawn fades flesh and bone that will be torn apart eventually by the capacity and anxiety of death. Madness in my case. I know how to stay healthy now in this red atmosphere with its bright lights, its beaches where sand and sea are a loose fit. I think of others social inclusion and then I think of loneliness, because this is a complicated planet. This is a lonely universe. And I am falling in love in bursts with my own resourcefulness. Rhys' voice. The voice of social inter-dependence and class-nesting. She is as significant as Richard Rive. Brink. Mxolisi Nyezwa.

CARL VAN DER LINDE





STELLENBOSCH STUDENTE PROTES TEEN GESLAGSGEBASEERDE GEWELD.
SEPTEMBER 2019 / BIANCA OOSTHUIZEN

In die ry by die hof

Deon Meiring

die banier sê
“Put a stop
to domestic violence.
Access to justice
for all.”
die klerk
wat ons bystaan
is kwaai met almal
wat aansoek doen
vir beskerming
hier kom 'n vrou aan
op haar handsak staan
No one
really cares.

WAG OP DIE KAPTEIN. NÁ 'N GLASNEGATIEF VAN 'N JONG NOOI WAT WAT WAG OP
HAAR SOLDAAT. VOORTREKKEHOOGTE 1933 / STÉFAN BURGER



Vlermuis uit die vloed

Alet Janse van Rensburg

Dit was op dag 28 van die inperking
dat reën met 'n dringendheid
in my tuisdorp begin val het.
Sou die hemelse water
die virus van ons wêreld afwas
voor dit ons
deur hongersnood of asemnood
kan uitwis?
Die sondvloed
het eens die taak
van verwoesting vermag,
maar die liewe Heer het belowe
om dit nimmermeer aan ons te doen.
Boonop het die diere vir ons gespaar gebly in die ark.
'n Jong paar van elke soort
seker vlermuis manlik en
vlermuis vroulik ook.



WATER / COLLIN STRYDOM



nuwe riff

Elodi Troskie

een aand in aandklas toe michael se band gespeel het
 het hy gesê vanaand is die laaste aand wat ons mekaar
 só sal sien. ek het lank daaroor gedink en hy was reg
 ek het my klere van daai aand gewas my beddegoed ook
 om die rook uit te kry. het oorweeg om meer grunge
 te raak meer dagga te rook meer aandklas toe te gaan
 my hare weer donker te maak of pienk (meer alternative)
 ek het lank gedink ek sal ook so wil skree oor die mic
 ons almal gaan in elk geval doodgaan (hier in aandklas
 of agter die mic of agter die bar of in die oopte
 in 'n veld of net omval) uitloop en omval
 my baadjie van daai aand het onder in my kas gebondel
 ek het dit lank nie gewas nie
 het lank nog soos verspilde bier op my skouer geruik



ADELE CHANGUION

Uit *Pinball 73* by Haruki Murakami

Vertaal deur Marcell Britz

Per geleentheid sou Naoko my ook van haar eie stories vertel. Ek kan dit tot vandag toe nog woord vir woord onthou.

“Ek weet nou nie juis hoe om eintlik die plek te beskryf nie,” het sy in ’n verveelde stem gesê – gebaai in helder sonlig, en met ken gestut in haar bakhand. Ons was in die studentehuis se sitkamer. Ek het vir haar gewag om voort te gaan met haar vertelling. Sy het haar tyd gevat, die tipe van pop wat haar woorde sorgvuldig gekies het.

Ons was gesete aan weerskante van ’n rooi plastiek tafel met n papierbeker oorlopens toe gevul met sigaret stompies tussen die twee van ons. Goudgeel sonlig het in pylreguit strale deur die ruim vensters van die vertrek ingestroom – kompleet soos iets uit n Rubens skildery, en ons tafel netjies in die helfte verdeel. My regterhand was stralend verlig en my linkerhand in skadu gehul.

Dit was in die Lente van 1969 – en ons was alby twintig jaar oud. Nuwejaarstudente – uitgevat in splinternuwe skoene met skedels tot barstens toe vol gepak met leergierige breins, en handboeke onder die arms, het die res van die sitkamer volgepak. Tydens ons gesprek was daar deurgans ’n konstante stroom van verskonings en klagtes soos mede studente teen mekaar gestamp en gesbots het.

“Wat ek vir jou probeer sê,” het sy haar storie voortgesit,

“mens kan nie eens regtig daarna verwys as ’n regte dorp nie. Daar is letterlik net n hierdie treinspoor en godverlate spoorweg stasie. ’n Patetiese verskoning van ’n treinstasie moet ek bieg.”

Ek het my kop inkennend geskud. Vir ’n volle dertig sekondes het ons daar gesit, in stilte, ons sigaret rook wat in spierwit slierte deur die sonlig oprank.

“En dan is daar altyd hierdieselfde hond wat die perron van die een kant na die ander kant op en af loop. Dis daai tipe van treinstasie – as jy verstaan wat ek bedoel. Kry jy die prentjie?”

Ek het weer n keer my kop geknik.

“Soos jy by die stasie sou uitstap, is daar ’n verkeersirkel en ’n busstop voor jou. Ook ’n paar winkels.... ’n Opregte “terug op die brug” tipe van dorpie. As jy vandaar in ’n reguit lyn sou aanhou stap sal jy jousef uiteindelik vasloop in ’n park met ’n glyplank en n paar swaaie.”

“Is daar ’n sandput?”

“’n Sandput?” Sy het vir ’n oomblik gehuiwer – asof sy eers versigtig deur haar geheue moes blaai voordat sy met oortuiging kon knik. “Yip, daar is beslis ook een van daai.”

’n Stilte het ons weer soos ’n wolk voor die son ingeskuif. Ek het met oordadige mening my sigaret doodgedruk en my uitgebrande stompie in die papier beker geprop.

“Dis werklik ’n ‘nêrens-êrens’ dorpie. Hoekom op dees aarde so ’n vervelige plek in die eerste plek op die planeet geplaas moes word slaan my dronk.”

“God openbaar homself op allerlei vreemde maniere,” het ek geantwoord.

Naoko het haar kop liggies na weerskante geskud soos sy gelag het. Dit was ’n gematigde lag – presies die tipe van lag wat jy sou verwag van ’n meisiekind wat altyd niks anders as A simbole in al haar vakke op skool ontvang het nie – maar tog – vir een of ander rede – het dit soos die glimlag op die bakkies van die Chesire kat in *Alice in Wonderland* in die lug bly hang – selfs lank nadat sy die vertrek verlaat het.

Wat my egter die mees opgewonde gelaat het was die gedagte aan 'n ontmoeting met die hond wat die perron daagliks op en af gestap het.

Vier jaar later – in die maand van Mei 1973 – het ek inderdaad besoek afgele aan daardie einste treinspoorstasie. In voorbereiding hierop het ek sorgvuldig geskeer, en daarna – vir die eerste keer in ses maande – 'n das aan my nek gehang, en toe my heel spoggerigste skoene aangetrek.

Die heel eerste ding wat ek gedoen het toe ek by daai stasie aandoen (soos ek vanuit die verslonste passasierswa se trappe op die perron afgeklim het) – was om n diep teug lug in my neus op te snuif.

Die oorweldigende reuk was ongetwyfeld die van geurige grasvelde – 'n reuk wat ek altyd sal assosieer met piekniek byeenkomste in vervloë dae, en op 'n manier het dit selfs vir my op daardie moment gevoel asof die Mei bries my met alle geweld wou terug wink na daai verre verlede. Deur aandagtig te luister kon ek ook net uitmaak die gesing van lerwerikke iewers in die veld.

Ek kon myself egter doodeenvoudig net nie keer nie. Ek het diep gegaap, en daarna myself neerslagtig neergeplak op 'n platform rusbank waarna ek n sigaret aangesteek het. Ek was terneurgedruk. Al die opgebergte energie wat vroer vanoggend saam met my die trein bestyg het, het intussentyd soos mis voor die son verdwyn. Dit was altyd die selfde ding oor en oor, 'n déjà vu wat net met elke sirkelswiep gegroei het in portuur.

Op 'n vroer stadium in my lewe sou ek elke aand aan die slaap raak met 'n groep vriende – almal van ons uitgestrek oor die vloeroppervlak. Iewers in die oggendure sou een of ander ou op my kop trap. Jammer – sou hy opper, en kort daarna sou ek hoor hoe hy in die toilet pis. Dieselfde ding oor en oor.

Met die sigaret slap in my mondhoek het ek afgebuk om my skoenveters los te maak en terselfdertyd die das se wurggreep

op my nek verslap.

Ek het die onderkante van my skoensole op die perron geskuur in 'n poging om van die ongemak in my voete ontslae te probeer raak.

Dit was nou nie juis of my voete seer was nie, maar eerder asof die beknotheid van my skoene my ewe skielik ontuis gelaat het in my eie liggaam.

Die hond was nêrens in sig nie.

Changing careers

Hugo van der Merwe

My mother is gone
I look for her in unemptied drawers
Of carefully folded washcloths
And soap still in the packet

Another holds mittens and hats

But she herself
Flesh and sundering laugh
Is not here

And I realise that I have gone from biologist
to paleontologist
From holding clammy, endangered hands
To digging for fossils
In sock drawer strata

volgaan

Michelle Oelofse

volkome is jy in jou jywees
ek, as ek by jou is.
kom, neem die sterre
vier fees
wees vrolik
met jou kom en gaan

volgaan is ek met die besef
dat jy tydelik is
gaan, sê ek vir die maan.

Lockdown haikoe

Hanru Niemand

koddig: alles wat
die lewe draaglik maak is
nie-essensieel

Filosofie- eksamenvraag in kwarantyn

Hanru Niemand

dekades terug
toe die gedrukte pers
nog soepel was en fier
het hy in 'n snuffelgids 'n ou skoolvriend
se foto raakgesien
en moes hy met 'n mond vol skemer
opmerk
dat hulle nou in sy woud kap
dat hy nou die jaarringe aan sy bas voel

nou dobber almal soos dryfhout verby
in ruimtepakke
doofstom agter glas
en sy longe is onder water

as 'n boom val in 'n woud
kraak sy asem?
as hy kug in plaas van roep
en geen getuie mag kom hallo sê
of groet nie

maak dit 'n geluid?

learning French from an audiobook

Ian Bell

learning French from an audiobook, I've
decked a rickety table in a red checked cloth,
a candle and a glass aglow with scarlet acidity

I've some Django playing, for atmosphere
you understand, as the lady with her Parisian lilt
tells how to enquire my way to a post office,

nearest public convenience, bureau de change;
but there's a lag in her voice, she's distracted,
her heart's not in it, she's thinking of her man

as she scratches in her bag for that envelope
with his number scribbled on the back, among
no lack of dried pens, lip gloss, parking tickets,

she has not the faintest concern whether I can
correctly roll R's off my tongue as I flatten curls
of le beurre to a wilting croissant; instead, she's

straightening seams, patting her hair, recalling
his warm breath in her ear, she doesn't hear me
plead mademoiselle, I've tickets booked, dreams

[cont.]

await! of strolling Gallic cobbled streets reading
signs, fluent with denizens of sidewalk bars
whispering in cathedrals tall with antique sadness

chatting in sunny pillared squares where
ice-cream tastes of dusty revolution! So, leave him
be for now mademoiselle, I've an urgent need

for words to lift history off pages!
walk pavements strewn with bright old lives,
cross bridges where Voltaire hawked and spat,
tread in things with smells unchanged
since the distant Middle Ages



AN ARC WHERE THROUGH GLEAMS / MARIA STALLMANN

Chapter 14: In the woods tonight

Mick Raubenheimer

Me and Jo were attending Tony Cox's latest Guitar in the Woods workshop, which was to be followed by a tiny, kinda-secret-though-he-did-inform-students-via-newsletter mini performance of his first, newliest instrumental work since the delightful steep into singer-songwriter territory – *Enormous Flowers*. We had secretly signed up not so much to have our morose, several left-footed fingers be sympathetically taught by his elegantly fretted mind, but to experience the new material unfurling in the woods, at night, and stuff.

Tony's album *Looking for Zim* kinda threw a spanner into my young, pompous belief at 16 that 'True Jazz, Good Jazz, cannot come from Africa, much less South Africa.' Dustiest funk I ever did hear up until that moment and a long while after in spliced time/space. And the title track's Hammer break is still one of my favouritest Jazz piano moments ever. Hands down. Feets in the air. Maita Basa Mr. Cox!

[Postscript, pre-concert:

Jo: "So.. isn't the mini-gig supposed to start soon?"

Mick: "Look for the tree with the most generous girth."

Jo: "Speak English boy."

Mick: "Look for the tree with the widest trunk."

Jo: "{rolls lovely green eyes} Okay, then what?"

Mick: "Then wait for the plumes of thick blue smoke."

Jo: "Oh shit. I see it!"

Mick: "That's Tony. Gig starts in three minutes."]

Virus.

Rudolph Willemse

Voor die virus die land oorneem, moet ek doen wat ek moet doen. My Pa is op 17 Augustus 2018 oorlede, 'n maand voor hy 90 sou word. Ek voel al lankal skuldig oor die vertraging met die afhandeling van sy boedel. Ek moet nou sy kar verkoop kry. 'n Honda Ballade. Hy kon die kar al lankal nie meer bestuur maar het geglo hy sal weer. Tewens, hy wou 'n nuwe kar koop, so het hy in die rolstoel gesit en dink. Maar voor die kar verkoop kan word, moet ek eers 'n duplikaat registrasiesertifikaat kry. Die oorspronklike is weg.

Ek het al vir mense geskryf wat teen betaling vir jou in 'n ry sal staan om dokumente in te dien of te ontvang en hulle het my laat weet hulle kan my nie help nie maar ek het die volgende nodig:

'n geregistreerde afskrif van die lisensieskyfie

'n geregistreerde afskrif van die eksekuteursbrief

'n geregistreerde afskrif van die doodsertifikaat

'n aansoek vir 'n duplikaat registrasiesertifikaat

'n aansoek vir 'n verlore amptelike dokument

'n geregistreerde afskrif van my identiteitsdokument

'n geregistreerde bewys van waar ek bly

'n geregistreerde afskrif van my Pa se identiteitsdokument (gelukkig geen bewys benodig van waar hy nou bly nie).

Maar die belangrikste van al hierdie dinge is dat “die eksekuteur(s)” – dis nou ek – *in persoon* aansoek moet doen *by die plek waar die motor geregistreer is en in persoon* dit na 7 tot 10 dae moet kom optel. *In persoon*. In hierdie tye wanneer mense moet hande was en by die huis moet bly. Ek kan dit nie afhandel in die Swartland nie. Nee, ek moet Carletonville toe.

Ek sien visioene van lang rye mense wat op my hoes en nies. Ure se gewag. In verkeerde rye. Maskers. Handskoene. Ek sal moet ry, met my bakkie. Erynne, my skoon dogter, wil by haar Ma-hulle gaan kuier. Sy sê sy kom saam. So val ons in die pad met handwasgoedjies, natlappies, en padkos soos in die ou dae. Frikadelle en toebroodjies. Hierdie keer vermy ons die Wimpies, selfs die toilette wanneer ons kan. Ons slaap oor in die Karoo. Vermy mense. Eet skaaptjops in ons kamers, groente in botter gebrui, en kwepers. Melkert vir nagereg. Op pad deur die Karoo hoor ons die berigte deurkom. Nou soveel bevestig hier, soveel bevestig daar, soveel dood hier, soveel dood daar, die President gaan op televisie met die mense praat.

Erynne wys my die enigste plek in wêreld wat beide 'n kerk en 'n skaatsring is. Net in die Oos-Rand. Ons ry oor die Barrage, waar die Vaalrivier vol water vloei. Ek het die plek laas as kind saam met my Pa besoek een van die kere toe ons gaan visvang het. Gewoonlik het ons nie veel gevang nie, net gesit en bolle vislyn ontbol, of sinkers en hoeke in die rivier verloor (of in die wilgertakke wat oor die oewer hang).

Ek laai vir Erynne by haar Ma-hulle af, en ry dan op die Potch-pad tot waar dit die Parys-Fochville-pad kruis, die pad wat ek en Johan met ons fietse gery het van Carletonville af om vir my Oupa te gaan kuier in Parys. My Oupa was bly om ons te sien. Hy het sommer gehuil. Nou ry ek die pad maar dit is vreemd. Alles lyk meer toegegroei, meer verval, kleiner, smaller.

Ek kom by Lourina aan, Lourina Middel. My Ma het vir haar gewerk as 'n klerk en boekhouer - eers vir haar ouers in 'n besigheid met die naam Middel Electric. Sy is haar wonderlike gasvrye self, snaaks en hartlik. Ons lag oor die ou dae. Ons was saam op skool. Toe was sy 'n wonderlike vrye rabbedoe - nou is sy besigheidsvrou, baie ysters in die vuur. Sy sou met 'n Royal Enfield in Tibet gaan ry het maar dis afgestel weens die virus.

Ek het sorgvuldig al die vorms gekry, ingevul, fotostate gemaak van wat ek moes, laat sertifiseer. Ek daag 15 minute voor die tyd by die Verkeersdepartement op. Ek het 'n lang ry mense verwag. Daar is net twee mense voor my. Die deur word oopgemaak en ek is gou voor. Ek is vriendelik met die vrou agter die toonbank wat haar hande spuit en afvee.

Sy kyk na my sorgvuldig vergaarde dokumente. Daar is twee foute: my Pa se identiteitsdokument se afskrif sê nie DECEASED nie. Al is daar 'n gesertifiseerde doodsertikaat. Ek moet dit Binnelandse Sake toe vat om te gestempel te word. Waar is Binnelandse Sake? Dis oorkant die nuwe hof. Die “nuwe” hof is in my tyd gebou. Ek ry soontoe.

Baie dinge is die meer daar nie. Middel Electric is nog daar, maar verkoop. Oorkant die pad was Blyvoor Timbers. Dit is nou 'n Build-it. Toe my Pa jonk was en vir hom 'n huis wou bou, het Meneer Wax van Blyvoor Timbers hom toegelaat om boumateriaal op skuld te koop. My Pa het dit baie waardeer. Baie jare later het my Pa dikwels soontoe gegaan en somer net 'n blikkie verf of spykers gaan koop en bietjie met Meneer Wax gaan gesels. Toe die Konserwatiewe Party in Carletonville oorgeneem het hulle geweier om die “Slegs blankes” bankies en bordjies te verander. Meneer Wax se seun wat by hom oorgeneem het, het toe die Munisipaliteit hof toe gevat want mense het geweier om in die dorp te kom koop.

Toe ek by Binnelandse Sake inkom, bied die man by die ingang my handwasgoedjies aan. Waar kan ek 'n DECEASED-stempel kry? By nommer 8: Geboortes, sterftes, huwelike. Ek wag vir 'n ewigheid. Die beamptes praat kort-kort met mekaar. Hulle beweeg stadig. Ek voel ek wil hulp aanbied. Die een beampte maak haar lessenaar skoon. Sy is baie deeglik. Dit vat baie lank. Die virus het nie 'n kans nie. Toe kom my beurt uiteindelik. Ek verduidelik aan die man met die handskoene dat my Pa se identiteitsdokument nie sê dat hy dood is nie hoewel ek 'n doodsertikaat het. Hy moet dit nou stempel. Asseblief.

Hy stempel die identiteitsboekie. DECEASED. Op elke bladsy.

DECEASED. Is een DECEASED nie genoeg nie? Hy stempel sommer bo-op my gesertifiseerde afskrif van die boekie ook. DECEASED. Hy vra of ek nog afskrifte het. Ja, ek het nog 'n gesertifiseerde afskrif. Toe stempel hy hom ook. DECEASED.

Ek bedank die man. Hy vervang sy handskoene. Seker te veel stempels. Te veel oorledenes.

Ek ry deur die dorp op soek na die polisiestatie. Daar was nadat ek die dorp verlaat het ook 'n nuwe polisiestatie gebou. Maar dit het nie lank gehou nie. Blykbaar weens sinkgate op die terrein. Op die hoek van die straat het Oom Japie gebly. Hy was ons Voortrekkeroffisier. Op 'n stadium is al sy tande getrek. Toe het ons after sy rug gesê: Is dit nie 'n skande nie, Oom Japie het nie tande nie.

Verder af in die straat het my Pa se ouer broer, Oom Pieter, gebly. Pieter en Sarah. Hy was 'n Springbok-snoekerspeler. Ek soek na die plek waar my Pa sy karre gekoop het maar dit is weg. My ma was altyd baie kwaad as my Pa alweer karre gekoop het. Die Oberholzer Hotel waar die myners gedrink het en mekaar gemoer het, is ook weg. Ook die Tattersalls oorkant die straat. Ook die onderdeleplek waar soms 'n Ford Mustang of 'n Chev Camaro gestaan het. Naby Anton se huis. Langs die Court Café (oorkant die “nuwe” hof), waar pin ball machines, Ruiters in Swart, Mark Condor, en Tessa ons altyd ingewag het.

Een winkel gaan duidelik van krag tot krag: Jacob's Cycles. Dit gaan so goed, hy het nou twee winkels. Daar is net 'n Fochini tussenin. In die winkel dra almal maskers. Hy verkoop nou eintlik goue horlosies en messe. Maar daar is nog baie fietse. Ek ruik dieselfde vars rubberreuk wat ek so goed outhou. In die ander deel van die dorp was Mrs. Goorley se fietswinkel. Sy het ook musiek verkoop. Meestal kwela, township jive. Daar was altyd 'n vrolikheid. Eendag is een van Middel Electric se werkers daar met 'n mes op die voorstoep van die winkel doodgesteek.

Die polisiestatie is langs die bank waar my ma my eerste

spaarrekening vir my oopgemaak het. Die ander winkels lyk almal maar dieselfde. Sommiges verkoop lenings, ander verkoop kos. Maar meestal klere. By baie winkels kan jy goed koop op lay-by. Daar is 'n Lay-By Adult Shop in een van die strate. Dink net wat jy daar kan optel.

My bekende bakens is weg. Nu Reef-apteek, Dokter Visser se spreekkamers. Op die hoek by die brug was 'n winkel wat langspeelplate verkoop het. Ek en my vriend René het soms daar uitgehang. Daar het 'n meisie gewerk wat meer as ons van musiek geweet het. Sy het vir ons 'Deja vu' van Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young gespeel. En John Lennon se 'Working Class Hero'. Op die perseel is daar nou net Elite Tombs. Iemand het 'n virus sien kom.

Ek vra vir die polisieman om my verklaring te beëdig. Deesdae is daar niks meer soos die waarheid, die hele waarheid, niks behalwe die waarheid of *So help my God nie*. Hy teken net en stempel. Die Polisie het nie handwasgoedjies nie. Maar ek is nogtans dankbaar vir die stempel. Nou moet ek weer terug na die Verkeersdepartement.

Ek ry om die sirkel in Oranjestraat. Dit is 'n park: hier het ons krieket gespeel. Ek ry verby die huis waar my vriend Andries gebly het. Hy was fynerig en was baie geterg op skool. Eendag het hy hom vererg en vir Anton met 'n baksteen om die rugbyveld gejaag. Toe ons een oggend by die skool kom was die rugbyveld toegekamp. Daar was 'n sinkgat op die rugbyveld. Ons was baie terleurgesteld, ons wou rugby speel.

Pa-hulle se huis was in Dolomite Drive. Ma was trots op haar tuin. Die dak was silwer geverf, die mure geel en daar was malvas in potte en 'n visdam wat nou en dan skoongemaak moes word. Daar was 'n stoep met plante en gras wat ek Saterdagmiddae moes sny. Toe hoor ek een Saterdag Peter Sarsted se 'Where do you go to my lovely' oor die radio terwyl ek grassny en daarna het ek nogal dikwels gedink aan daardie vrou waarvan hy gesing het. Nou is die huis grys en die sinkdak skilfer af.

Die vrou by die verkeersafdeling lyk bly om my weer te sien, dis seker nie elke dag dat iemand met haar vriendelik is nie. Sy sê sy gaan sommer gou die baas kry om hierdie ding af te teken, sy weet nie waar kom ek daaraan dat ek 7 tot 10 dae moet wag nie. Ek wag vir 'n rukkie en betaal. Sy gee vir my die duplikaat registrasiesertifikaat vir die Honda Ballade. Sy spuit haar hande en vee hulle af en sê ek moet nou mooi ry huis toe. Voor die virus kom.



The One About the Second Wave after Lament

Andrew van der Vlies

He put aside his pipe.
It sits there on the rock.
It sits there on the floor of the sea.
He puts aside his pipe.

Too much can be said or unsaid!
We are paralysed by something close at hand,
although our phones leave little out of reach.

Inside it is not yet autumn.
The hedges scream at night – man or fox?
And chestnut leaves already brown with sunspot moles
anoint the vans that bring our food.

Months go by.
Weeks speed daily.
Moths flutter on pheromone traps:
like emails filtered out,

or sinkers on the floor of the sea.



#solitudenot- loneliness

Marenet Jordaan

Alles is okei. Regtig.

Alles is fine

op WhatsApp en Zoom

in antwoord op voicenotes van langvergete kontakte
wat jou nommer gebêre het vir 'n rainy day

wat worrie almal só

weet hulle iets wat jy nie weet nie

of het hulle half-verveeld gescroll

by jou naam gestop en gedink:

hierdie ene gaan dit nie maak nie

hierdie een gaan crack

vergeet van WiFi en Woolies

alles gaan té veel raak

'n semi-suburban bestaan

gaan nie dié keer die ding doen nie

want, ag shame, sy is dan alleen

alleen gegrendel

sonder geselskap

stoksielalleen vasgekeer

wat weet hulle in elk geval

in sy raadsaal

Jemima Meyer

ek ondervra die Regter:

sal slegs ore soos

Samuel (drie keer uit sy slaap geroepe)

Rut (rustend aan Boas se voete)

en Saulus (van sy perd af geruk en skerp
deur ondubbelsinnigheid verblind)

jou roep herken?

hol weer-

klink my eie stem swaar

staan my vensters oop

steeds ver-

leë oorholtes

ek probeer glo

dis die eggo's uit my foon

bande skurf op die teerpad

en gille onder stadsligte

wat my verdoof

maar dis sy stilte

wat my versigtig

verwurg

Hunter S Soek Swart Koraal

Tom Dreyer

hunter s soek swart koraal
in 'n diepseetrog by yucutan
hy swem gepaddavoet in 'n baai gepons
deur die neerkom van 'n groot komeet hy baai
sy ledemate bruin en drink en rook en hersien saans
die pypies van sy skuba-apparaat dog met onvoldoende
sorg want een oggend staak sy suurstofvloeï en laat hom
hark en ruk op driehonderd voet en kurklig boontoe bons
verby sonvis en wier en elke aanbevole dekompressiestasie
tot hy skreeuend deur die oppervlakte bars 'n borreltjie
lug onder sy stopsel en elke gewrig geïnflammeer hulle lê
hom neer op dek en jeep-laaibak sy duiksakkie vol koraliet
laat loop dan verby klokboei en veerbootterminaal
en besorg hom skreeuend by die hospital



"KEEP YOUR JAW IN A JAR"



"EMERGENCY EXHALE ONLY"

PIETER LÜBBE

K-T Gebeurtenis

Tom Dreyer

hunter s ruk tot sy sinne
in 'n hiperbariese tenk in die sonskynstaat
gefolter en ontwrig en voorlopig onbekwaam
om teen normale lugdruk te funksioneer
hy vloek en hamer teen 3.3 bar
teen die wande van sy sel veral
ontstig oor sy 50 eenhede mda
versteek langs cozumel se kaai hy staar
deur die ruite van die buis en sien blitse
teen die romp van 'n dc-10 vertak sy nood-
vlug pyl vanaf mexico na miami-dade sy stash
met elke myl meer onbereikbaar hy kyk
af na die everglades en sien 'n basilisk
met swingeltreë oor die water draf
ook logger lywe en ook hyself hy stoot
aan in infrarooi deur krapriet en pampasgras
in 'n nag wat sis met ionisasie buite die tenk is dit 1973
en watergate woed maar hy sukkel voort na chicxulub
broekloos en bebloed en sonder sy kassetopnemer
hy baai langs 'n kring gedoemde dinosaurusse
in die skreeuwit lig van 'n aankomende komeet

Hunter S Voorsien Sy Dood

Tom Dreyer

“Well, vehicular, of course - something in a very fine car”

- Hunter S Thompson aan George Plimpton oor hoe hy graag sou wou sterf

hy sterf veral buite birmingham
agter die stuur van 'n jaguar supersonic
hy hou reguit op die pas se laaste draai en hang
papierlig bo die maste van 'n raffinadery au naturale
op wieke van red heart sy kap is afgeslaan sy kottebak
vol springstof sy middag 'n steeds-reiner distillaat



TENKS / LINDLEY PRETORIUS (@SUPERPERD)



rainbow notion

Joe Botha

CR + unions
= unicorns
#justsayin



Bedek

Marna van den Berg

Maskermense dra
mensemaskers
in die donker
wanneer die curfew
in stilte neerdaal
lig die mombakkies
krimp social distancing
tot krete in 'n kussing
word die waarheid

ligdag versluier.



ROXANNE BAYMAN

Stoepdenke

Willem de Lange

Noem my Judas, noem my Jogebed.
Dit is op die mooiste dae wat ek die meeste droom
van tye saam met die wat ek lief het
sonder die kordon van 'n slimfoon.
Ek is 'n voyeur met 'n verwronge fibre optic teleskoop,
ek bly middeleeus terwyl die Suidpunt van Afrika aangaan.
Dit toets my moed en bedreig my hoop
terwyl ek buite staan
op 'n gereedheidsgrondslag
om hulpeloos toe te kyk
hoe dié wat ons voorkeur soek in hoë definisie vir ons glimlag
en die waarheid aanhou wyk.
Maar waaroor mag ek kla?
O sonho continua

DUBLIN, IRELAND / WILLEM VAN DEN HEEVER



Theefontein

Gérard Rudolf

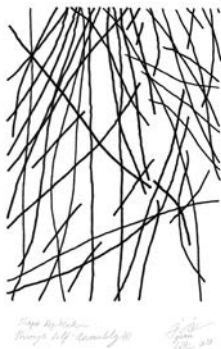
"Jy kan mos nie die hele tyd vals wees nie, dan val iets mos uit."

- Antoinette Pienaar

1.

die stofpad lê
soos 'n lint
voor ons uitgestrek
theefontein toe

'n bruin lint
uit jou blonde hare gewaai
deur die bros wind



GIVAN LÖTZ

2.

hier
loop stories
oor god's akker
maak stof vrugbaar
soos 'n jong vrou
laat klippe wortel skiet

dis droog
droog

droog
al vir die vierde jaar
in 'n ry
droog
droog
woord droog
verby

die Oom vertel van skilpad

wat kop innie stof staan
en huil vir reën
reën wat wegbly
soos 'n sleg man
wegbly
soos 'n vermiste kind
wat lankal dood lê
in 'n sloot

maar hier
kom alles tog los
in die Woord
(in) die (ou) vinger
in die wond
van die wind
van die Verlosser
van die warrewind
wat oor die vlakte
na my toe aangedans kom
soos 'n voorvadergees
met iets op sy hart

ja, ook die reën...

dis die karoo
die droog
die stof
die droog
waar die onthou van water
soos 'n traan gevang is
in die siel van 'n klip
in die klaaglied van die
windpomp
wat dapper en getrou
stof pomp
en draai soos 'n gedagte
wat wild gaan word het

sonder rede

dís wat hier gebeur:
alles doen sy ding

alleen
soos 'n stuk sement

3.

en toe

reën

grys val dit
poel en stroom

oranje oker

nat

nat

nat

skilpad trane in die stof
en die aarde
raak dronk

dronk van blydschap
dronk van oorfloed
dronk van genade
dronk van verdriet

die hemele rommel
soos 'n honger maag

en swart wolke
wat wydmond gee

4.

jy gaan haal die landskap hier
uit die Woord (uit)
die Woord wat rol oor die
tong
die Woord wat bestaan het
toe dit nog oseaan was hier

jy grou die Woord hier
kaalhand uit die landskap
soos 'n dinosaurustoon

die landskap wat stil lê
onder somerson en
donkermaan
van tóé af toe tik tik tyd
nog g'n bestaan het nie
ag, daar is nie eintlik 'n
Woord

of 'n landskap nie
dis Droom,
alles Droom,
die Woord en die landskap

dis die verstand wat klip is
die siel 'n dun riet
langs 'n droë waterkuil

hoe kan daar dan 'n Woord
wees
in hierdie moordstille
waar selfs voëls hulle liedere
inluk teen dors en honger?
en hoe kán daar 'n landskap
wees

as selfs die oog nie vertrou
kan word nie:
jy sien die arend draai
maar jy hoor hom nie
jy sien die wolk

maar jy hoor hom ook nie...

en soos ons almal weet
is daar geen geluid
in die gewig van klippe nie

en die bossies?
ja hulle slaap vas
hulle siele diep ge-anker
in die oergrond
waar ons mensgebede en
gebeentes
lankal fossiel geword het

eendag
sal god hier kom grawe
en slegs vae tekens van ons
vind
vir sy museum van
mislukkings
en ook hy sal sukkel
om die Woord te vind
sukkel om homself
hier in dié landskap te sien
sukkel om homself
te hoor en
dit sal goed wees



Lions

Carl van der Linde

When you pass away
So shall time
Cattle will graze
Lions will make lions
Industry, economy, society
Won't grind to a screeching halt
She will look in the mirror, fix her hair and go out
into the night.

One day soon we will forget about everything

Alice Inggs

Today, now, in an hour, tomorrow, yesterday, it's always whatever time it is on the internet. We're lying on the bed like two cats, our faces grey-blue from screen light. Imagine if we could hold moons and planets like that and spin them on an endless scroll. *What magic we'd make*, you say.

It takes one hand to count the things I remember:

A half moon above a broken fence

A burst pipe

A blind snake like a twist of gold wire in the veld

Horses throwing up their heads against the morning

Dolosse that I didn't throw, just in case

Do you ever imagine an atom bomb or a volcano or a nuclear meltdown? You're always the person who gets away. Does it happen like that? Does it matter that you're prepared?

How many other things can you remember?

A spring like an enamel bowl under the karee

Drought, maybe

What was it like?

Like black mould, like the sun was pulling our blood like water.

And?

A shepherd up north who lived alone with his sheep and his dogs and the rocks and the wind

What was his name?

I don't know.

Anything else?

I can't think of anything.

It's good to remember these things.

Then you look up from your hands and say, *Keep watching that end of sky, soon there will be rain.*

It's good to remember these things.



Suutjies groei

Desiré Gird

'gewete' is nie bloot woord nie
ken hy jou naam
roep hy dit hardop
en aaneen

voel 'n slang ooit bang
in die lang wintersluimer
en as sy vervel
alleen?

Ons toekoms lê tussen my slape
Ons toekoms trek die huid van my hede uit

suburbs

Robyn Perros

On a walk through the desert, she peered into all the
glittering blue swimming pools behind the fences and
wondered how many people had stared at them, thirsty.

Aandrympie

Etienne van Heerden

Ons hande, van ons arms afgeval,
Om as dooie rotte in vore te bly lê;
Saans het 'n eekhoring in my bors sy nes geskop,
Opgekrul, geril en daar gesterf.
Soggens was ons eerste woorde:
Watter wêreld gaan die kinders erf
En wat het ons, ek en jy
Kinders van die aarde
Te laat vir die inskat van sy waarde,
Wat het ons, het ons vir mekaar gevra,
Wat het ons uiteindelik te sê
Vir dié wat gekoppel aan silinders lê.
Die dae, die weke en die maande het gesneuwel
En in my drome kom ruiters oor die heuwel;
Honger baarde en swartsilwer swaarde,
Hulle fok slordig deur die buurt, deur die hawe;
En só vreet die woedende virus
Deur die klein, blinde enklawe.



Pathway of the gods

Erica Lombard

On the very edge of Italy,
Through terraces of lemon trees and vines,
After the lurching buses that leaned like cartoons as they
climbed the coiled passes,
Behind a town we found a path.

High in the blinding Lattari we hiked.
I, each step willed among the ragged volcanic rocks;
You, a mountain goat at full caper,
Delighting, delighting.

We crushed leaves of rosemary and thyme growing wild
beside the way,
Smelled the herbs on our fingertips,
The air hot in our nostrils.

A fig tree on the crest of a hill
Offered little shade
Alongside the cliff.
You jumped to reach the one ripe fruit,
Broke your sandal,
Bought on another south coast years earlier.
I bound it together using a cord from your camera bag, with
dusty fingers –
A temporary fix.

The warm fig shared between us
Was sweet jam in our mouths

Before the endless stairs down to the town
Broke my heart,
Left my body aching
When we returned to the cold of England,
Where we would pack our home into ten boxes
To hurl ourselves further south again.

Cosmos

Andries van Pretoria

Partykeer moet 'n mens jou eie Getsemane bou.
Klippe rol, water lei
Al daai jazz wat karakter bou.
Hark met die hart
Saai met die oog
Herhaal genadeloos
koester hoop.
Die impatience bly impatient
die ander saailinge ook.
Woestynrosies vat makliker.
Soos jou siel in 'n dorre landskap,
deel maak van jou mondering,
nes sout eet of harde bene kou.
Elke akker afgemeet
elke hektaar sonder behoud.
Net behoeftige beloftes wat die aarde
ten aanskoue van die hemele moet volhou.
Brood op die water, saad in die wind.
Ek my eie Judas, bou 'n altaar van sweet en grond
om my duiwels te bind.



'n Klompie gediertes (*Al- gunas bestias*)

**Pablo Neruda vertaal deur
De Waal Venter**

*Era el crepúsculo de la iguana
Desde la arcoirizada crestería su lengua como un dardo*

Dit was die aand van die likkewaan.
Van sy reënboogkleurige kroon
het sy tong weggesink soos 'n werppyl
in die groenigheid,

die monnikagtige miervreter
het met musikale voete deur die oerwoud gestap, die
guanaco, delikaat soos suurstof
in die wye bruin hoogtes
het gaan wandel in sy goue stewels,
terwyl die lama sy onskuldige oë
geopen het vir die delikaatheid
van 'n wêreld gevul met dou.
Die ape het 'n eindelose
erotiese tou gevleg
langs die dagbreek se oewer,
mure van stuifmeel afgetrek
en die pers vlug
van Muzo se skoenlappers verskrik.
Dit was die nag van die kaaimanne,
die suiwer, polsende nag,
die snoet wat uit die slym steek
en uit die sluimerende moerasse
die dowwe geruis van skubplate
wat teruggaan na die oorsprong van die aarde. Die luiperd
het die blare aangeraak
met sy gloeiende afwesigheid,
die poema hardloop deur die ruigtes soos 'n verterende vuur
terwyl in hom die alkoholiese oë
van die oerwoud brand.
Ratels krabbel op die oewer
van die rivier, snuif aan 'n nes

vol sidderende lekkernye
wat hulle met rooi tande gaan verslind.
En in die diepte van die groot waters, soos die sirkel van die
aarde,
is die reuse-anakonda
bedek met seremoniële klei, verslindend en religieus.

“Uit Spaans” uit Vandag is boordensvol (Naledi).

Lunar Eclipse

Beaton Galafa

in the moon's worst days
I belong to its brightest side
coiled in the night
it never shows to earth.
this disease-ridden earth.

in the darkest of hours,
I sit at the laterals
staring at humanity as its soul
trapped in dust and coughs hangs on
to threads of hope on the moon's rays
bouncing off the lakes and rivers.

everything we birthed races towards death
the sadness and joy are the stars
that brighten the skies
you float on when you lie
on the floor reminiscing when
you were at war with the gods
and science said
you were just hallucinating again.

in the moon's worst days
my soul languishes in loneliness
but I do not despair
because listening to the night as it canvasses hope
for civilization when dawn takes over
I hear summer rains whispering
from a distance – rushing
to rinse the streets
of gloom
and
doom.

Deception

Beaton Galafa

I am done with the noise of
Broken windows
Scattered glasses piercing wounds
Of loneliness
Carved out of my flesh
By runaway soldiers
Lost in unquenchable thirst for power
And revenge.

I smell the tires and flesh burning
On the road and the thug's waist
Jurors flipping papers
Pointing to where winds must blow
Along with the blood and jubilation
Of a fire raging through and through
Cars overturning on our coffin lids
Connecting us to our pauperism
On this long march to deception.

OOM PAUL / OKKERT BRITS



Everyone to their God

Beaton Galafa

For me
That grey-haired hill
Stashed with light in the dark
For ages
Welcoming my wearied bits
As I carry my present into
Your soft arms wriggled with
Seasons of life and death
Dust falling off my head
To cleanse the tips of my strands
Of dreadlocks and the empty field of
Plainness off which the light in your eyes
Bounces
Is the vessel through which I shall travel
To the past and
Witness the night
God spurted us out of
Nothingness.



Drought

Trudy Songo

The curtain floods in, dancing across the patched carpet before its body melts back against the french doors as the wind falls out of the room. I'm half sunken into the mattress, staring at what would have been Xhe exactly eleven days ago but isn't anymore, because she's 'out there' and I can't say where that is, any more than I could yesterday, or the yesterdays before that. Mother peeks in through the door, her head at an angle, like a curious note slipping out of an envelope.

"You should come eat now, Fi. We've been waiting so long, and your father's really hungry."

"Dad's hungry, so I'm making him tea and biscuits in Mary's tea set," she said, breaking what was left of her wet cookie into the doll's miniature side plate and placing it next to the similarly sized cup of leftover tea on a tray. Mary sat back on the grass, staring with her blue glass eyes. A smear of mud marred her round, fat face and on her flimsy cotton dress was a polka dot of mud stains. We'd gotten her for our eighth birthday, plus a monster truck with spade, bucket, and a little brown man with red boots and a bright yellow plastic hat. Xhe had fallen on Mary immediately.

"Can I help?"

I stood up to balance the tottering tray. I did not think that Father would like a little cold tea in Mary's cup, or that there would be any of it left at all, by the time she got to him.

"No!" she said vehemently, pushing me firmly back with her foot. 'Dad said he wants me to do it, not you. You can make him your own tea later.' I shrugged as she sauntered off

into the house, looking back to stick out her tongue teasingly. The January sun covered me in a warm shroud.

I found the monster truck tucked into the flowers and filled it with sand. I danced. I plucked a blade of grass and chewed on it thoroughly. I spat and spat. Eventually, I lay down next to Mary, my arms and legs stretched out. Then I did not move for a long, long time.

“Fifi?” She is leaning over me, a hand on my ankle. I feel a slight tingle as she breaks contact, straightening up, a wan smile splitting her face. “I can’t believe you still have this photo,” she whispers, running a thumb over its glazed surface. She is still smiling, and I find this odd because there is something sweetly private in the gesture, like watching a sun ray sneaking in through a closed curtain.

“I have all her photos,” I say, to no one in particular. I have spoken to no one since then, since it happened, preferring to direct looks, questions, opinions, at any piece of silverware, or a wooden chair, or the floor. But mostly the floor. Once, I thought the carpet winked at me. *Will she be alright?* I hear them ask between themselves when they think I don’t hear, but the carpet keeps winking so I wink back, or imagine it a small muddy stream that takes me further and further away from them. She will be alright, father always says, reassuring, rubbing Mom’s hand or stroking the back of her head or squeezing something.

“Father is a long drought, Fi, and we are the aftermath. Don’t think it will ever be alright.”

She was gently massaging a scented oil into her scalp as she said this, eyes closed, head thrown back. There was something almost lost about her, like she were a spirit that had stumbled upon the physical world and realised it could move objects. I pretended not to have heard her. I should not have done that.

“Where did you get this?” I asked, making a lurch for the twisted bottle. She quickly whipped it into her palm, her face falling.

“Wouldn’t you like to know...”

“Xhe!”

“What!”

She had been sitting on the bed with her legs curled beneath her and now she jumped up, making a beeline for the wardrobe. A stream of clothes flew towards me, then cusses. I realised then that I did not recognise this woman-child with the perfectly combed afro and twitchy eyebrows and a fresh piercing in her nose. I did not forgive her drunken brawls, or Mr Mpofo and Baba Ncube and the pastor’s nephew, who called incessantly and persistently, spreading her thighs without shame, and her, for allowing it. She did not care for the trinkets that piled up in her side drawer. Nor the way people stared and whispered behind cupped hands as we moved down the aisle in church, craning our necks for an available seat and realising that no one would push forward to make room for us as was common courtesy. I could not forgive any of it.

“I’ll be in the kitchen if you need me.”

“Don’t you dare judge me!” she shrieked, whipping around, a slinky silk dress bunched up in her fist. “Don’t you dare. You don’t know what it was like. It was not you he touched.”

The air inside the room suddenly grew thin. I moved my hand to touch my face, then realised I had touched hers instead. Hard. She made a move towards me, stopped, and sunk to the floor, shaking. I did not say I was sorry.

I knelt beside her instead, rocking her gently in my arms as we cried noiselessly, and at the back of my mind I couldn’t help marveling how her hair always looked so perfectly untouched, even in the midst of a storm.

“Well, I’ll put them away for you nicely, OK? You can—”

“Don’t. I’m not trying to forget her, Mom,” I snap, pushing past her and making my way to the door.

“Oh, of course not Fifi love,” she says hurriedly, warmly, grabbing my wrist. But I can tell that she is worn out and

faded, like those Dandy bubble gum wrappers after we've twisted and untwisted them during a long bumpy bus trip, to put our minds off the heat and the fat sweaty neighbour with the stinky armpits. Only, it's worse with Mom, because after all that twisting she still has to attend to the sea of faces trekking in and out of the house, wearing too much black and reciting practiced condolence speeches. I would not do it. I could not. I would sooner shut the house and howl and eat heaps of burnt dry toast and sip at endless cups of cold tea, holding the mug just as Xhe would have done, with its body cradled snugly between her hands.

"Come. We must prepare the beds after supper for those who'll be staying with us for a bit. Just till things settle down,' she adds, sensing my obvious discomfort. 'It will be good for you, Fi. Your dad and I have been worried about you."

I try not to roll my eyes. The silence in the dining room is nerve-racking. Everyone looks at me as I pull up my chair, only they do so in turns, in an awkward orchestration that leaves me feeling they probably discussed it amongst themselves not to look, but couldn't help it anyway.

"Shall we pray?"

It is Father. I did not know we prayed. Most of our meals have hardly been taken together anyway, mother always sitting forlornly at the kitchen table picking at her food like a bird while father... Well, I honestly don't know what Father does, but Xhe would never sit around to pretend like I did. And when she did scavenge for leftovers hours later, in the dark, in a long robe that she tied firmly at the waist, she would sit in the toilet for minutes after that, choking and retching. Months later, I would read an entry in her diary that left me reeling:

06/09/13

Dear diary.

I hate myself for doing this, but at least I am in control now. I know

Fisani won't understand, but she's always been the lucky one. She doesn't need to hide. But if I don't, more of them will come, and they might be worse than Father. Everything about my body has been nothing but a curse and I can't make it go away. God, please help me if you're anywhere out there.

“Fi? The salt.”

I realise I'm staring at the frog pinned to aunt Thoko's jacket. It is a spectacularly ugly thing, silver and clearly reserved for sad, meaningful occasions.

I pass the salt, knock over someone's glass, and there is a yelp as chairs screech back and utensils clatter to the floor. Someone – I'm not sure who – glares at me. Quietly Mom dabs away the mess with her napkin, apologising profusely in a low voice, and for a moment I feel like stepping out of my body and walking away, like puncturing myself with holes and watching my body sink. I close my eyes instead and push a fork into my mouth. Spaghetti. It tastes like spaghetti, yet all I feel is a mountain of soft rubber forcing its way down my throat, forkful after forkful, until eating soft rubber feels normal and I start to do it at an enraged pace, tendrils clinging to my chin, falling to my lap. Xhe would have hooted with laughter. Xhe is not here.

“Maybe she needs to take a rest, my dear. Let her go lie down a while.” Mom and Father again, in their hushed tones. They did not do so this before, this whispering. Our house hardly made any sounds at all, except for when we were little and oblivious. After that, we played, and danced, and spoke less, while the secret lived among us, waiting.

I remember the day in the garden, waiting for Xhe to come back and thinking she might have run off and slipped through the fence to play with Thabo and James without telling me. She knew I liked James. I would not let her go without me. But the torn fence looked untouched, as did the gate that led to our neighbour's garden, and so I wondered aimlessly

through the house, my feet muffled by the thick beige carpet that we were not to walk on after playing in the mud. Mom would have a fit if she found me, but she was with a friend shopping for a visit to see Gogo in the *makhayas* and Father did not care for such things as carpets and clean feet.

Looking back, I should have called out to her so Father would know I was in the house and let her go. But I did not call her name and he did not hear me enter the spare bedroom, or see me flatten myself to the wall as I shrunk out. Xhe had said he was hungry....

I jerk back in my chair as something lodges itself in my throat, but I have stopped eating and I can't breathe so I know it can't be food.

"Fisani!"

I don't recognise Father's voice, but I feel his hand on my shoulder as I leave the table blindly and I don't know what terrifies me more – the clamminess of his slender fingers, or that I can feel him pulling me into an embrace and I'm afraid of his body touching mine, and him knowing that he is my fear. For a second I am rigid, then I push him away, but I push too hard and he crashes into the dining table, sending bowls of salad and spaghetti and stringy soup to the floor. There is a stunned silence, someone's baby screams, then Mom is reaching towards him, helping him to his feet.

"Don't." My voice sounds strained. Firm, but strained.

Mom looks at me sadly. Aunt Thoko shakes her head, grunts, then says rather loudly how no one should be shocked because we've been spoilt and left to our own devices, and that had we been sent to her from time to time all this would not have happened. I almost want to spit at her ugly silver frog. I want to grab her by the hair and drag her to the spare bedroom where I had found Xhe kneeling beside the bed, her hands pressed into the mattress, dress pulled up to her waist as Father moved strangely behind her, grunting as he did so. She had looked back as I shrunk out of the room, calm

and detached, as though Father's hunger was something she expected to be common. Normal.

"He raped Xheshelihle, Ma."

The screaming child is quiet. Everything is quiet. I remember that I should be helping her make the beds for the relatives who will be staying over for a while, but then I realise there is nothing normal in opening a wound and then leaving to go lay sheets and fresh blankets.

Mom is staring at me. Me. Not Father.

I do not understand.

"Not just once Mom. Since we were little, and especially when you were away. That's why Xhe couldn't take it anymore, because he wouldn't stop. She killed herself because he wouldn't stop!"

"You stupid child!" aunt Thoko shrieks, striking me across the face. "You stupid, stupid child! Francis, will you stand there and allow this woman's bastard to insult you?"

She is facing her brother now, arms akimbo, eyes burning into him.

"I warned you about this and you would not listen! You should have listened! Now they make accusations against you, just because you gave them a name and a life when they had nothing! Nothing! Shame on you. *Auxilia! Pthu!* Shame on you."

I close my eyes. I imagine a delicate little blue bird flying towards me, chirping excitedly. I imagine myself calling to it, but it begins to move away, drawing me towards a giant mopane tree covered in bright yellow flowers. I want to know where it is going, but every time I mean to lure it to me I keep calling Xhe, thinking she will come running from out among the trees, her perfect giant afro untouched.

I start to hum. It is the tune Xhe would sing to me every night, when I could not sleep because I had nightmares about a stocky, brown skinned man who would lure little girls into the back of his shiny, black truck and made them breastfeed

his frogs. Mom knew. All along she knew what Father did to Xhe, to all of us, and she did nothing. I know it, because something in her face tells me I am right, and that nothing has ever been what it appeared, because the secret was always watching quietly in the shadows, waiting.

I feel like a lost image stuck in a family portrait, only that someone has a scissors and is cutting me away carefully. Slowly.

“Fi.”

I walk to the window and look out, then let myself out through the heavy side door.

“Fi. Fi, please. We should talk. You know I—”

The cool wind snatches Mom’s words away. Mother. Not Mom. Mother.

“What will you be?”

We were sitting on the old fence beneath the mango tree, waiting for Thabo and James. A ladybug fell onto my lap, then circled furiously as it tried to lift itself into the air. I watched it for a while, and gently nudged it with a finger so it would climb onto my hand. It refused. I nudged it again. And again. Until after circling around several times it took off, its delicate wings still somehow curved around its body.

“Hey!”

“I’ll be a ladybug,” I said, looking at the spot where it had fallen on my lap. “I’ll be a ladybug, and always keep moving.”

Xhe squeezed my hand and laughed into my face.

“You silly old thing,” she whispered. “You always were the clever one.”



54 Past Midnight

Sarah Uheida

- i. Do not fear fantasies
feverish; feral; fatal as they are
your body a casualty of *come closer*.
If I break your rib in repentance
and the sky scuttles past this lightless loving
would your mouth still famish mine?
- ii. I read something about olive picking,
how the greenness costs a tree all that fruiting
the black ones being easier to crush
sixty-six million trees lining Spain in silence.
do you know about the olive trees of Bechealeh?
somewhere in Lebanon, six thousand years old
biblical, baby,
sanctified
saddened by this fading flesh.
- iii. And then I remember how
you said you only ate one color,
but which was it
unready green or crushed black?
will you tell me some things again,
fill my mouth with first-time-ness.
will you remind me often and ungrudging
of the whys of this love.
- iv. The first time the tree lost itself to the ground
stood dressed in centuries to come,
said *now you can never claim*

*that you lost your way back
not when I have already shown you
what I want; where I will stay.*
the first time I tied my hair back and knelt for you.
the first time I wanted there to be a second time.

- v. It comforts me to think that, past this, past our bodies,
there will be something rooted somewhere
something that must have
watched us be
a living thing that frames:
look, they were here. And here. And here.
- vi. To fall asleep with someone, I think is to
sedate all instinct.
To renounce disappearing.
You risk not waking with your artery intact So
you can imagine
the enormity of the promise I make you
every time you trust me with your sleeping body you
can imagine
why I cannot afford to fall unconscious
with the weight of a human heart on my right shoulder, the
serrated knives of everything that is not us,
and the small muscles of your hand, soft as scalpels
forever unwinding
never letting go.
- vii. It kills me
To say your name and hear only my own back. I
think of you saying submerge,
of the journal you bought and tear up for me
your willingness to gut and be gutted,
and then I remember
why we are the way we are only
half human
only half gods
loving the way neither could.

Blaue Stunde / Blue Hour

Maria Stallmann

*In unserer Schale schwarzen Wassers
Treiben wir
Ganz leicht
Zwei weiße Fische in der erwachenden Nacht.
Das Wasser knistert
Ich hab Salz im Mund
Nur wir sind warm im kalten Meer.
Es schimmert Gold im Schwarz
Meine Finger schöpfen Kupfer
Das in dunklen Tropfen in die Tiefe klirrt.
Von deinem Rücken,
Zwei Wellen,
Kullert das Meer
In jedem Tropfen eine blaue Stunde.*

In our bowl of black water
We float
Weightless
Two white fish in the awakening night.
The water crackles
I have salt in my mouth
Only we are warm in the cold sea.
Gold glistens in black
My fingers scoop copper
That tinkles into the depths in dark droplets.
From your back
(Two waves)
Rolls the ocean
In each droplet one blue hour.

You can be sure

Leila Bloch

a copper brass shell on which to muse
a bright-woven scarf in which to revel in
bright cobalt, magenta moments in
loneliness despite the sun.

In the morning I will not be able to sing
so instead I will line the sheets of Paris streets
for you with words and graveyards in the rain
Starting with a simple image, repeated, I like repetition and

Damp fields of reveries.

Aside from your collection of soft stones, there will be
Rosary beads that found in an orphanage
once discarded but for now revived.

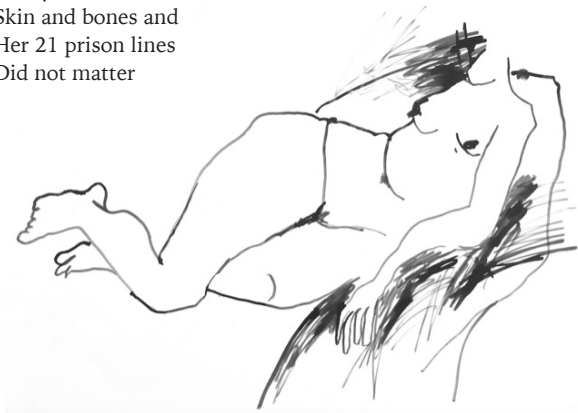
You can be sure, I will leave you.



A day

Merle Grace

She moves in and out
Of time and out
Of day and night
And good
And evil
Before and after, this
And that
She moves to
Before the cosmos
Before ferns, eons
Ago when ocean
And land and woman
And virus and dust
Worry and water and
Skin and bones and
Her 21 prison lines
Did not matter



NEGOTIATING GENDER / ELZAHN NEL

Roots

Naazneen Laher

I see you as a threat
So I cut you down
But you grow back
Stronger
Wiser

I poison your roots
Inject in my misery
But you propel it
Create a forest of failures
Turn it into beauty

I attack those
That you nurture
That stemmed out of you
But they only grow closer
To you
Creating a force
Like none other

The more I cower
You only tower
Over all my hate

How ironic
That my beatings and bashings
Fostered your undeniable
Power
Your wise old roots

Scrunchie

Pravasan Pillay

“Looks like you made up your mind?” Rakesh asked, walking to their bedroom dressing table. He stood closely behind Alisha, who was sat in front of the table’s mirror, vigorously brushing her hair. The sound was distinct, a long rasp, interspersed by electric-like clicks as the brush teeth cut through tiny knots in her hair.

“Uh?” Alisha replied, smiling at him in the mirror, but not stopping. The brushing was part of her morning routine, and ate up a solid ten minutes every day.

Her hair, which came down to her waist when she was standing, was over her chest, almost like a shawl. It was black, shiny and healthy, due in part to a strict shampoo and conditioner regime, but also some very good genes.

Rakesh made a rapid scissor motion with his fingers. “We got a voicemail on the landline. Auntie Saras from Curls Salon was confirming your appointment for Saturday,” he said, resting his palms on Alisha’s shoulders. His wife had been talking on and off for the last couple of months about cutting her long hair. It seemed she had finally bit the bullet.

“Ja, I made the booking last week,” Alisha said. “I just want something more manageable than this.”

Rakesh saddled up to the front of the dressing table, placed his phone down, and leaned against the table, so that he faced Alisha without the mirror as an intermediary.

“How much were you thinking of chopping off again?” He measured out about ten centimeters between his thumb and index finger. “This much?”

Alisha scoffed, then grabbed all her hair at the base of her

head, making a tail of it. “I’m cutting it all.”

She waved the tail at him, whipping at him playfully.

Rakesh let out a low whistle. “Shit, you’re not playing – that’s major.”

“It’s a pixie cut. Kumari, from work, has one, and it’s super cute. My hair is like a farm-girl from Umkomaas compared to hers,” Alisha said. She sounded as if she was joking, but there was a definite hint of seriousness lurking below the surface. She often compared herself unfavourably to the stylish Kumari.

“Any hairstyle you choose will look great on you, Ali. You’re beautiful,” Rakesh said, smiling, before leaning in and cupping his wife’s face in his hands. He studied her fine-boned features, bright brown eyes, pert lips, and button nose. She was gorgeous and he was lucky to be married to her.

Alisha leaned in and kissed him. “Thanks, love. Let me finish brushing and we can have breakfast.”

Rakesh picked up his phone from the dressing table. He quickly surveyed the table’s contents. At least half of the stuff on it was hair related – clips, hairpins for those occasions when Alisha wore her hair in a bun, hairspray, a hairdryer, a hair straightener, and a few other contraptions he could only guess the function of.

“At least you can bin of all this,” Rakesh said, waving over the table. “You won’t need half of it anymore. And maybe it will finally free up some real estate for me.”

“I’m not getting rid of any of it,” Alisha fired back quickly. “I might need everything if I decide to grow out my hair again.”

She hunched over the table, her arms stretched out, pretending to protect it from him.

“At least you can get rid of *that*,” Rakesh said, pointing at her right arm.

“Of what?” Alisha asked.

“*That*,” Rakesh repeated, this time tapping on the old, threadbare hair scrunchie circled around Alisha’s wrist.

Rakesh hated the ragged-looking thing, which always seemed affixed on her wrist or hair. It was made of cotton, bunched-spirals over elastic – like most scrunchies. Black in colour, it was a polka dot print, though the dots seemed to have long faded away. It was also often – disgustingly – entangled with loose strands of hair.

The scrunchie simply didn't fit in with his fresh-faced, well-dressed wife – it was a remnant of her past that was past its sell-by-date. Rakesh didn't know how long she had had it for, but it was definitely longer than the five years that they had been together.

He remembered that she even brought it along on their honeymoon to Mauritius. Though she vehemently denied packing it, the scrunchie had been there right on top of her skimpy satin nightie, when they opened their suitcase at the hotel.

“Not my scrunchie! I love my little scrunchie-wunchie,” Alisha replied, in mock-horror and pulled her arm away. “You've always been jealous of him.”

“It's so gross,” Rakesh said, screwing up his face in distaste. “Where did you even get it from? The rubbish dump?”

Alisha screwed her face in return. “Don't be mean. I've got a lot of memories attached to this scrunchie,” she replied. “I've had it from my varsity days, you know, when I was roomies with Ahsha – and it kept me company during all those late nights studying. Didn't I tell you how I got it?”

Rakesh shook his head with disinterest.

“I was running late for my stats class one morning – ja, I know, big surprise – and I couldn't find my Alice band so I grabbed this off of Ahsha's desk,” Alisha said, pointing to her scrunchie. “But what's funny is that that night when I told Ahsha that I had borrowed it, she said that it wasn't one of hers. So, the scrunchie just showed up somehow in our room, like magic. Isn't that crazy? The only reason I remember all of this so well is that this was the day the big solar eclipse

happened. That would make it 2011, I think. Or maybe –”

“Gripping tale,” Rakesh said, interrupting. His wife had a remarkable ability to recall the most mundane details.

“Don’t be a hater,” Alisha replied, bringing her wrist to her lips and loudly smooching the scrunchie. “It may be ugly but it’s mine.”

“Sies, man, don’t put that on your mouth,” Rakesh replied, gagging. “It’s already bad that I have to see it on the back of your head every night in bed, but now you’re cheating on me with it. Anyway, my point is that you don’t need the scrunchie anymore since you’re cutting your hair. It’s time to Marie Kondo its ass.”

Alisha looked unconvinced.

Rakesh continued. “We’ll make a deal. If you get rid of your scrunchie, I’ll get rid of my Simpson’s t-shirt.”

The t-shirt, which consisted of a picture of a drooling Homer Simpson going, “Mmm, donuts!”, was a weekend favourite of his. He wore it everywhere, including shopping malls and restaurants, despite the fact that it was badly stained with crab curry gravy and dotted with numerous holes. Alisha hated it, especially when he wore it out the house.

Alisha’s eyes widened. “No lies? You’ll throw it away?”

Rakesh placed a dramatic hand over his heart. “Promise.”

“It’s a deal,” Alisha replied, immediately, grinning widely. She held out her arm with the scrunchie towards Rakesh. “Please take it away before I change my mind.”

Rakesh didn’t bother to reply. He reached quickly for the scrunchie, which was strangely warm to the touch – probably due to his wife’s body temperature – and pulled it.

But the scrunchie didn’t budge from her wrist.

He pulled it again, but still it didn’t move.

“Very funny,” he said to Alisha. “What did you do to it? Why is not coming off?”

“What do you mean?” Alisha replied.

She tried tugging at the scrunchie herself, but couldn’t get

her fingers beneath it.

“That’s weird. It’s like the elastic has gotten tighter against my skin. That’s never happened before.”

“Maybe it knows we’re throwing it out and doesn’t want to let go,” Rakesh said, with a laugh, but it was a half-laugh because he saw the concern on his wife’s face.

Something wasn’t right.

“Let me try again,” he said. He pulled with a little more force but even though the scrunchie felt flexible under his touch it remained where it was. It was like a ring that had gotten stuck on a finger.

“My hand doesn’t feel good,” Alisha said, in a stressed voice, which she was unsuccessfully trying to disguise.

Rakesh looked at her hand, and was shocked to see it lose its colour, becoming white, and then a few moments later, pale blue.

What was going on?

How could a cheap hair band be cutting off the blood supply to his wife’s hand? How could it suddenly tighten so much around her wrist? But this wasn’t the time to think about that. He had to remove it before it caused real damage.

“Rakesh, it’s hurting! Get it out! Get it out!” Alisha shouted, in pain. Tears began to roll down her face.

Rakesh stared at the table in a panic and a moment later spotted what he was after: the large pair of scissors that his wife used to trim her bangs.

He grabbed it.

“I’m cutting the scrunchie off,” he shouted back at her. “I need to squeeze the scissors under and it might scratch you. Right?”

“Do it. Cut it off,” Alisha whimpered, through her tears. “It’s burning and cold at the same time.”

Rakesh let out a big determined grunt and lifted the scrunchie with all his strength. At first it didn’t move but after keeping up the force he managed to create a few millimetres’

gap between it and Alisha's skin. This was just enough to slide the scissors through.

He didn't waste any time.

He shoved a blade underneath and without thinking slammed the scissors shut. He heard what sounded like a tiny screech, but it was likely the elastic inside snapping.

Blood splattered everywhere.

The scrunchie fell to the floor with a wet squelch.

"You're bleeding," Rakesh said, panicked, holding onto his wife's bloody wrist. "I'm -"

A still crying Alisha stopped him. "It's not me," she said, wiping her wrist on her skirt.

She showed her cleaned wrist to him. It was unscathed.

"It's that *thing*..." Alisha continued, nodding weakly at the scrunchie, which now sat in the middle of an expanding pool of blood on the floor.

"How's that possible?" Rakesh asked in a daze. "How can that... how could it... bleed?" He bent down and hovered the scissors over it.

"Careful," Alisha said, standing behind him. The colour had returned to her hand, but her face was pale.

"Whatever it was, it's dead now," Rakesh said, lifting up the scrunchie and bringing it closer. He peeled away the cotton exterior. Instead of elastic there was a worm-like flesh inside. It was limp.

Rakesh tore off the rest of the covering and saw the creature inside. It looked like a small snake. Its tail was tucked inside its mouth, almost as if it was eating itself, or as if the tail was fused there. If he hadn't cut through it with the scissors, it would have been a perfect circle or loop.

"How could it have been so close to me for all those years?" Alisha said, a mix of fear and wonder in her voice.

Rakesh sighed before dropping the severed serpent to the floor and hugging his wife.

A Blunt

Jennifer Mngadi

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty
He knows me

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty
He kissed me

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty
He said "I don't need to roll you a blunt, you are pretty!"

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty
He likes my smile
the way I talk
the way I walk
the way I am
but most of all the way I think

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty
He enters my mind
my heart
my soul

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty
He enters me

He rolled me a blunt and told me that I am pretty

Voor mense

Louw Venter

In die tyd voor mense was die water alles. Die water was die middel en die buitewyke, die binnekant en alles aan die buitekant. Die gras was slim en vol voedsel. En lewe. En ontasbare verskeidenheid. In die tyd voor horlosies het die lug self besluit wanneer om die son weg te stuur na die anderkant van die bol, wanneer die dag uiteindelik klaar was met sy besigheid. Wanneer die meerkatmammamas moeg was vir neulerige kleintjies se getjank aan hulle tieties en die bobeejaanbrandwag genoeg gehad het van tuur na die gevaarlike horison. In die tyd voor mense het klippe iets beteken: Stil met die geheime geskiedenis van die aarde. En wolke was swanger dansers, giggelend teen die wand van die bloutes. Goggas, buffels, paddas en varings. Modder. Sand. Saad. Musiek was rotse wat breek oor millenniums in die vlak golwe van die magtige see. Die nag was oneindig en geduldig. Wreed. En vrygewig vir die jagters wat kos soek vir hulle kinders. Daar was grotte vol beloftes en vlaktes wat strek soos lang antwoorde op eenvoudige vrae. En daar was ys. Enorme kluisse wat die fynskrif van die kosmiese bloudruk bewaar het terwyl die aarde stadig om haar minnaar gedans het, genadiglik onbewus van haar onskatbare waarde. In die tyd voor siekte was daar lewe. Tydelik, permanent, onbuigsaam. In die tyd voor die Dood was tyd gemeet in asems, hartkloppe en winters. In die tyd voor geld was kos soos lug, en medisyne was die liefde.

Homecoming

Daniel Kemp

I've never been able to write a poem
for my home
and now these streets I have known
since I was a boy
have become foreign to me

when I think of the backyard of the house
in Iona Street

I am sure that it was some other child
who made mud pies
on an overcast winter's morning
all those years ago
for though I remember it
the memory is not mine

now that I have memories
of Rhode Island and Colorado,
Houston and Tuscaloosa,
my home where I sit and write
these lines
seems distant to me

I occupy this room
on this continent whose name I have forgotten
knowing that it is another poet
here at this desk
composing this verse
for though I hold the pen
the words it forms

find themselves somewhere else
probably in a fourth-storey room
in an apartment in Brooklyn
but certainly not on this page



Dublin departures

Charika Swanepoel

To an unknown “Marie”

More than anywhere, here, the air is sterile
and loss is tangible, either loss, longing, or lust.
My French neighbour wishes her daughter ugly,
she is bitter for beauty misspent – bless her.
Mother and daughter are equally disembodied
and the mind slides across the glossy lake of indifference.
Show me a painless female landscape, a cold and reflective
godhead slinking from glass plane to glass plane.
Mother and daughter, arched backsides,
cheeks moisturized, two lost, soft, elephant trunks.
Aesthetics aside, there’s a joke in here somewhere.
Mother and daughter, perhaps a theological jibe?



WILLEM VAN DEN HEEVER



jakkals gedagte

Sjaka Septembir

Aan Isabelle

jy slof hondagtig om die son se rand
met jou vuil tong
ek gooi die see in ons bad
die kalkoen van tyd verloor sy kop
daar kekkel God
die president het sy stink sokkies aan en
dans kaal met die sekel maan
ons masjeer die eindtye te gemoed
sodat ons vanvoor af kan begin
met ons malhaas speletjies
ons is armgatige, grootmens kinders
ewig dansend en doenig met vroetel en frattel
prittel en prattel, dittel en dattel
ons dons-bons, pooidjie oor ons deurgetrapte skoene
val kadoeps-doems met tweedehandse klere, silwer in ons
hare
ons like van opstaan, van ons lywe rond gooi
lag koringlande van geel terwyl ons gras rook
blaas toeter en jaag vir die polisie weg
want ons stem vir die loosers en maak geraas
ek en jy
ons lag en huil in die groot tent van ons hart
Mr Bojangles waai vir ons
soos ons deur Afrika jaag

ons is groot kinders besig met die pers wetenskap van wees
ja, ek en jy, jakkals en uil
vir ons jolige dronkgat vriende is ons lief

my malste mooiste uiltjie
in die absurde hartseer jubel-juweel van bestaan
is jy my deurtrapte harte se dief

AT THE PUB / CHARLES TAIT



A short poem

Liny Kruger

The night feels open.
Guinea fowls pretending to be owls,
for after dark everything can be a little grander,
if one so wishes to lift the veils instead of drawing
the curtains.

(ongetiteld)

Susan Samuel

Daar is 'n hond in my huis. Ek hoor hom en ek ruik hom. Soms sien ek hom uit die hoek van my oog, maar dan is hy weer weg. Ek probeer iets doen omtrent die hond. Dis nie veronderstel om in my huis te wees nie, maar as jy verduidelik hoekom jy nie van honde hou nie, dan kyk mense jou snaaks aan. So nou bly jy maar eerder stil. Ek besluit ek moet die hond konfronteer. Ek wag en beplan. Ek praat met kenners. Hoe verras jy 'n hond? Ek sit lank buite, maar dan hoor ek hom binne. Ek gaan sit binne. Dan blaf hy buite. Ek maak vleis gaar. Vetterige afkookvleis. Ek hoor hoe grawe en krap hy aan die deur. Wanneer ek oopmaak, is hy weg. Ek hoor hom tjank in die agterplaas. Ek krap van die vleis en die sous en die bene in 'n bak. Ek sit die bak by die agterdeur. Ek wag. Ek hoor hom. Hy het lankal die vleis geruik. Sy bek kwyl. Hy wil nader kom, ek weet. Maar hy kan my ruik. Hy kan ruik ek is kwaai. Hy kan ruik ek is bang vir hom. Hy kan ruik ek het 'n sambok in my hand. Ek wil hom nie slaan nie. Net wegjaag. Ek is bang hy byt my. Ek wonder of ek vinnig genoeg sal kan slaan. Sal hy mik vir my arm of vir my keel. Ek begin sweet. My hande bewe. Ek staan op en gaan by die huis in. Dan hoor ek die hond vreet. Ek hoor sy tande teen die bak se wande kap. Ek staan stil en luister. Hy vreet gulsig. Ek is te bang om te kyk. Hy weet wie het vir hom kos gegee. Hy weet ek sal more weer. Hy weet ek wil nie kyk nie. Ek voer hom, want ek is bang vir hom.



KALK BAY FISHERMAN'S LAMENT

*'Ek soek 'n snoek.' / Djy mors djou tyd / Wannie vissie issie lussie, /
Ma die bote da buite / DÍe kry die byte.'* – Simon Winter

Death of George Floyd

Fred Cicada

Enough!... the world said
And took a knee. Of racism
And other barbaric practices
Of men kneeling on others' necks
Benefitting from others' sweat

Enough!... the world said
This time - we take action
Silence screams loud - no longer!
Before they, again, extinguish our voices

Enough!.. the world said
Every country has a 'black man'
Who suffers, ... then dies. In vain – no more!
(To the streets we take)

Enough!... the world said
Cruelty lingers for generations
Carried-over-sin from fathers
We'll put an end to it. Speak out
Or burn it to the ashes

Enough!.. the world said
Reflecting on itself as a whole
Those who don't speak up now
Forever guilty - through their apathy

Enough!... the world said

Today we join hands. Those against
History's continuation to the present
A new order is needed, a new lease of
Life - for the oppressed.

Enough!... the world said
Those in power need to listen
See our anger as testament of
Frustration unbound. Heed our calls!
...or the city will fall.

Enough!... the world said
We want reform, equal opportunity
Lady Justice needs to listen up, or take
Off her blindfold. And see. Not the colour
Of acquittal but a verdict: of guilty
Or not only Rome will fall.



Utopisme

Louis Roux

Ek is in 'n elektroniese veld
van Coca-Cola-rooi en Coca-Cola-wit blomme
almal besig om algoritmies te bloei
in die volmaakte vrede.

My liggaam is net 'n digitale skim,
'n projeksie van die perfekte self,
aanpasbaar en ewigdurend.

Diere, mak geprogrammeer,
eet appels uit my hand uit.

Voëls klik en sing soos hardeskywe –
binariese versoeke na kos of seks.

Ek kan 'n voël wees, as ek wil.

Of 'n rivier, of 'n luidspreker.

Ek kan gaan waar ek wil – fotos,
digitale kaarte, 3D modelle
van onbereikbare bestemmings

word deel van my bewussyn,
ek is daar, ek is die daar, ek is
alles en orals, tydloos en grensloos,
'n digitale god van my eie heelal.

Ek is
met trots geborg deur Square Space.
Besoek squarespace.com/ozymandias
vir 15% afslag op jou eerste
webtuiste.



ALISA FARR

Blackxllence

Nessy Shimwafeni

I am constantly productive in my creative zone
If I made it this far, it means I have grown
From Boys 2 Men, leave the Childish Gambino games alone
It's time to build empires like Amazon.

Failure is a teacher that can fill you with doubt
Hustlers don't complain and never bailout,
Keep your feet in the streets but your head in the cloud,
Ideas need cultivation before Success can sprout.

Dreamers dream
Entrepreneurs they start,
My Blackxllence comes straight from my heart
I stretch my marks and give birth to my Art

The monk who sold his Ferrari escaped his mental prison
ignore the haters with their constant criticism
the future is now and not just anymore a Vision
when opportunities strike, you make the right decision.

When a hustler becomes a billionaire
I call it Bossmosis,
My marathon continues,
but my priorities have changed in the process
While I wait for God to come through like he did for Moses,
my hustle stays on point and becomes more ferocious.

Dreamers dream
Entrepreneurs they start,
My Blackxllence comes straight from my heart
I stretch my marks and give birth to my art

From *Promised Land*

Karl Kemp

Promised Land: Exploring South Africa's Land Conflict is published by Penguin Random House. Available at bookstores nationwide.

'My farm is too small actually to consider it an economically viable unit in today's framework,' says Cois. 'Land is not wealth. That perception is created on the radio and on the TV.'

We stop at a little mobile store Cois has set up at the corner of the main road and the dirt track to his property just outside Zeerust. Here we pick up Lerata. She gives me a Fanta on the house. Cois says that she, too, is a Mohurutshe. Her English, although better than Aubrey's, is still haggard, so Cois jumps in where necessary. Firstly, and probably very rudely, I ask her whether she's happy living under a *kgosi*, figuring that tiptoeing around it would be patronising.

'Yes, of course,' she says.

'But what if you don't agree with something?' I ask. 'What if he keeps all the resources and money for himself?'

'Then we strike,' she says.

Cois laughs at this and then picks up the thread. 'So, if you need *anything*, the way to get it is to strike?'

'Yes, because then you cannot go anywhere.'

'So you close all the roads and that's how you get what you want?'

She laughs and says nothing.

'On my farm, will you get anything if you strike?'

'Here we don't strike.'

'Why?'

'Because we just talk with you.'

'Okay.' He smiles at me, satisfied, but Lerata pipes up again.

'But if you don't give us what we want, we *will* strike!'

'No, we can discuss it,' Cois cuts in, aggrieved. 'It's not always possible to

get—' he switches to Setswana then back to English '—if a child is crying for something, must you always give him what he is crying for?'

'Yes, when you have it,' says Lerata.

'No, no, no! That's wrong,' says Cois.

'It's right,' says Lerata simply.

I'm not sure if it's her English or her stubborn devotion to the principle, but even her employer's insistence can't shake her.

'No, it can't be right,' says Cois, now stern. 'The child must be disciplined, he must be educated in the right way. If you always give the child what he wants, he's going to give you trouble when he grows up. Because he will always ask you a lot more than what you can afford.'

'No, but you must tell me if you have it. [And] if you don't have, you must tell me.'

'And then you will just accept it?' Cois asks.

'Yes,' says Lerata.

'But do you see the reasoning [that] you can't always give what the child wants?'

'Yes.'

'So, it's important to educate your children so that they must understand what life is all about?' Cois presses his point. Lerata has either lost interest or become suspicious of the conversation.

'Why are you asking me?' she says. 'Why are you asking me about my chief?'

'Because it's nice to talk with you,' begins Cois.

‘No, I’m talking about him!’ she says, gesturing toward me. ‘Oh, me?’ I ask. ‘Because I’m interested in how Tswana culture is. Because I don’t have a chief. You know how Afrikaners are. Everyone wants to be their own chief.’

‘And he wants to understand what is the difference, because maybe he can become the chief of Braklaagte or Mogopa and also be rich!’ adds Cois, and they both laugh.

‘I’m just wondering if you are rich because your chief has land,’ I say. ‘If you are richer than other black people who do not have land.’

Lerata laughs loudly. ‘Yes, yes,’ she says.

Cois steps in again. ‘Maybe we should ask: are all the people in the village rich?’

‘No,’ says Lerata.

‘Why not?’ Cois and I ask at the same time. Lerata hesitates, and frets slightly.

‘Lerata, you are not in any danger!’ roars Cois.

‘In my opinion, the chief must share the money,’ I add, lamely.

‘I understand,’ says Lerata, ‘but ...’ She switches to Setswana to express herself better and starts explaining about the chief’s role in building RDP houses.

‘But he doesn’t build the RDPs, the government builds the RDPs,’ I say.

‘It’s not the chief?’ she shouts.

‘No!’ says Cois. ‘The chief has nothing to do with that. He is just the gate.

But it is not his money.’

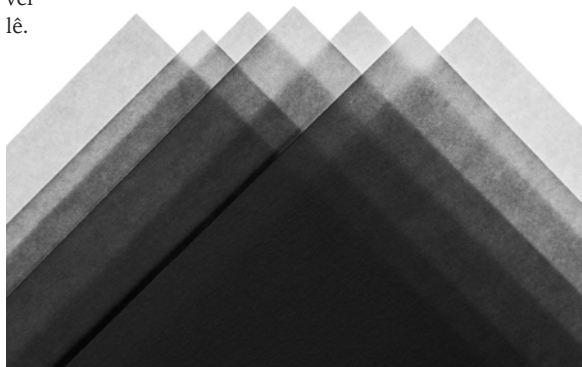
‘Yoh!’ says Lerata. ‘But if it is not the chief, then how is he helping us?’

I don’t know how to respond.

'n Opvoeding

Kanya Viljoen

Opvoeding is die realiteit
van weet
dat toe skoene,
'n langbroek
en 'n serp
gedra moet word
parlement toe
stap
kinders
te jonk om te verstaan
te jonk om stil te bly
te jonk om politiese speletjies te speel
te jonk om te besef
dat bloed 'n koeël
weg van
vel
lê.



Ek droom van 'n duin

Kobus Burger

In my droom waad ek en my Pa
deur 'n duin seesand
in my voorstedelike flat.
Pa deins terug om die bult te betrag
bruingebrand en braaf in 'n kortbroek
nadat chemo hom amper katswink geslaan het.
Ek trek solank die onkruid uit;
die hardnekkige wortels breek deur die wit.
Wag, ek gaan haal 'n graaf,
beduie Pa
en wys ek moet die geil, groen bossie
se lewe spaar.
Ek wag
& ek weet
daar's plek in die gebou se skamele voortuin
vir 'n bossie,
& dalk 'n blom.

BORN IN A PANDEMIC / FLORENCE DE VRIES



GENX / REGARDT VISSER



Deep in the armchair

Bill Dodd

After Friederike Riese: 'Tief im Sessel sitzt der Schnee'

deep in the armchair
sat the snow

the chair gave it comfort
grateful for respite
from human intrusion

the snow edged
into dark cavities
where it licked
mislaid pencils
and coins

stale outhouse smells
were teased
into daylight
by the curiosity
of settling flakes

but now at night
frost turns the chair
into one of those thrones
where once in a while
a weary angel
chooses to rest

with the help of upholstery

and cushions
gravity fashions a shape
for pure being

a becoming tangible
takes place unseen

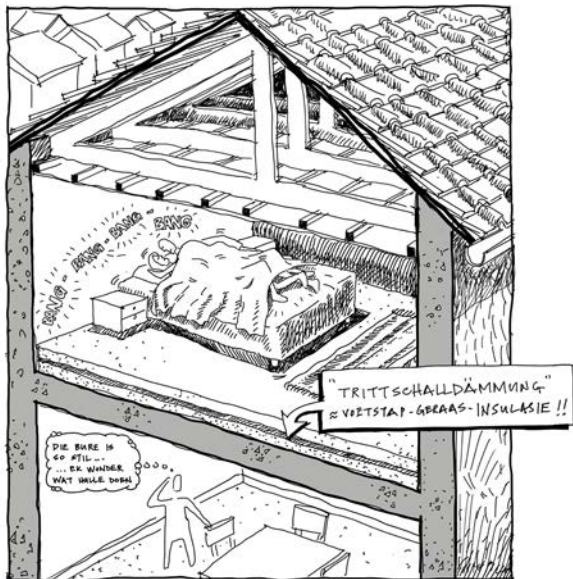
only the soft tick tick
of frost
hints to the human ear
what the eye is missing:

an angel unwinging
and settling briefly
for the weight
and respite of earthly body

ongema

Marnet Jordaan

dit is 'n anderste soort gevoel dié
soos iets wat aanhou klop
sonder antwoord
steekpyne en hartkloppens
met niks om daarvoor te wys nie



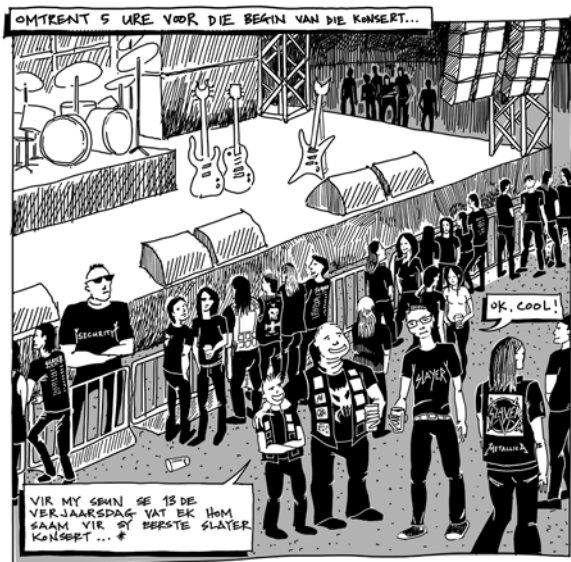
GERMAANSE OPENBARINGS NR. 1 : DIE WONDERLIKE
 DUITSE UITVINDSEL GENAAMD "TRITTSCHALLDÄMMUNG"
 WAT VERHINDER DAT BURE MEKAAR SE VOETSTAPPE
 EN ANDER GELUIDE EN VIBRASIES HOEF TE HOOR ...



GERMAANSE OPENBARINGS NR. 2 : SELFS DIE MEES
BANALE DINGE WORD TOT REINHEID GETRANSFORMEER
AS SNEEU OOR DIE WÊRELD KOM LÊ...



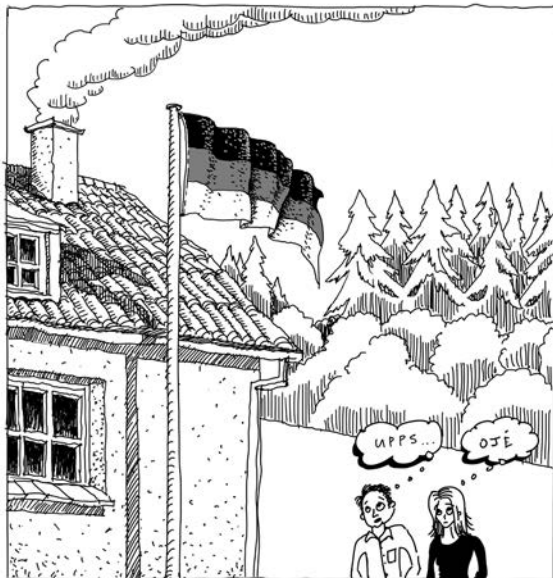
GERMAANSE OPENBARINGS NR. 3: ALHOEWEL DAAR OP BAIE STREKKE VAN DIE AUTOBAHN GEEN SPOEDBEPERKING HEERS NIE, IS DIE PAAIE NOU EN SO VOL VERKEER DAT VINNIG RY AMPER ONMOONTLIK IS ...



GERMAANSE OPENBARINGS NR. 4 :

METAL IS GROOT !

* GESPREK VIND IN DUIJS PLAAS !



GERMAANSE OPENBARINGS NR. 5 BEHALVE GEDURENDE DIE WERELDBEKER JOKKERTOERNOOI WORD MENSE WAT DIE DUITSE VLAG BY HALLE HUISE OPSIT, MET AGTERDOG BEJEN.

Vir Deidré

Willem Mulder

as jy my maar net gelos het
my onder my gat geskop het

dan kon ek darem nog soos 'n pateet jou bel
en in jou ore moan en huil
ten minste nog jou stem kon hoor
al was dit net om vir my te sê ek moet aan beweeg
en myself reg ruk

as jy maar net op 'n lang reis weg was
vir 'n paar weke net die pad gevat het

dan kon ek nog pateties vir jou oor die foon vertel
hoe vreeslik ek na jou verlang en dat jy nou moet terug kom
ten minste nog jou stem kon hoor
al was dit net om vir my te sê dat ek mooi groot is
dat ek myself moet reg ruk

as jy maar net nie, as jy maar net nie
as jy maar net nie

but i don't believe in if anymore
soos Whittaker gesing het
maar dan sou ek ten minste nog jou stem kon hoor
al was dit net, al was dit net,
al was dit net

Geslagsrolle van skottelgoed

Sariné Potgieter

Dis dag 35

ek staan met my verrimpelde hande in die seperige water net soos elke ander oggend vantevore moedeloos was ek elke vuil beker.

Uiteindelik die verdomde pink en blou bekers elke oggend was ek hierdie pink en blou bekers. Pink is vir mamma, want sy is sag en vroulik, blou is vir pappa, want hy is hard en manlik.

Hierdie koppies doen tog hulle werk ewe goed beide gee die nodige motivering om uit die bed uit op te staan en gee elke persoon die stamina om die dag aan te pak of hoe?

Gisteroggend vroeg maak ek vir almal koffie ek haal bekers uit die kas uit versigtig voldoen ek aan almal se vereistes van: baie melk min suiker, baie suiker min melk en geen suiker.

Versigtig gee ek elke beker aan...

“Nee, hierdie kan nie myne wees nie? Dis dan in die pienk beker!”

maar pa wat maak dit dan saak?

“Ek is ’n man ek drink nie uit pienk bekers nie, gaan kry my blou beker.”

Op dag 35 ontdek ek die geslagsrolle van die bekers in ons kas...

Kluisenaar

Marguerite Cellarius

Vir die Korona-kluisenaars

ons sit nou almal
in ons klein huisies
wat al hoe kleiner word
soos die tyd aansleep

leef ons lewens
middelk en tweedehands
deur sinlose skakels
en vreemdelingvriende

verweerloos
verwaarloos
verwese
verwoed

in hierdie nuwe wêreld
het niks vir my verander nie



If I could eat love
It would taste sweet
It would taste of your lips
And for you it would taste like me

Zadie Prince, “Feasting on Love”

With contributions by / Met bydraes van

Okkert Brits, Albert Retief, Elzahn Nel, Colijn Strydom,
Givan Lötz, Regardt Visser, Willem Samuel, Adèle Changuion,
Florence de Vries, Carl van der Linde, Anouk Cronjé,
Dorit Hockman, Bianca Oosthuizen, Stéfan Burger, Ian Bell,
Marianne Stewart, Pieter Lübbe, Bester Meyer, Olga Leonard,
Lindley Pretorius aka Superperd, Roxanne Bayman, Alisa Farr,
Willem van den Heever, Strauss Louw, Lezanne Fieuw,
Charles Tait, Simon Winter, Bill Dodd, Jaco van Schalkwyk,
Amayetta, Willow Ruby, Zadie Prince, Sello Huma, Daniël Prins,
Marguerite Cellarius, Sariné Potgieter, Willem Mulder,
Anton Barnard, Marenet Jordaan, Kobus Burger, Kanya Viljoen,
Karl Kemp, Bernard Brand, Nesy Shimwafeni, Louis Roux,
Fred Cicada, Susan Samuel, Liny Kruger, Sjaka Septembir,
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Marguerite Wolfaardt & Abigail George