

*NOW MORE THAN EVER*

*By Vincent Silk*

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1.

There is only so much I can tell you. I'm a very private person. The words are very old, the paper very fragile. It will crumble in your hands.

There's nothing here you haven't heard before. But something must be said, some flag must be raised for them, whose possessions haunt filing cabinets, tended only by a furrow of volunteers doomed to forever ferret through ancient biscuit tins.

Panning across the scape of a long slight decline,  
a free wide open place, as inappropriate as it is to imagine.

On the second floor is a gym. A row of treadmills overlook the street,  
occupied at intervals one-two,

like Piss etiquette, nobody ever explained it to me.

Behind, in the flat area, carpeted, stupidly, incipient punishment for  
falling down,

Nightly groups of adults perform highkicks, giddyup and yell yee-hah

This one comes, wrapped thrice in sweat-wicking cloth. Held in place by plastic tubes.

The years have not been kind to him. Aged twink,  
beset by the tidal flowing of smog and bricked over crone-wise. He points a long, crooked  
finger at the steam room,  
accursed place.

Below, unsuspecting rainforest bird, intent on  
picking out the best bits, Removes with surgical precision a log of meat from within  
sodden pastry. Heavy with rain. Her warm scales, perfect. Her bald, raw  
head swivels to look at him as he stumbles

across the threshold and out into the night.

The Bird, through no fault of her own,

Ever-seeking unwrapped treats, juicy and complete.

*In some views it is inherent as violent because it is not reversible - the ability to reverse its conditions is contingent on its place in the order - among other things - so the way of it is - the thing of being reversible - the reversing of it is unclear - there are arguments to be made for either - the ability to change things or not engage - neither are fully possible - it is just as impossible to not engage as it is*

2.

Neither have the years been kind to this pocket of earth. Ravaged by cranes, wet streams in soft rock.

This is the most beautiful place on earth and all people do is spend their lunch breaks running through it.

He almost trips, crouches down to inspect the lines

busting a path through overflowing green-and-brown flora: inflated pipes

— poor foundations — rotten shit —

'Pramtracks' he whispers, sniffing the air. He draws his climacool cloak around his shoulders, around his head.

The way stone leaks, you'll never get used to it

*Stop talking so much. Just listen. You might learn something.*

Maybe movement and constant kinetic energy is good. Maybe stasis is bad. I want to be spring loaded — that I will build up all this stored energy from being still so long, and then bounce off into the aether. Go further than if I rolled slowly along. Reasonable pace.

Reasonable rubble. Should've stayed with the old one, the safe one, the public place

Strolling by the river in search of the right one, the thrill of the chase

Grass blades, watered steel.

Opening along the seams with silver insides flashing in the lamplight

The last whale oil lamp in the world.

If fear is present what else is there.

In the middle of his back Patti Lupone unhinges her jaw and caws into the abyss gaping, thick-toothed and emotional. Whose go is it? Draw the drapes across the blacked out windows.

What makes the places we touch come back to us.

Touching the walls with their tongues on hot days, when the bricks sweat through the paint, when the lacey caps adhere to their scalps.

They've been dragged from the tops of trees, rootless. Gouged out from soft wet ground.

Help yourself to the reversible thing, if you can. If you can be helped

— automatic — incomparable — complacent —

In the drinking-pen he's full of shit, gay as in happy. Queer as in fuck me, as in Fishman.

Hunched over a spattered screen with his headphones in and a girl walks past, her thongs squelching with pool water and foot-sweat in time to the beat in his ears. Stamping metronome, keeping time. He turns back to the pit.

On the second ship their backs oozed dark slugs of it

An archive of feeling. High-pollen-day, someone slaps his back and he winces. Patti Lupone scowls;

And what of the regional fetishist? Him without networks. Who will mourn if not you, for the one

who, autoerotically, encased himself in polyester and, engaged in that most specific of private pleasures, drowned in the dam.

*What shall I do when there is no-one to talk to?* Thicker fabric is needed to keep it all in, wrapped Threefold at least. Calico crisscrossed with snailtrails  
words like 'grove' and 'dell' — fluttering to rest,  
hardening into a jelly of forgotten metamucil, thick, fibrous, and foul.

Eighty or a hundred years ago would have seen him with a wife

Going to church Blanched and starched, romanticised in war

Still cruising by the river

Earlier still and he obsesses, lying awake at night, with the knotted sheep intestines he would have needed,

The things he wishes he didn't know.

As though the river can still move silt and water with the weight of all those bones.

He bursts his banks, shuddering

Destroyed psycho-spiritually by the mere suggestion

Of another two minutes on the stationary bike

3.

A curtain of awful, oily English wool falls, covering a tramp stamp — ‘Abolition Now’  
Little M’s wrap the torso. birds and barbed wire. Rolled in a blanket and tipped into  
the sea.

Mariners coat, heavy enough without  
Pockets weighed down by river rocks and sheeps teeth

They are diffuse and thinly spread, trickling over porous rocks.  
Particularly unmemorialised which doesn’t mean unremembered. Big blown eggs in  
wharf-side real estate.

Tapping the earth at four precise points:  
brig; bilge; lock hospital; darkened doorway

It only takes a second  
The mob’s genteel — obsessed with making public space private  
‘save our dully’  
A dummy hanging from a tree

The boarding up of dens, the ghosts of dazzling queens, eternal  
Jewelled droplets, moist, adorning her feather boa  
That path, trodden by feet thick with calluses, rough with hustle-crumbs, shouldered  
heavy bags overflowing, laden with cured sheep gut — those little words, grove, dell,  
pox —

He lumbers into the room, usurps the only chair  
Shave gel — cautious — everyone knows the feeling  
His eyes two little pouches of rage  
The air sucked out, big balloon,

Regulated passage of people in and out  
she punches holes in the time capsule and throws treasure into the crowd. A kid  
scoops up a fit from the ground, holds it tight against his abdomen  
and won’t let it be wrestled away.

The curtain twitches. Someone’s scratched ‘fuck off yuppie prick’ into the red door  
It only takes a second

This document was produced on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung people of the Kulin nation. I pay my respect to Elders past and present, and acknowledge the ongoing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resistance to occupation.