

Much and often had to be worked out a lot of chaff, that one. Often at work it used to fill my mind. I'd be sitting there with Jada, when simply "head" and I was back there in that place, coming to terms with it again. Poor Julie coming from the storeroom and Jada were gonna get it... was like the matrix... projection! I am a bat with wings. I sail.

Get down here now please! I hear deep in my jaw.

Everyone looking so cosmopolitan.

Back at work I am happy, I tell myself I am happy, I am happy, I toss and turn at night, I am happy. I am sauced, waiting for a response, freshly deep cleaned but the laundry is due. Abigail's desk is empty. The filing cabinet is looking. Eyes dance, in the air is Clark, his sweating fills the room he kills his workers with his black curses. What was it about him? Some blindspot, some helpless neuroticism, invisible step, poor coping mechanisms... We love our boss, we cheer him up... Not gonna happen... Not gonna get nothing here except attention release a forcible one later on, that's the way I feel my hand cramp up a bit. The bozos had it coming to them... All personal, all heading home. It's been what, two weeks, and everything was the same, I wasn't, I wasn't I'm not going to move any time soon I reveal I snort I think of my friends old purchases I think of my life my livelihood things were not perfect there was a cycle of events fireworks or is it gunshots I hear in the distance all is well all ends all victim all stilts all high and mighty. Boss or perhaps the word is bass or sass was wearing all white... Hello Abigail there's a dirty spot on her skirt but it's okay she won't notice it.

Tomorrow, tomorrow might be like today, probably, I had realised I was unhappy about a month ago and still wasn't headed anywhere but the coffin, the long breathing coffin, hello clock, hello puppet strings, hello consecration, hello perjury and cutthroat pull the money through the hole. Hands flashing... Screeching...

Anyhow... We all fit in here... We all have good taste. All we care about is the room, all of us there, so we're clamouring for the tea break, we look forward to coffee and cakes... It's a calculated investment, the yields are high, our lives are sorted like butter on hotcakes, enough time left to chase the spirit... Cushy, involved work, manifest Versace, real sexy, extra topping... Just writing the songs, writing the songs... Still this year a jetstained annoyance from that damned bass on the far side of the room...

Amanda... Amanda... He's calling my name... Oh! Sorry boss. Yep, got it. The 200? Sure. I'll get to it right away. He doesn't trust me, he'd relax if he did, I never did, no one did, not ever...Yeuch... not when it's low. I won't lie, I do dress well. I write myself love letters then do it in new ways and in new places with new toys and new heights and new tracks left and lead ups I am a hedonist I have always been a hedonist I have always been a voyeur. Right now the object of fascination? Meow yee ken straight from the hot pan. Straight to my wires, down the front, near the eyes and the camera/kundalini.

Raucous fun... you won't believe it... All the events... Release is far away... I mean what can you imagine... A smorgasbord... An exposed limb... Shirt lick... all of us here involved with ourselves... So everyone good time or bad time was always there on their time which made it a good time... I will be exiting out and entering the next room though, tomorrow want to change but something will be said and done of some consequence... lounging, lounging, irregular pattern... that was it, we knew not to spoil the broth... Stew...

Work is a ruse. Work is a ruse. Work is a front. Work means I know people I didn't know before. Work means my interests are capitalised on and I am made to jaculate

for a good long while for someone else's pleasure. Work wasn't so bad in previous months, back when I didn't know the job as well. Now I know the job well, so all is on me, all nastiness, all scapegoating, all responsibility, we love it, I love it, I do not love it, I may, will love it again I'm sure...

A-and then what would you make of that? Foolhardy, Amanda, plain foolhardy! Didn't even have the money, asked for the invoice, the smarm! A-and at the party, he was... Bosses' voice trails off, trails off again... This life is a bore... Coffee is needed...

Bleargh boss will you shut up says X Ophelia... It pierces the ear but it's saving grace, thanks X Ophelia... It's funny... Does she know she's my saving grace, my screechy angel? Does she know it's a departure on her part? Or mine... Oh well... Bass returns with a shot of whiskey, steady with the pour, this isn't the first time, a second later he's blaming... Everyone gets ready with their resignation letters... All the conspiracy will start, it will take a bold afternoon, a chance encounter, drinks, stimulation, letting catch... Double or nothing... The hand is up. Every day I decline... I am a woman in her prime. Have I hooked to you yet? Or must I smash and shout? In any case, gotta make noise at home to feel the music... Every squeaking door accounted for. Always cushioning it. Another shot. Nobody loves. I am an accomplice in it all. I am deep in the pit of this place, deep in the fandango.

FFFlabbergast! Says boss, with his head in his hands at his booth.

I am the incarnation. Rocking the socks off children high and night in exotic bliss and soda, returning to dear homes and nightly caresses... Blah! A bad loom and a sensual friction I wish to live in?

Ain't no children here! The phallo-narcissist speaks, winks... Fantasia! Makes me want to do it... Reading for the dints... Mghrrr! Exhalation.

Must be quieter with myself. One elevates and does not return a long while...

Must watch the strivings... Let the right permit the left to do only what is good for it, and let the left caress the body.

They think I don't get it. Everyone. They think I don't know what it is like to be with them, they think I have forgotten. Yet still I'm thrashing while it looks like I am asleep, and my arms wake up, my head too and that is the start... Me myself and I we always go back there every summer every once in a while. Haunting myself with my future... Going "whoa!" And raising my eyebrows through a muslin sheath... Past trauma... Past thunder...

Nah, what is it it's this having forgotten what I've told myself, I get what I want and don't like it. I suppose we should try not think about anything.

I tap the beat out. It's the Tuesday beat the Tuesday beat when all is well after the Monday. Office walls. All of these flat planes and paper... More paper... Paper... Stickers... Pulp... Rendered fine... Plastic... And that tacky metal... The Chevron battalion is wearing pink today. Stripes. He's got a healthy glow. Released. He's waiting on news today. He's had a good week, looks to

be a good month or two, three months judging by the length of the last dip... he' ll charge through a break up... He' ll charge through any bad news... Minor hiccups. I hope they happen now not later. Later he' ll be back in his cradle with his tommee tippee and his sucky thumb. We do a little dance. He' s had lessons. Nonetheless I learn to live with it. The present, that is.

Amarina called yesterday she's married now and has two kids, so does everyone else from old heyday, familiar suburbs, streets, no clear view except walking home from fun at the park... Rod's name is fat and ugly and I don't have the same taste as her. Still, it's nice to hear from her and relay the message, we're both waiting for the eternal greeting or the reunion at 60, whatever comes first... I'm in no mood to forget that, that's a promise I'll keep to the class of Ms Danger Hawkins... Life in all of its social ways got already from then on, that was the smooth day, true love on the classroom scale, community of 20... Amarina used to dance in a troupe... We all danced in a troupe, I had first procession into Hawkins... What, Amaranth? Do you want a copy? Sure.

I get off the phone and things are not so simple. How dare she call! Who does she think she is? Waltzing back into my life like that... Lusty traitor... Pity this and pity she must pity me! She wants to know me, she genuinely wants to know me... Time and place! The carriage departed long ago! Sad maladept child... Me I' m a firm believer in the tacit approach. This one was damned long ago!

It would be nice to do a space jump and freeze and leave off on this... But it' s defeat, I am defeated, I am defeated by my friend who is my enemy and they appear from the sides, they have my hair in an amulet... I try to banish them. Shit, I need to go home... Haven' t gone

anywhere the past few days and hope not to go under in the meanwhile...

I' m finished. I' m creaking inside. I want someone' s confidence. Is that too much to ask? I' ve been living off my own for long enough... Behind me always this raging blare and my skirts catching on things... The sun is not doing its job properly. My angels are elsewhere. My inner monologue is cajoled on by my lesser self, an alcoholic with ill-fitting chinos and a beer gut... One can try quit, the next one will get you... and the next one... and the next one... Main trend is that the breath stinks... Gosh, my breath stinks...

Wurgh... X Ophelia did something weird just now. She just looked around to see if anyone was looking then ducked out of sight for a second... Sketchy shit. OK... She' s back up again. Just the cosmopolitan straight with fringe... Full treatment. Eyes down at her desk, checking her emails... She sips a huge drink bottle... Deary me I need Clark to come over here and give me a massage... How grim...

Here she goes now, back into the office... The phone rings. Quite, no, quite extraordinary... Yes? Yes, this is she... Ha ha, well I'm not sure about that... Goodbye... She talks like I am listening... I raise an eyebrow...

You know I really need a bánh mì. Do you want to go grab a bánh mì with me, Manda? Great... No, not really... Yeah... No... And you?... I get a chicken with extra carrot and XO gets a roast pork with extra meat and carrots and no coriander.

I make it out alive... No skin. What the ... was she doing today? I'm plagued. Can't cook on this one. I'll have to get a burger or something instead. Anything. X Ophelia walks out the lobby in front of me. She looks like she could use a burger too, to beckon some metaphorical form... The sum of a single G word, the worst of all of them... Glutton...

Not that we can't guess the "M" word and such... Not while XO rides the high of her life with a blown and burnt out countenance... She probably doesn't see me looking...

I head to the pool. All the bodies are out today and everyone is shameless, they waltz around their godliness with harrumph and pride and laid-backness. It's a show. There's hair there' s skin there is very little there's bunching there's haunches paunches and all the rest of it. I sit with my legs crossed and try to look nonchalant. My hand is seizing up. It's not a worry, the nerves will have their fun later. For now the hand takes its primacy. It holds on for dear life. Did the lifeguard see? No, they turned away. Actually the water will be better for this. There... There...

Now, back to the pool... No X Ophelia here... Towels on shoulders... Adult ticket 6.90... faculties, using the faculties... It facilitates my horror, the arrival in the thick state of it... Because the water is cold, close to my chest and the organs want to dash away in it... I'm over, I'm over... Legs kicking all the while... A momentary caution passing by a nameless blob... What was she muttering to herself? Kadoum kadoum kadoum? She does it as if to tease me, as if to tell me something... She makes me need to socialise... Time to get out of this pool... I might go past the bakery... In any case the... Gah...

Of course, I like it. Why wouldn't I like it. I don't really like it. Attention is manifold. Silence is golden until penetrated at which point it writes To Do lists and mantras and such. Once an addict, always an addict. A little seesaw in the brain. Some days a horrid languor. Sunday is a hurried getting there or so one tries. I see herself in me in that she is crazy. Anyhow, one must taste and persist. Her skin is cracked and old. Not a common cosmopolitan. She wants into my apartment but I won't let her. I won't let her barge on in here with her fancy lingerie and her carbon frame. And her daggerish nature and her thickening presents. Too attractive to have ever been told to lay off for awhile. She thinks we're all flakes. She's a posh handbag. Me and my fungal infection are better off doing our own thing.

I sleep I dream I wake up. I've lost myself. I've left big holes in places. All there is is invading scandal and cameras and montages. It is all obscene. My life is three people. X Ophelia, Clark and the unmitigated love interest that has me spending far too long at parks, down alleys and in toilet cubicles.

I see the room is indeed as X Ophelia suggests. Messy, but it's a compliment. One can't be too catholic about it. It's lived-in. Me I once had myself in too many unopened envelopes anyhow. We are all censors. Blatant regard for the truth or whatever. I prefer the mother suck. Without the Rolex on the wrist.

As long as 20 minutes stands between here and the last but I'm going to do it again. Naturally you don't have to bring the tension up to get there. Naturally it's an

experiment in self-sufficiency. Naturally I don't want to do things the way I should do. Such is sickening. No codes will be broken, I am the impeccable mosaic already. No fear. A light inside, illuminating. In the day it comes through transparently. The only ask is that I try tense up less.

The effuse, the effluvium, the coffin, the beating head, the task class still mongered crat man on the rocks, and my knee.

There goes a self-destructive down on the dock of my jetty my harbour my pier.

The scale and the scales are out. May as well be one year older and one year younger, or two, I must find myself again. The busyness is in effect... I started from the slow nothing, now I have the slow something... Waiting, pending on the rundown attitudes of my contemporaries... fluttering in and out of sea. Licking the finger.

Sexual threat...

Ballooning out... Me, it's just the glasses... And words pouring like a broken reservoir... Many dollar projects... The scale of years... Hunching... Bending the neck proper... Not a conventional stretch... For others, idleness... For me, the fast forward...

Again they keep calling my number, always hanging up at the last minute, taking my spare change, my quietude... Messages about the mail, the hate, the poor necessity... Me I can't mine do it. Me I can't need

mine own space. Me I can't must say sorry but I have an awful lot to do. Awfully busy, you know. I didn't get home on chance... To catch you up to date I have been suffocated by smothering lovers with smothering mothers. Won't leave me in peace. Always coming into my room with a sheepish hello. And they wonder why there's a creative block. Good way to do it. Catch a fly.

Marcel asks me on a date he asks how I would characterise myself I would characterise myself as a firm individual who has gone soft, no, had gone soft for a moment, nothing wrong with soft, something wrong with abuse, I climb out of it the only way I know how, distance, time, occupation...

My lack of faces. Address book empty. Story of my life in the cauldron pot. Story of my life in the schisms. Doesn't matter about the look. Matters about the drive... The bition... Ambrosia... Intoxication... Making one stand up... Always in my head, this tragedy playing... The one about Monnac, all the other dolled up... Work's work and it plays over all the while...

I've the script... The one scene in my head... I need to write it... Not that I'll never forget it... not that anyone doesn't know it...

The other is deceiving, the other... In this case it is XO... She is deceiving me... She is running me in circles... She is encroaching on my space... I'm starting to get the routine of it. I'm starting to feel as if the feet move of their own accord, to a purpose, beat I have no place to challenge, I'm there, I've got it. They keep going on and on. Forget the bookshop, it was the bookshop, it has done it, I will never have to vote again, I only need wait till Thursday... Can buy a book, cheap, good addition to my collection... I catch the train into the city... That

makes sense too... Can run, can go... all a smooth smooth line and transaction... Transaction... Wrong word? I don't know. And now I'm sitting on the seat. The sun rises, sets... Miranda calls, tells me we should hang out...

Five years of reading, five years of writing... Or 20? I see now the ending to the noise. It is that Clayton is taken out of there in handcuffs... Voracious appetite. Cameras.

She calls and says to me ugh, why would she... She says I am playing a game I don't understand. Game of older people... Trying to cut the corners on growth...

I see the room in the reflection sitting at this yellow café... Italiana... I skipped my recommendation for a quick... Me... Amanda... I write as abstractedly as the other... Concretely as myself, I live, I continue to tell plans big line, no, I am loved, grandma knows I am telling the truth... Dread fined, and the eyes are an invite... I love God... Outside the window a man passes with his too young girlfriend, there is no elegance in her step while his is all street... he nods to a hooded, who is looking at a menu...

I found my fun again after a while. Naturally enough I also found my clenched jaw, clenched from my walks over the city... They ring an obnoxious bell behind me, it's food...

Here I am on the cusp of reality, no more wood, no more texture, unless it is paid for... I straight outside the walls of the fun, having my own, heaving myself... When has it ever not been those lines, coming from behind the sunglasses? The youth are aggressive. They get it from

their punk clothes. They play innuendos a long while. I see it in the coy smiles and the snickering and the coiled bodies... A layer of armour over them... I rub at my clenched jaw... I know a couple others like me... The city of clenched jaws... Clenched jaws and handbags... Sharp price for opportunity. Every line I write sends are feeling down my back. I am exhausted by the impressions which overtake me...

I've gone and ended up with a rash... That's what happens when you wear the same underwear for days... Not that I didn't have time, I just didn't get around to it... Pure itch... Who could tell me otherwise? No one, I am my own worst enemy. Eczema, change lightbulb all I want to do is push the button... Experimentation awaits... But one still has to live out the rest of the day throwing the corpse around... Painting and being slovenly with a broken leg and little to do... Shoot the brain, continue...

Today I get up late, Clark's sprightly for a change, calling up the clients with gusto... XO was... I make myself sit for 20 minutes... Mind on the clock... I'm in a rush to later deposit funds... And chums... And drogues...

They sense why I don't like anyone. I'm just another caught up in dialogue with myself. There's no way I could relate to anyone else... Occasionally I get up and look over the frosted glass. People waiting outside in the waiting room... I'm writing the journal. I'm on the job. At least, at most, need a little help, a little clarity on all these suggestions...

There is a possibility this is about those harsh words from old quarrels and such... Sure... They think I don't get dirty and that I'm just a pencil skirt. Sure. Maybe tomorrow I won't shower before I go into work. But I don't want to overextend myself... Not when I keep doublethinking over this paper and examining the details. And search, and suck, voila, I find myself knowing things I didn't know, or at least would not be afraid to bet something on...

Blinding lights and blinding ability, it keeps me forgetting...

The sun the moon the stars... Every day... The surroundings.

Bliiiiiiiiiiiiiigh

Is that the phone? That's the phone.

It's Miranda, she wants to talk. Granted. I take my time telling her the story. She tells me what she's been up to. Just talking...

Drat! I ended up in some similar spot!

I say it but I don't say it. Coffee. And that.

... Pick myself up off this greasy floor. Yes. Harumph. Yeah, here too there is only throbbing. Thank you, time.

Yeeagh. There it is. A flash of the spirit, a flash of imagination. I remember Amarina dressed up for a party...

Moving on...

Not a bad thing, just a thing...

XO still lingering... Not close to rosy sweet anymore I tell her, it was from all angles, and my chances aren't good... Right now it was something out of a risograph a bit tacky, but due to change...

Mainly it was the lines in her face. But I'm thinking up trouble for myself...

Preamble... Preamble... They want this room transfoed they want to perform administrations of the sort, the first room a bit dark first thing I'll get is a cleaner second thing clear off the benchtops table is too large not intimate too much visible here. Screen or large plant there. This room needs furniture a coffee set something rustic they will probably have some ideas from their favourite shop with the one with the nice boy. This room is good not much needs to be done... What's that? No... Right, that's an interesting idea. I'm just concerned what it'll be like from this side of the room. Hm? Yes... Alright... Over here, you'll have plenty of space for important items...

Money later I can think about it in my own time. Eventually it would be that day and I'll for now I put my hands behind my head and sit back on the couch. I see myself. What did that other Gadge say? Aggressive-narcissistic, left out... Active feminine... although the skews were moving about... balance shifting... A box full of private material...

Pink and white, they want pink and white. Yellow the yellow and bring it in in a cardboard box and an hour and a half to myself and an exhibition it's ready! Display at 9 pm... That'll all go well, I'll let them see and make friends with the new blinds the simple ones... If I have that I will have friends in the afterlife.

And that other place? I'll wait till they call me. A little professional detachment...

All comes back to my ego moment, hot day and I don't know where mum is so I go and see if she's in that weird double door corridor with the signs on either side. Inside is that overbearing old woman with the make up and next to her these manikins, a demoniacal one and a gas mask. Otherwise everything is flashy times. Ouch, that rash... Almost as neutering as that prickly pear in the Matron's... she tells me my watch has stopped. Do you mind? I'm trying to sleep. It's better that you don't catch yourself so you don't hurt your limbs pulling on the fence.

Got to keep on like a godsend and like a nephew that won't leave you alone. Stay in the Highground... Yes, don't try teach the insolent. Can you garner that... can't ask for any more. Too much time wasted. Alone, gladly. One never wastes the alone, but together one hits one kills with words and scratches the media... It's that left-hand... Can't help you on any other front, there are messages to check... I have lived like this for a very long time...

No he doesn't get it. You think he's going to get it? He was never going to get close to it. Not unless he saw a leprechaun run off with his life savings. I need to be alone with my bad self... Finally... Honey for the throat...

I intertwine myself with string. Knock on the door. It's Mia. She lets me in. She's been waiting for it... Since he was a small child this whole house was built for him. Naturally Mia has her own quarters. This house is a modern Gaudi. I delight. A benetiful time. A preen.

Father absent with the flu or something. Orders are in writing on the dresser and in Mia's eyes. Where is he?

He's upstairs. He's playing PlayStation. Mia wipes a spot. Lemon and ginger, thanks.

A great deal of space in these houses. Staircases in the hall and such. Crystal glass. Shiny, new world.

Again, the house needs out. How do you say it? I don't know. Imposition of taste the very large question.

He wants to Hall "beautified" he wants to garden "rectified" he wants taste after the sham that was the last designer. No rococo. No art nouveau. This man is thin in his allowances. I have met him once. His character is dangerous. A banker. No inner life. No dialogue.

Patrick! Pat, come down, Amanda is here.

Not sure whether I want to see this child. Any more interactions and I'll be held responsible for his neuroses. I kid. The looming question is the place of the mother/father relation and who the complexes will be placed on. The maid? No... The PlayStation. Quite fruity...

These rooms all look like tea towels.

I take off the blinds and charge him a lot of money, and rearrange some of the furniture in the hall. He asks me about principles, he quizzes me. He is clueless.

Back at the office I rest... The boss is flattening, injuring at odds... Dealing with his decisions and his point of least resistance... FFFF... Fuck you! Boss was saying into his phone. False alarm... I check the address and look out my window. 8 o'clock... Some idiot in a baseball cap sucking a lolly walks by. Vape, I mean. I touch myself, always this excess of the orgone... Always treading... Murmur-footing...

X Ophelia's calling... She's talking about the fair, she wants to go to the amusement park, talking about her nephew and some free tickets... She can't even wear an invitation let alone a blazer... She's a sucker... Always asking for permission, angry at herself... She probably just wants to talk about work... Another cut-rate cosmobitch... that's right X Ophelia, I'm coming out to lunch and the big dipper!

It wasn't all bad, although she kept talking about the horror and such whilst looking out of the corner of her eye... Well gee, if she wanted to play that role she could have just asked... Gadge... yeah... She did ask... Wants to know what the boss thinks... Darling... Don't kid yourself... That's between him and his papa...

Deary me she's a handful, asking for love this that and everyone's approval!

Having caught up to myself and locked the door and played that relaxing song I meander through my kitchen. "Party list", at the moment I couldn't care less about a party. The immanence is astounding. The party is still going. What to say of its constant renewal and all-vibe-show?

He's not coming. She's not coming. I sigh. I am wearing a shirt full of memories. I play the busy woman. Where is another I can unload upon? Nowhere, so these exertions will do. Getting everyone to get down and free, that's the prerogative, the off-standby, the reason there's spare

batteries in the drawer. My cosmopolitan lifestyle a cop out. I do it for the love and bells and whistles, beijos and such. The money distribution, this night a 1/2 grand, two weeks away, although if it falls through the cracks and I spend all the money on candy, well, wouldn't that be a something.

My skincare routine is failing. Doctor says I need this stuff called Clotrimazole for whatever it is my hands are doing. That's the latest party refreshment. Mum looks at me in that photo across the way. Get out of here, Mum! You're not invited. The finer details can be glossed over, naturally. Oh drat. X Ophelia. What does she want? Get out of my head! I'm caught. All I can see is her bending over to get that coffee. Gross! This is the sad reality of it, watching as they eat their sandwiches, their Poké bowls. Gosh, I love the waterpark. Just a short drive from rest and the tree on top of the hill. I know, I know, it's hard to leave...

X Ophelia. The elephant in the room. An attractive one, naturally. A candidate. A lesson in humility. I think I might keep it to myself. Can't help but imagine us both in black in gloves and cargo pants ready to case the jewellery shop or even just the surplus shop. Bunker down and such. Both of us have sharp tongues. Where did we get it? Ladybug, obviously. Suggestions. Clark had been there but had lost it all in the hedonism and bathroom and toilet trips, he saw it as temporal, finite. I suppose what I'm saying now is that one ought to keep the arts, to put it clearly. The arts lived, that is. Clark was just doing his stage routine over and over again. Miming, singing along to the Opera. One person show, free show, demanding sex and other niceties later for the entertainment. Unsolicited. X Ophelia on the other hand... She's sexing on everyone too. Filthy. I can't help but see

myself in her, especially when she loses the look... No, she never loses the look.

I grab Falooda, sit down and watch the families. I come to this restaurant all the time. They bring the food out on trolleys. Here's mine. Yum. The rice is four colours... White, yellow, orange, red, all mixed in. My right buttock hurts. Last time I was here I was with grievances. Now my name is Amanda Pream and I'll be 30 in not too long. Fortune. A lot of alone time. The occasional introduction of a bad character. Sometimes it's me, otherwise it's Jim and Joanne. Play acting as such. They have such kindly eyes in this part of the world. They relinquish me. A paddock of grass to be munched at. The crumbs are always swept away.

Still always these cobwebs of the mind. A poor handling of the transference. Always this chbadness no matter the brand and cut of cloth. Always teetering and twitting. He's no longer a threat. I don't busy myself with the irreconcilable. I touch myself to the deepest every night and take it from there. Every night meaning every minute. A landslide... Better to sit back and watch than to attack. The density just right. On the outside I am frightening, and on the inside I roll my eyes. I came across too strong the other day, I frightened the spider back into its hole. Another successful day. They wanted to talk about TV shows and politics. I wanted to bubble like champagne. Not a catching trend. I sip the drink. Deep breaths and such. The predator and common thread. A mank discovery at a younger age I remembered yesterday. I dance in my righteous wrappings. I drop them.

It's in both ears, the police, it's a spot, I wish I could get it... My pinky is too weak, my index too large to get at it although Mum says better to not put anything smaller than your elbow in it. But I suppose the money is in the hand so it doesn't matter too much... There it is... Ooft. Clark is looking. They are talking about me picking my ears. Fair enough. One must always expose and be exposed. Fine rites of childhood and such. They go back to their many plates, I wish they had stayed longer... There it is... I cough...

Cough

And exit the building. I can't remember, but down here is where XO lives. Waitaminit... What the... Is that noise? Pang in my neck!

What the... What was that? That sound just messed up my ears.

On the way home can't see. Retreatment. What's that? It's some???? on the ground... I don't know... Should I touch it?

A tray... It isn't a tray it's a microwave safe container with paint scrapes all over the inside... What's this?...

Move my sleep schedule back... always a push in this or that direction, a temperament, a locus, a locale, who put it there? Me? The vibe is cocksure. A ripening of old fruit.

I scribble it a bit it's a map. It's zigg zaggy...

Oh... Oh no... A lady just got run over on the intersection... Shit... That's horrible... Gee... Augh...

Fuck... far out... Need to get a bit further away...
Gee... I saw that... The angle wasn't too bad for me, I
should be thankful... Caught at the corner, just standing
there with kindly eyes!

Already I'm conversing with my friends in my head.
They shake their heads at the end and give me some
consolation. It's okay to cry now...

Golden honey days, children of my life untainted... Slick
willingness... It could only mean one thing...

Far out... Was it the kid or the old woman who

All that yesterday was a lot. I need to rehab from that. Far too intense. These long weekends end me up in odd places. Strained too far from it all. Nonetheless I'm going to go out today. Can't live in the hole.

Camo. Binocs... The stimuli? Neighbours talking far too loudly. This is one of the good parts. It's not dark enough yet for me to look over the fence. Bickering... Wop! Certainly not bickering any more. These fairytale moments always confuse me. I don't know how to react. Neither of these two know a thing about acting. Got me looking for my shadow in the half light. Makes me wonder whether blending in is just concession. Okay. It should be safe to look over the fence now... Oh my, that's stunted...

The gluttons! I go back inside, noisily. What is it with these interchangeable Romeos and Juliets? They're cheap candy. Dare I harbour that within myself? They're my neighbours. I'll take the muslin cloth and see what I can see through it. Hopefully not another suitor. Hopefully just a tea-drinker. A cleric. Raise some grievances as to the anatomical function. The reprehensible actions I brutalise myself with. We can eat eggs every morning and stretch at night. Far out, I'm tired. In no physical sense. Just the senses pushed about. Neighbours, lens is no fun when they only showed the television. And closer to the fire just noise... Would rather go to work. Looks like I got what I asked for... Casing my own place for a hint of sentimentality...

So that's why today at work no work is done. Not that I didn't meander over it and play my own tune on it for awhile, I tell Clark. But bad behaviour has to happen sometime. I channel my sad face. He looks at me like trash in the general entry. I reciprocate accurately. He walks off and goes does double the quota to make up for lost time. Cushy, this cushy job with its donors and do-as-you-like basis. I can hear him whimper in there, fighting with me in his head. Carmichael our intern eats a \$25 sushi lunch and learns an important lesson. Later he invites me out to a gathering. Wouldn't mind a haunt but it's in the cold depths of some arrogant money-pub with its gimmicks and prices. Sorry Carmichael, things are far too pronounced...

Fill it like a vase! Carmichael, you have a delicate vase inside of you.

Gosh, take heed of your words, Amanda... This kid won't drown your pain! He'll just pick it up and leave fingerprints on it.

Hey, Amanda!... You really should come tonight. I've been planning this one for a while...

... Someone's calling... Valencia... Hello, this is Amanda... Oh hey Valencia! What's up!... Nah, I'm just on my way home... Oh, cool! Yeah. Me? I've been alright, still a bit low after all that... yeah... Yeah it's no biggie... Oh wonderful... I'm so happy for you!... When can I come and see it?... Yeah, that sounds great. Okay Valencia. Okay. Bye! Valencia bought a house. I'm happy for her... She's looking after children... Me? Stash

boxes... Ack! Why am I bleeding?... Oh, it's just strawberry juice... I thought I was bleeding...

Oh, stop it with your pity!

Oh Valencia... Potent pollen, the stamen...And now someone to spend the rest of her days with... She used to entertain that one a lot... Hers is a dream come true, but she'll be the glue, spread thin... Holding it all together souped up on coffee and fatigue... Oh, but still!

It isn't always like this. It isn't always Valencia, Valencia, but she's with me now, I couldn't stand her back then, we were friends, good friends but far too far from each other.

I try to put it out of my mind. It's this game. These characters... Makes me caught and smashed. Giving not so freely and what not. I sleep.

A swap... A snap a break of summer close. Backwards tilting, backward... Bus. Out. Where. Anticipate as download streaming from the face... I exhale.

Flapping and dressing another something something in the dossier

Been doing dirt off the front of the house... Frank consolation

A businessman's end...

Me? I'm sexy, I'm virulent, I'm dressed up to ..., I've got the tic, the always bug, the flak, flaky, the tainting and that all that Glenn, I am a forewarned foreclosure to the allowing them in? Oh, by me! Take me there!

I'm at Amarina's place... What... Looks like a bad children's show... One of those houses where the kids have their say on the place... Toys scattered everywhere, School art projects... Macramé, tornado, a corner full of board games... I am stupefied by this environment... The smell of talc... I can't stay long, I mention...

Amarina wants to talk to me about the house. She wants to see my demon. I brace myself...

Well, for one do you have a lot of things on the ground. If you can get everything off the ground...

Yes but...

If you find you have too much stuff on your benchtops you'll have to sort through everything...

Yes, but...

Mind it you smarm I didn't come here to listen! She's telling me the things she should tell someone dearer... I don't accept that!

Always, always trying to break down the door!

Gee, what's come over me?

Oh no, I wake up...

Lovely, mother and father speak...

Aw hey... you ah... mind if I take a look at that?

What's his name? Simon? Silcock? Holding some cultural capital...

I am feeling heavy in the eyelids I am finding it hard to suppress my yawns I am struggling to stay awake the weight on my shoulders is so great and lying down is so comfortable. XO tells me I am in a deep state of trance and that I am better off taking her prompts in the matter... She tells me I should nod once if I have and twice if I have not. I nod once. I nod twice. I nod twice. I nod once. She tells me to speak up. Donderhead.

We go and get a coffee. She's wired of the session and is speaking in careful tones... She buys me an iced latte. No, no sugar... she doesn't leave. Why doesn't she leave my headspace? She is clueless. Our conversation should have ended half an hour ago back at the golden handles and glass doors. Ticks me off. Suitor. This woman is a suitor.

It's not exactly daytime when the sky is black. I leave the office early. I'm tired.

There is texture between the louvres. In the openings, in the corridors.

I'm in a halo. I'm in a port. Window open...

I remember the dream was about when I was 25. I wished to check my click my fingers. I had to think about it a long while. Finally I earned. I got lucky.

On the way I knew Beatrice, Alice, Karim, Ariel, Berlioz, Barrettes. Now I know a few. I know a lot. But I know a

few. Knowing ain't really a big deal no more. Now it's more about the strain. The walks. The strolls.

My despair ends with a knocking on the door and begins a terror. They want to break it down and sodomise me. Who? The young men. They want to have it and eat it too. Young man takes me out and acts like a Michelin stick, wants me to give him credit for a lending ear. It's poor sport . I would rather skate. No flower or prepackage. I am picky, that's my job. The inverse neglect? Can't see the leaves from the forest. Can't tell the eaves from the Boris. I sit. Someone this way comes. A duo. A double. They sit down, and make haste towards pleasure.

Funny how when the light falls it's better that one doesn't touch it.

This weekend will be spent in not too much anticipation... As in a lot... As in the cat is afraid... Demon counting days. Constricting the trunk and all that. Clock turning. Tick tick tick tick tick.

Pollocking... Moth-behind-me... Batting...

Off to a good start already. Not only that, my handwriting did well for myself... My hands hurt I fell over.

Jeering...

Why are you afraid of intimacy, Amanda? Because I have a fungal infection.

XO and I are great. Good and dandy... Playing basketball... Joking... we don't sweat together... Although XO has some things to say about it. She's asking me what my deal is... I give her death eyes.

Finally I got them. A bit of tech... Smooth glass... My prisms... Binoculars... Oculars... I have a look out the window down to the street below... It's been said and done... Makes me feel like Mr Kent, says Clark... he looks at me endearingly... He too, thinks this work is too clean... He wants to get his hands dirty... He is the inventor of his ship, the intellectual property is his, some doors are off-limits to us, in any case he's showing us around the office... Which exists more in the address book than it does this high-rise... I defer to him gladly...

Don't go outside any more... the sun has died... The reasons are piecemeal... In any case all were far too drunk... Feeling it or not feeling it and such... So now, the brain trust... And the many hours of sunlight... Pressing, burgeoning matters, razzmatazz... Miranda and I, we speak of it... That there is effort involved... Slimy effort... All for a poor show... They must be reading palms... The domains of their bodies overlapped... A group of wall-flies...

Contra, and the means still always there. See it on the empty streets after New Year's and all the destruction. I pick up a pamphlet floating my way, it tells me I need to paint. It tells me I can find myself in the sliding of it all. I finally cleaned my room yesterday.

Company is here... Careless brought company. These ones want a sit down, here in the humming lightbulb. K tells me to keep up the appearances for at least half an hour, then I can return to my chambers... Where I try not to listen outside the door...

Coagulating... It never accumulates in an active stretching, I admit...

Okay... Drinks... Food... La television... Contrarian approach... The speakable... The unspeakable... The yet to find out... I surprise them this time... I am prepared... Let us learn a play... No... No they don't want that... Neither do I... Exhaustion, and a living...

What, what did I do, am I in your way? Gee! I was just cleaning up! They're all looking at me now... What is it?

Well, it doesn't seem to be anything I said... Oh, she's pointing... The window? Ugh... I punk on her but nobody laughs...

... What on earth was that? Am I missing something? Adjourned, for now...

K came in later... Says I can't be snorting and spitting in the sink... She says I look like the devil when I do it... Hold up a freakin'...

Shit... She can run and tell her boyfriend... The sparkly eyed organising body, with its big muscles and boxer briefs...

It all threatens me... I pick my ears... Reminisce on those diseased vomiters...

The downcast approaches me... Says he likes my spite... That it's right... Draws himself up... His shoulders don't hold him back... His name? The Prince... Actually, just Damien... Presence is looming, far too much, named one... not another named one... What's he want? Juvenile

lunch... Repose... He wishes he could bring a tear to mine eye, but I am calloused... I am a shellfish.

Me I am automatic I am good worker I always will be.
Lover I am not so sure about priestly lady I am a little
but I have my fun of course I don't jeopardise, I drink the
coffee everyone drinks. Dainty, dainty of the world,
dainty the number, dainty the crochet hook, I run, I'm
well and truly my own, I will not give myself... Not to
the games or to the forked tonguing, sensitivity is a lost
art, some things one should not try, should not try revive
the dead, knock at the coffins Amarina keeps watch on.
Should trial on to amaranth, amaro, slow burn, simply
sickening, the fruit of having-done-another-thing-else...

The boss is shouting at me, he shouts my name three
times... Amanda, Amanda, Amanda! Amanda Preamp,
are you on the same page as us? Clark is in a fright, he
breaks down at his having-to-be-rude, he doesn't like it,
he is a scattered chess game.

Me, it's no doubt I've been slacking off, my hands
moved to other places and one I pushed on my mouse,
boss losing his breath, me losing mine, flying, not too
much flying, taming... Trying to fly, whipping myself,
boasting, easing, oh! Meandering!... I think of the better
nights. Oh! That someone... I put my tongue back inside
my mouth... The trick is not to get too caught up in the
getting caught... Oh? Tonight alone when I really should
be doing this I'll make myself a cup of tea... much
needed, although much needed too late to stop anyhow...
There...

Back home two nips of scotch and boss is none of my concerns, nasty drink... He'll stink in a year or two. Flesh rotting off corpse. Thanks for the job, boss. Juicy kundalini. Pink. Swimming pools. I've never had that. Bully I bully this that and the pinstripe look everyone goes for it they don't have it I have it all you noise and you... Sorry, I get carried away sometimes.

My arm is clean. Conceptualising is good enough. I am my own right-hand... The left moves also. Sorry boss I need some time in my office. I'll never find that feeling again. Whimper whimper. Struck from behind with a riding crop. The entrance was barred, the ceiling had caved in.

No, not X Ophelia... My eyes my only connection to the outside world... A breath of fresh air... Seeing myself in the wall mirror next to me I feel ashamed... Was I always this tired... No... They keep changing the song in here...

I could go a spa. Could go a cry. But in saying so... Well, the dilemma is evident. Nothing to do with the Laadeedaa of speech. Find it in the dusty corner. Some people have found the treasure... In return their lives are obtuse. And XO... She looks at me like I am her lover...

She's vivacious... She's high on sorrow. She is the object of her own guilt. Her eyes are wide.

I don't want to go into it straight away. I'm waiting for her to ask me. I am a sea urchin. Can you see us, we are chatting, conversing under the awning... Myself reclined... Herself upright... We take our terms... Laugh gaily... A blessing... One should Hope for it forever... Don't take it for granted...

It came a long time. I am tired of explaining it. Really it is a matter of course. Guess not, it seems. Yes I cannot stay my hand in the wearier of months. Not that I care greatly. The time spent not doing what one wishes is spent walking. Up down and around... None have seen...

She's writing up a piece of some sort... It's one with the eyes. It's sleepless, not that XO ever wasn't... There's a lot on the table for it yet it doesn't occupy a lot. Yet she is consumed by it. Clandestine clandestine... Reverie... Yet she looks a chicken. The matriarch. Cub... A cub... A bother biting on my knee. What is it?

Amanda, I don't know what I'd do without you...

There goes her loneliness... Right thing... Yet defeated, yet still fighting... We do not live in a perfect world... Hurdles have duration... Hers, she tells me, will push things out a half year, a year... I envy her song and her motherliness. I envy her who is subject to her violence... Her coarse tongue bruising...

Perhaps not with me... if it were us it would be a death match... Not when both our heads are as loud as they are... We eat ourselves up inside... Mine neck and mine life compounding... Tittle and tattle and the whittling away of hours... there is always an itch one can scratch... Even though it hastens pestilence... Always a choice of seats... I will lose many more months... I cannot force it, cannot force the sloping...

Yet I approach a change. I approach having to see it. Hang to gather it all somehow...

Where did I put... There it is. Black paint. Black face paint. Black jumper. Camo. Skinny. Need to go shopping. Want to draw breath from a straw. Want to relax my

countenance all over the place like the mailman on Thursday and his five-minute stays. Like a boss after his fourth... These shoes are always so hard to put on. I think that's part of the kink. The military kink. Keep your shoes on. Armouring. Everything safer in a uniform. Oh... What is that! There's a hole in my jumper.

I leave... Good evening! One says it to me on my walk down. Good evening! I couldn't agree more. Tonight is sizeable. I'm pinching with it. Everyone is getting some tonight. XO, Clark, my date, myself... we're all gonna get some.