

THE
EAGLE
IN
THE
SKY

CLASSIFIEDS WANTED
FOR ISSUE TWO

AVIAN
LOOP



ISSUE 1

Autumn
2020

The intertidal areas are different here—upstream in the estuary. They're softer than the rocks around whakaraupo where I've been swimming these last few weeks. Like the two takarangi carved into the prow of the waka taua just ahead of me, things move in many directions at once here. The wind flutters peaks across the surface while the moon pulls water up the central channel. Shellfish submerge themselves. Deep in muddy beds. They emerge for the incoming colder water, oxygen, and avoid talons of the shorebirds eyeing slugs and snails. Sea vegetables grow shaded by reeds and bowing grasses. Nutrients are lodged in driftwood and fishbones.

They have tied up the waka now. Two men who didn't need to talk lined up their carrier across from the small, low wharf: nose upstream, tail down. Tides slide past til it's unmoored again. The attention from the shore has faded. Pākehā picture-takers and shy observers. Kids watching their dads, or uncles, or big brothers doing the important jobs. Watching, wrapped in a beach towel with lids heavy over big eyes. A band starts up in the hall across the road playing soft pop and classic hits. It's family friendly.

The estuary shivers in the wind but Rā, the heart of the afternoon, reflects off ripples to clean the waka like the people cannot. After a day's work, the rays chat and chide with their old friend afloat, exchanging stories of the people they have seen together in this valley. Today and every day. Every year on this day. Day after day. Never knowing they are watched over by these old friends. Well, some of the locals know it, and wave.

Only two flags rise to the wind today, and neither are blue.

I]

The beach stretched, awesome in its length, yet somehow was filled the whole way. Bodies on towels, speedos on bodies, umbrellas dug into sand casting slithers of shadows, providing little respite.

Lowering my body, now, to an uncomfortable perch. Not on sand; the cobbles clearly imported.

Walking cautiously down to the water, the beach suddenly disappears and drops steeply down to the sea. Standing before the drop, bodies floating about a meter away from me.

And the planes, swooping across, echoing the coast line. Every five to ten minutes. So close their branding is enlarged.

II]

The outdoor pool becomes crowded, turning from a mass of water to a mass of upper torso.

Looking around the pool, in waiting, I shift my attention to the decorative nature of the baths. The intricate mosaic tiling, the fountain and garden up above, the semi-circular terracing that surrounds.

A little tune plays, bopping heads turn towards the deeper end of the pool.

It starts with a slight movement, but it is vague. There is a sense of uncertainty, until one ripple turns more surely to a wave. The anxious quiet slowly turns to energetic chatter and giggles as the waves continue to gain momentum. Bodies growing more confident in the process.

Earlier, I could join in the revelry more easily. There weren't as many bodies, and I could swim, jump, push over the waves, simply

enjoy the motion and the novelty of being pushed around in this way. Looking around now, at the proximity of figures to one another, I wondered if this capacity was in fact an overlooked health and safety issue. Despite having waited 45-minutes for the event, I decide to leave.

III]

Lying here, the sand is warm, the sky overcast. The air feels strange against my skin. It's potent but not heavy or sticky, there is a thinness. I can see it; the rocks a haze underneath the dusty orange tint.

You run out to the water, exuberant. My mood doesn't match. I have a bad feeling.

Those of us still reclining have formed a line. Quiet, our necks cranked, eyes closed, as if to soak up the sun. It doesn't have it's usual freshness, however. Opening eyes, looking into it, now, I feel ill.



Posts, rails, and balustrades painted faded forest green. The number 36 etched in blackletter gold, cracked, flaking and covered in stickers. They lead my feet across the concrete patchwork. A low roof overhangs. Curving up at every corner. Count the sides: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. The wide brim barely conceals the copper green tent that sits atop, pointing up and up towards the endless sky. I came here as a child, entranced by the wonders of the square. The giant steel ice-cream cone, the floating restaurants on iron tracks, glossy chess pieces as tall as I was, and my favourite of them all; the eight-sided police kiosk standing low and proud at the base of the infinitely high cathedral spire. Once bustling and covered in colourful branding, now derelict and dystopian. My eyes lead me to the panels torn to expose fluorescent tubes that once illuminated the white and blue beacon spelling P – O – L – I – C – E. Now it's the muted grey and green that shine brightly where vibrancy once consumed the corner. Venetian blinds are closed tight behind half-frosted glass and seagulls play on the lip of the gutter. My memory of this place is warped. It is a symbol of home, of welcome, and of information. Its shape lends itself to the faces of friendly street vendors. It could be as much an ice-cream shop as a police station. But it is a symbol of authority and of structure. Hard lines of concrete meet aluminium doors. It is a wall with two sides. Without occupants the memory of the building remains. Structure is magnified. Authority now vaguely menacing. Now more like a home for the thought police. The safe haven now resides in the remnants of green paint, a sombrero-shaped roof and soft 135-degree corners. Empty but never gone.

#####

“With a surname like Corvid, no-one wasn’t expecting you to paint those talons black.”

Another bon mot broadcast from the direction of J_II.

Baeston whipped his mitts back into the muff. J_II and he were pulled over about 12 mile north of Motueka Knot, by the weir above the confluence that diluted Chocolate Awa into a shade of caromilky.

“You’re not listening to me. All I’m saying is, this ain’t your dad’s warm compress rock.” Gave her a long hot free-jazz eye-swipe.

“LoI, your face looks like the palm in Guernica.”

Van Cryin-for-a-Wage now jacks pink prices for some bark, but before he dropped off to become a full-time L-phenyl junko and cauterized his villi, he writhed on stage with the rest of the Gelleed Eels. Now a puppet named needle brought up the rear, and it was Baeston’s turn to tinkle the strings. Another 45 and they’d reach Outskirts.

J_II climbed back in and released the kerning iron, pulling back onto SH. “Wait a tic.” Baeston jumped off and let 20 ccs out of both back tyres, opened the rear doubles and flipped the esko—extracting a couple Über-embossed **mothers** — ripped tabs and they stepped it.

The lineup did not look promising.

Husband-wife duo Lost Wallet, whose only known output to date was the schlock-ballad *Blepharitis Babby*. Breastmilk Bodhisattva—members of BMX street trader-gang Sad Hobbits, priding themselves on low wheelbases and even lower saddles.

Toffee Scrimshaw. Nautopunks who’d blackstrapped their entry through revenue on loot plundered by their local branch of the black market protein ring.

The venue weren’t much either. WINGTYPs had melted away just about to the rebar. The floor a partial encabblement emitting marachinic odours. Proprietur Whendy, with sucrotic dark rings and kohl drawn in reverse distributes his chapbook gratis, Stones My Body Has Made.

Baeston noted Whendy’s split second foamer as J_II and he dragged the pippymatic past to the roastrum and they began setting malic levels.

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list of loss:  
lost  
forgotten  
or misplaced  
ideas  
lovers  
wilfully  
Carelessly  
or conveniently....  
missing...

GiovanniTiso reminded me via his bat-bean-beam  
blogspot, that Dante's body was so loved and  
cared for by Franciscan monks that they secretly  
took it from its sarcophagus. They hid it in so many  
different places that they forgot where they hid it...  
and they lost it.

I lost my Iranian bracelet cycling home from  
Morley College...  
When my Brazilian bracelet became so loved  
I gave it to a young grieving widow  
So I know where I last was with it

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group first established by  
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Writers and editors for issue  
one include but are not limited to:  
James Hope  
Hamish Petersen  
Natalie Kittow  
Georgy Tarren-Sweeney  
Daniel Shaskey

Designer:  
Daniel Shaskey

Typefaces:  
Avara is a collaborative  
font initiated by Raphaël  
Bastide and published by  
Velvetyne Type Foundry.  
MT Grotesque is designed  
by Frank Hinman Pierpont.

Printer:  
Angus Donaldson

Correspondence:  
Avian Loop  
PO Box 22 351  
Ōtautahi, 8013