

LUNCH



002

Welcome to our second summer LUNCH.
Suitable for vegetarians and vegans.

LUNCH 002

Welcome to the second edition of Lunch. Our magazine is full of the poetry created by poets who are friends of Poetry Kit Courses.

This edition edited by Jim Bennett

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Cover picture - Tea in the Bedsitter 1916 – Harold Gilman 1875-1919

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BILL COTTER

STORM OVER LAKE CONDAH

He lopes above the lake, the unwanted thought,
There, where the land and the sky run together
And where the petals of the blood-stained sun
Close upon themselves
And where the shallow water shivers among the reeds.

Now, he is perched high on the branch of a wattle.
His glossy wings are folded,
His hooded head is thrust out
And his dry, rattling stone voice is calling,
Calling upon the cold, featureless moon to appear
And whiten the lake.

BILL COTTER

HIGH COUNTRY DRY

A few stringy clouds hang above the hills
And the 'roo skin patches of dry, cleared land.
Perched on a burnt- out stump, a raven spills
A flood of stony notes that creep, expand
Across the gullies, then lumbers off, fanned
By the festering wind and the late sun.

Beside a spider legged windmill sits one
Grey rabbit, and, bristling with defiance,
A barrel headed bull roars at the sun,
His eyes focused on the smoky distance.

Stock tracks meander through the dry clay beds.
Spikes of bracken fern glint in the harsh light.
Old man stringy barks shake their shaggy heads
And long deserted creeks are lined with bright,
Shingle back stones. High up, a whistling kite
Swings in lazy loops, props then wheels away.

A grumbling truck passes, loaded with hay.
Mud blisters crack on the surface of dams
And on Lake Glenmaggie the shadows play
Over stumps where secretive bream once swam.

BILL COTTER

GIBBER PLAIN

The blowtorch sun blasts the blue
Metallic sky. Spiked and sparking,
Copper gibbers gleam and glance.
Salt bush, silver skinned,
Wallows in the dust. Death drains
The bell-blue curve, bends the spine
Of hills hung, heaving and spent,
Parting, polishing the bones of the past.

BILL COTTER

DESERT STORM

Dawn nudges the darkness aside
And a thick light slowly fills the gullies.
Clouds and thunder come tramping together.
Lightning spurts in pasty yellow.
Afternoon rain creates mini craters smelling of mud.
A feral bull camel chews its cud,
Unconcerned
And a kangaroo, grey as weathered hessian,
Props against a rock.

Now, dusk wipes the sky clear.
The moon rises, clean as a washed plate.
A burrowing frog, patient for many months,
Blinks, licks the mud, lumbers up.

The camel chews on
And the kangaroo lopes leisurely away.

BILL COTTER

A BEACH TOO FAR

Death of a shearwater

The minute detonations of his heart
And the deep, bedded history of his race
Drove him on.
But, tonight, salt spittle, foam,
Wind and bursts of whip sharp lightning
Conspired against him.
The ragged skeins of his companions struggled on,
Soon lost in the tangle of dusk and rain.
But he, responding to a will not really his own
And an auto pilot buried somewhere in his brain,
Persisted, rising, falling, rising again,
Until, with the beach spider web thin ahead,
He was taken, swung high,
Brandished and tossed,
A trophy,
Crucifix dark,
Into the sea.

PETER EMERY

Christina's World

(from Andrew Wyeth's painting)

I briefly pause from scrabbling uphill -
succulent wild blueberries
that grow down in the Dell
so tasty so worth a little effort

Today as I look all around me
I realise how much I love this place
coastal Maine in all her summer glory
and I wonder how I got to be this lucky

High on the ridge stands
Grandpa Hathorn's mansion
often called the house of many windows
each one frames a fresh view of my world

OK so my legs are next to useless
I choose to not let that be who I am
prefer to keep my eyes on wide horizons
I'm Grandpa's girl my spirit is a sailor

PETER EMERY

The Look

(from *Mrs Mounter at the Breakfast Table* – Gilman)

Mrs. Mounter portrayed as I remember her
that famous look said more than many words
you'd get one if you were late to pay the rent
she'd seldom choose a verbal confrontation
preferred a look determined disappointment
you'd feel reprimanded were not late again

that look reminds me so much of my father
who seldom raised his voice far less his hand
there was no need whenever I'd upset him
he'd *look* and I would question what I'd done
no avoidance through resenting his behaviour
unnervingly effective the power of that look

PETER EMERY

my neighbour's wife

I recall that summer when I turned seventeen
weeks of endless sunshine and girls
in mini-skirts and skimpy tops
learning how to play with sex and femininity
and awesome power to keep lads on a string

raging hormones guaranteed their tricks
would work on me I gave those girls
especially Miss Jenny Kay
every last ounce of encouragement
to make me dance I loved to be their puppet

but Jenny Kay had competition
my room looked out on our back yard
and next door's too where a young wife
you can call me Rachel sunbathed privately
safe from any prying eyes excepting mine

where Jenny's charms were girlish and naive
Rachel was in every way a woman nubile
a fantasy dream lover fit for any teenage lad
in reality I knew she scared me just a little bit
so I kept my Rachel safely for my dreams

FIONA H

Flames

My heart took one fell swoop
As you shot me
from the sky
And into your fist

As you shot me
I try to rise
And into your fist
You make me fall

I try to rise
You watch me cry
You make me fall
The words are clear

You watch me cry
Once held so dear
The words are clear
My diatribes

Once held so dear
Your bonfire pit
My diatribes
Ashes of spit

Your bonfire pit
Flames all out
Ashes of spit
My hands are split

Flames all out
As I scrape you from my tongue
My hands are split
and wonder what it was all about

As I scrape you from my tongue
from the sky
and wonder what it was all about
My heart took one fell swoop

FIONA H

Baby Bird

Before leaving the house with my daughter
I turn on the radio;
Callers talk of trips to Cuba.

Another muddy March morning on the horizon
Million literal miles from Cuban colour
Tiny hummingbirds in brilliant skies

We take our steps outside
Join early risers for school and work
Cars flying precariously close

Daughter safely delivered
I put on ear phones to drown the sounds
Splat! A small broken egg on the path

Church bell strikes nine
Glancing upwards I wonder
If it fell from a nest

Tragedy at this early Hour
Man hurries past, Icarus perfumed
While I go Home to write.

An aura of emptiness
egg's final resting place
Another promise lost.

FIONA H

Fallen Night

Pack up your breakdown and take it
Far from where we savour
Your fall from Grace a favour;
a fervour of morning butterflies.
Every time I see me falling
To see you in colour;
not so black or white.
How unbecoming this ache becomes.
Darker the night falls
Slower the tuning in time
Breakdowns and breakups;
no easy way
to save us from falling
into ourselves.
Night of tragic comedy
Pick me ups for passion
tranquil pain killer joke
Coleridge and Cohen
for the comedown
Turn me back on.
Catch me when we fall
Back to the warm dark wave
Before night is gone.

FIONA H

Selkie

Suspended in Time, I am twelve
Floating face down in shallow sea
Cold, clear, salty, the taste on my lips
As I respire.
Outspread limbs
turn me around again
Opening my eyes underwater
Sun's heat on my back
Summers always seemed longer and hotter.
Submerged sound;
Overhead a plane's flight
I watch its shadow on underwater sand
Rippling shape
I am weightless.
Calm waves reflecting light,
Time ticks slowly as it likes.
Mother sitting by the shore
Father crosses himself, then swims across the tide.
A seal watching us on sea-weeded rock
Sheds its skin in imitation.

SHEREE MACK

‘we’ll show you you’re a woman’*

in memory of Eudy Simelane

The minute you see likeness is when you realise that no matter what you’re going through in your life, you are not alone

- Zanele Muholi

- a) On the outskirts of Johannesburg, she is finally cured.
- b) The Namaqualand daisy is in flashy orange bloom.
- c) They say Satan has a hold on her. She is a demon.
- d) I am afraid to be myself.
- e) In a park, on a moonless night,
they each take their turn to correct her.
- f) The township always smells of *Omo* washing powder,
even when we have no water.
- g) My mother says I must take a boyfriend.
She invites the Pastor into our home to convert me.
- h) No way a finger or tongue can satisfy you, he says.
You need one of these to sort you out, he says
as he pulls down his pants.
- i) They find her naked body in a creek,
stabbed 28 times, including the soles of her feet.
- j) No one is saying anything. No one has been caught.
- k) I sense the guys in my neighbourhood are planning something. They cannot accept me
choosing a woman. My day will come.

**‘We’ll show you you’re a woman’ was the title of a report compiled by Human Rights Watch into the violence and discrimination experienced by black lesbians and transgender men in South Africa.*

SHEREE MACK

What the body remembers

a found poem

Stop pushing me, fingerprints all over my back.
I turn because a friend calls my name.

Death stares from the cracks and corners,
blood, year after year, remnants of finger sweat.

You have time to watch the birds return to the trees,
waiting for the storm.

The plushy air of summer thunder.
Here it comes, in the low lichen coloured light. A ritual.

Quick glances, sideways looks dripped in water.
A needle threaded with thought. Ash upon their boots.

They search for my body, unwrapping
and wrapping bundles, little fragile wisps of linen.

Across the river, only one to see my lit face passing.
Whisper what I remember.

I can't speak of it without feeling.
It's something found with a white flower.

SHEREE MACK

stand on any corner of the fire city, look west to death

After Eve Ewing

we come from fire city, it's been so for generations.
we show the whites of our teeth, to put you at ease.
we real cool*, sound and safe. down in the ashes of our homes,
we know how to conceal, the flick of flames,
through practice. we advise you to not come any closer,
not to touch our hair, say, or our anointed skin. we know.
we burn our own lips own before we speak of our tiredness
and frustrations, before we call out your actions for what
they really are. don't look at the sun, yes that hot.
we lie down, spread out ruby, vermillion, red lapping waves,
thinking of an alternative era when fire kissed truths burn
our birth into freedom and laughter and love.

*homage to Gwendolyn Brookes too x.

SHEREE MACK

The Melodrama of Gone With The Wind - Found poem

Sweeping violins. A Southern Belle, pretty and shallow, chatters on as young men flock around her feet, captive. *Fiddle de de.* Relishing in colour, technicolor; rich reds, blues and greens of the gallant Old South. Pan out see mansions surrounding by plantations. Bonnets and ribbons. Dances and horses. Cotton.

Mammies, yes we all need a mammy. If not to to fetch, clean and be loyal, then as a comparison as she be obese, coarse, ugly, but have a shiny, glossy face of contentment as she be the most happy slave alive. See. *Just hold on and suck in.*

Silhouetted against a magnificent orange tinged sky, identify the stock figures; the Confederate soldier, the minstrel, the mammy and the spear wielding African savage. Changes are afoot, here comes the war. Men ride off waving their hats in the air, screaming like Indians. The women are left behind with terror in their eyes and excitement in their breasts as they must tend the children and the wounded.

As a wind of flames sweeps through Georgia; menacing reds and oranges against a bleak dark sky swirl and crackle in time with fast ascending music. Real danger and Butterfly McQueen (real name not character name) runs around like a blue arsed fly worrying with no sense or plan.

But turn towards a more intimate scene, with softer reds and misty pinks. And slick black haired anti-hero takes her, the heroine, in his arms, kisses her deeply and leaves her alone on the road to Tara with invalid, newborn and Prissy (who we have already established is useless). Tears, plenty of tears. Always draws the audience in.

Yes'm. In hunger, Scarlett digging up dried up roots and tubers down by the slave quarters. She's overcome by a 'niggery' scent and vomits. An epic moment. (There's the assumption I should know what this smells like, what this means?)

But not to worry. The war ends. They marry. He might want to tear her to pieces. She might still think she loves someone else. A child comes along and doesn't stay long. But she was Bonny.

cont..

cont...

Like thick lips and flat noses, against white chiselled features. Grin, keep grinning at the camera and even do a little childish dance in your starched turban. Rustle, rustle red petticoat on under black skirts. Always pleasing her white folk. Is this who I am supposed to identify with? The faithful worker, desexualised so the white family remains safe?

(Not me. I'm with Scarlett, green bonnet, green velvet curtains outfit, red figure hugging evening dress with feathers. I should be kissed and often by someone who knows how.)

It's quitting time, quitting time at Tara.

Source: <http://www.art21.org/texts/kara-walker/interview-kara-walker-the-melodrama-of-gone-with-the-wind>

SHEREE MACK

How do I touch without gloves?

The orchard is a rare find.
I never thought of the blossom.
The pure smell lingers down the road,
undulating. From the back,
she squeals for the hidden dips,
felt in the core. Always afterwards.

His neck is red. Pains in his head.
That must be why he seldom smiles.
I know I put them on a pedestal.
Yet, I still want what they had.
How they kept the ice from melting.

The alternative is now 'Other'.
She invites me as things get political.
It reminds me of those actresses
who accessorise at the awards
with women of colour.

Perhaps, the sea is history
and with cobbled streets along the docks,
I thought we were going somewhere.
Same images played over and over again,
the trickster used my face. My skin. My voice.

I say, give me green fields and bleating sheep,
for I can see behind their stares.
Some days, I smile them away. Other times,
I visualise punching their eyes out
then laughing into the hollow chambers.

KRISS NICHOL

Big as the Wind

the morning like you was beautiful
as it sat wrapped like a special present

eagerly you peeled back the first layer
deciding on a coastal route
stopping at Flamborough Head

the bowl of the sky was so blue it hurt
and the sun breathed mirages

that sprang from parched grass
only to shift their wobbling
onto tarmac blurring the road

we walked along crumbling cliffs past
dislodged stones that huddled like mounds

of milk teeth I caught your Bisto-kid image
along with slices of that day served up later
on squares of polished paper

yesterday I watched your eyes glaze over
heard your laughter still to a frozen silence

and today in this house you never saw your soul
big as the wind blows through the rooms
out into the November rain

KRISS NICHOL

A Day with Grandma

walking into memories cracks open
doors to melancholic journeys
and boiled cabbage childhood

but today happiness calls in the rush
of blood that holds us together
breaks the skin of day with its simplicity

together we crack eggs pour milk into Pyrex
jug of coarse white flour your pink tongue
peeking through mocha-coloured lips

bubbles surface and pop in the pan
of hot butter the mix solidifies
is thrown and caught

with equal mix of joy and terror
I'm imprisoned by the sound of your laughter
yet freed to fling wide the windows of now

make new memories

KRISS NICHOL

In The Evening When the Boats Come In

trailing nets pregnant with bounty
a cry shimmers in the sunset

suspends for a moment
is replaced by shuffling sand
as the village makes for the shore

grabbing sections of nets
they pull in unison singing
hemming in the catch

while the sea shudders and boils
from futile escape attempts
as booty is dragged ashore

nets give birth to rainbow colours
reflected in the dying sun
gills gape in ensuing panic

hands grasp slippery tails
smash heads against rocks
till twitches and tremors are stilled

and after by communal fires
scented with supper the catch
is consumed conch shells blown

sleepy children put to bed

KRISS NICHOL

Rough Beast

*“And what rough beast, its hour come round at last
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born”*

WB Yeats *The Second Coming*

hefts of humanity bend and beg
in the writhing heat
beside bones bunched
and bundled into cloths
abandoned in desert graveyards
presided over by vultures

nearby the Sphinx rises
to the snip-snap of camera
its weathered nose
eroded by time
disintegrates back
into the skittering sands

and in the City of the Dead
where vagrants and dogs are bagged
and binned by soldiers
centuries of slouching
lead to slow slides
into anarchy then oblivion

KATHRYN WHARTON

Refugee

In dreams she visits her childhood land,
small limbs curl up in the soft white sand.
She feels the rain, quick and warm,
trickle on the skin of her upturned palms.

Orange is the essence of her mother tongue,
sticky in the air, alive in her lungs,
fresh from the heart of the market town,
before the war songs rang.

In dreams metal rattles from the throat of a gun.
Flesh melts to bone in the heat of the sun.
She wakes up tall in war's aftermath,
searching for home, in the cold wet mud.

KATHRYN WHARTON

If.

If I could,
there'd be no lines
of youthful vigour, no volunteers,
no conscription, no posters,
no great adventure.

There'd be no need for desertion:
no man in no man's land,
I'd mop up the mud, unmake
the bombs; white feathers would float
to the floor.

There'd be no minute's silence,
no canon of poems
to mark remembrance.
If I could, I'd undo the lines.
Poppies would blow

undisturbed.

KATHRYN WHARTON

Visiting Bradford's Peace Museum

Peace folds a white dove
Torn ribbons in a rainbow
Hanging in a cloud

On a curve of pearl
Steel volcano erupting
Blood evaporates

Arms tied in a knot
Around a warhead of state
Nucleus of peace

KATHRYN WHARTON

Peace Map

There are no sides
to the walls. Broken
vein in the heart
of the landscape.
Did you share a joke
in the mess
where your whisky waits
spinning
shattered glass
to the ground?
You have
fallen.
Now
news fires fast.
Weapons
grow remote.
A
child
wears a mask.
Prayers
are no
good
against
chlorine gas.
Words froth
from a mouth.
The peace
map
is torn. a gaping
wound
on an atlas
no borders.
Hear
a bell toll?

POETS BIOGRAPHIES

BILL COTTER

Bill Cotter's poems and stories have been published in journals and magazines in Australia. Also in New Zealand, England and New Delhi, India. He has also had a novel, a short play for voices and a collection of short stories published in Australia. He has won a number of literary awards, including the Melbourne Shakespeare Society's sonnet competition. He is a retired secondary teacher living with his wife in Bairnsdale, Victoria, Australia.

PETER EMERY

Peter is from Greater London although his working life took him all over the world. He started writing many years ago but it is only since his retirement that he has found the time to put some serious effort into his poetry. That effort has become significantly more focussed since studying with Poetry Kit and the results can now be found regularly in 'the poetry press'. Some of Peter's personal favourites have now been brought together in one place under the title 'Watcher'.

FIONA H

Fiona H lives in Ireland and is rather shy so would prefer to let the poems do the talking. She is a former Humanities student; now she studies humanity through creative writing.

SHEREE MACK

Sheree Mack is a freelance writer and visual artist living on the North-East coast of England with her husband and daughter. Her work draws upon her experiences of living in a black woman's body in a predominantly white world. She is currently writing about traveling and working in Iceland as well as the next installment of her creative non-fiction memoir.

KRISS NICHOL

My poetry has appeared in numerous small press magazines, anthologies and online. In addition, I was highly commended in The Federation of Writers' Scotland 2013 Vernal Equinox Poetry Competition, 2013, won third prize in Scottish Association of Writers' *Write Down South Poetry Competition* in Nov 2015, was commissioned to write a poem for Wigtown Book Festival Sept 2016, have appeared in 5 issues of *Southlight* and 4 issues of *Open Mouse*, Poetry Scotland's online magazine. I have published three poetry pamphlets, *The Language of Crows* 2012, *Between Lands* 2013 and *A Suggestion of Bones* 2017, and a sequence of haibun, *Ancient Anchors*, that tells the story of the Earth from the Big Bang to modern day, is awaiting publication.

KATHRYN WHARTON

I am Kathryn Wharton from Baildon. I wrote about the experience of war as part of my dissertation, one poem (not in this selection) came second in the armies Armistice competition. I have been published in two anthologies by Indigo Dreams and my poem 'I am' (about widowhood) was published in Mslexia Sept 2017. I am currently working on new poems.