

The Long Moment

KATE FAGAN was born in 1973 and lives in Sydney. She has published a short collection of poems, *return to a new physics*, and her poetry appears in *Calyx: 30 Contemporary Australian Poets*. Kate is the managing editor of *HOW2*, a US-based journal of innovative contemporary and modernist writing by women. Also a musician, she has performed extensively across Australia and in the UK.

Also by Kate Fagan

return to a new physics

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KATE FAGAN



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for Margaret & Bob & James
altering the local song

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Set it beside a tree, draw the road with chalk
and on the margins put *exit*.

I Calendar

(april)

Against a grey sky thought appears differently, drowning in soapiness. A handful of change connects my hearing to a remnant of technological presencing. Something unutterable comes to rest between two morning letters. As soon as you begin the low walk down collapsing wooden stairs, a lens is directed to record a sense of purpose and I am startled at what returns, weeks later, in a quieter metropolis. Tulips and their messy gravity remember a thing previously imagined, now actualised. A shared vocabulary, that mechanical and cellular recognition. Cars glint almost charmingly along the river. Buildings have their impressive disregard for sound. Everything happens because of this chance encounter, a series of circles a street sign a long pavement or music wrapping into branches, apertures of air. Falling up adjunctive steps into a second scene. The future is just the future, starting yesterday.

(may)

Twenty birds announce the difference, peculiar in their proximity to a recovered industrial dumping ground, peripheral pattern of this renewed attention to unfamiliar and impossible detail. Red cloth, then black. Walking to keep width in our faces as vertigo delivers us from each articulate second. Outside the café rolled bolts of printed cotton clock a particular shade of endlessness. We start to lose track of old rituals, aware of how things might arrive later. A deep and verdant ellipse, offered precisely. Breath becomes a figure of meeting. Beside water a thousand bright words hum into being, regional, translucent. What revelation, folding up a day. Cursive lines in a generous palm, green restaurant a clear signifier on an opening map, letters' flight meeting an alphabet. The bridge and its drifting wheel of gulls. Bodies strewn along the wharves, reflections too close to name, beginning to decide again.

(june)

Coded eventualities, we throw handfuls of syntax and desire a kind of persuasive clarity, obviously mythic. The street becomes a conduit for breakages. Everyone I know appears there. Winter holding a pleasure of light, an absent lover, the absorbing difficulty of an ethics. At the corners of sight a corrugated fence clicks in a breeze, particular to this description. Meticulous print, excoriation, eruptions of wild possibility making sharp turns toward desperation in care. At times we are more present in writing. There is that in poetry, the sound of a great improvisation. Coffee splits the distance between us over and over. Three points of colour visible from the small window beside the bath, announcing continuity. Each day proliferate with things eluding trace. We all begin to share a body memory of forgetting, noise in a cloudy margin, persistent and entomological. I carefully arrange songs and imagine a rapid flight out.

(july)

Holding hands we leap off jagged rocks for a video camera, not needing to communicate our knowledge of why. It will only move forward in disattached places. Calendula, a blue jug, candles and punctual smoke, the slow fret of uneven talk. I reappear with space in my gestures and gather a few things, turning back to gaze along the coastline. Each shudder of metal cites a dark evolution, wallaby ghosting as light drains into a road of gums, one frantic possibility. Indifferent rain buckets down between great washes of sea. We stride toward freesias with the narcissistic joy of equally-matched heights. Shadow of irises, exquisite scapula, angelic pitch in a room of temporary dust, arms out beside the fence, beams as spokes of a giant circus, purple evening, details we might wish for later. The crescent moon patiently regarding haphazard sand. A whale, a star, two names for a present child, twinning temporalities, every return measured against this one.

(august)

Emptying over a balcony, slow light recalls the loss of a city.
The word and repeatedly. Saltiness scalds. Perhaps this is the life
we have dreamed, close beside bone. We are unafraid to touch it
for a blue second and this passes for miraculous. Hugging our
skin on cooling concrete, distraught with trying to tell how.
Single gulls edge aside crows. At the far limits of corporeal
certainty, held in water, hearing water. Gifts are passed across an
increasingly ragged membrane, a cup, a feather, an idea, a poem.
Under my hands one-and-a-half thousand days seem to melt
alarmingly, the visceral reach of sorrow. Each of them requires
patient testing. Red stature angled to the leaning zone,
escarpment of night, a halo leaking through the stratosphere.
Though determined to find another language for it, we reiterate
certain learnt narratives. Familiar saxophone glancing off
the midnight walls of central tunnel, quiet windows, a phone
number jammed in among coins.

(september)

In a secondhand shop I find obscure printed validations of these fledgling connective practices and hope again for excess. One fold words into another. Art is rescued near the slowly expanding garden. The second spring returns memory but we are wearing different things. Melbourne fragments arranged carefully, a promise of vodka, your lipstick night, oranges and light words, a singular red bead. Summoning energy for another magic trick, inversion of capabilities, language threading the hours. On the town hall steps holding photographs of patina-bright blocks, scattered not far from the colour field. Crowding in to witness philosophy, a leaving, long translucent petals. People crane to hear your lines tumbled as whispers, itching to be associated. Curiosity translates metonymically. Some relations are improbable, some are inevitable. I walk out to a second lighthouse carrying nothing and fall sideways as the wind dumps ocean onto our arms, preserving us.