

200. MISSPELT

B

I misspelt your name  
In an effort to remember it  
Your quick correction  
Surprised me  
Not being used to being  
Caught out!

How do I explain me?  
To you  
If I am in love  
Then perhaps you are using me  
As you say  
And I laughed  
Men aren't used  
How traditional  
How absurd  
How silly

(I must be careful)

*19/5/1989*

201. GOOD FOR ME

A letter for you  
B  
My strong friend  
Because men so often do  
For their entire lives  
Remain silent  
What you did for a year  
Brutal solitude

So I want to thank you B  
Perhaps you didn't notice  
You caught me at an impasse  
Where a dull ache  
Enveloped life  
Being haunted  
Feeling smothered  
Incapable of feeling  
Or love

I let you rave  
You said  
You let me love  
And feel  
You held me  
And let me be little  
You held me  
And let me talk  
You held me  
And let me sleep  
(Ha, some of the time)  
In your arms  
You held me still  
And let me stare  
Your eyes, your face

So I want to thank you B  
For amidst your tumult  
Perhaps you haven't quite seen  
How good you've been  
For me

29/5/1989

## 202. BROTHER

When your brother has a  
Nervous breakdown  
You shake a little  
And quake, feeling weak  
And crying  
Out of guilt?  
For the bad, bad advise you gave  
That may have denied  
The last thread of support

When your older brother is crying  
Alone, untouchable  
And reliving the dread  
You want to breakthrough  
To be there  
But you cannot  
It is so complicated  
And you are not the one  
So you sit listening  
Both silent  
Alone

When your brother  
Your big brother  
Is hurting and lost  
Your father appears  
Out of a road movie  
Dad, seemingly so distant  
Now present  
Miraculously wise  
Doing good and saying good  
Holding and supporting  
And crying too

When your brother is wandering  
Aimlessly Melbourne's wintry streets  
As he is right now  
What can I do?  
You want to be him  
Your mother rings from  
Distant Queensland  
Telling you secret things  
Caring things  
Accepting things

When your big lovely bear-brother  
Is alone and scared  
You need to do some normal things  
Just to temper the eruption for a while  
Greek, kaval, music anything

You want to cry, to ease  
But it's not quite your pain  
You want to do more  
Than offer fucking money  
For airfares  
You want to be well again  
With him

*2/6/1989*

### 203. SAINT SATIE

Waiting  
Satie  
Slow and melancholy  
For B  
For news  
Good or bad  
For the brandy  
Cheap, neat and fiery  
To anoint me

*2/6/1989*

204. MAYBE

Maybe...  
You smiled  
Then up and left  
For Perth

Now I wonder  
If I'll miss you  
Maybe...

If I have a secret  
That I want you to choose me  
Ahead of your lover and  
Your boyfriend  
(God what complicated crap)  
Maybe...

Do I love you?  
More than I care to admit  
Or is it an alpha-male thing?  
Maybe...

Maybe I should try being  
What I say to you  
It's cool  
It's nice  
No problems for now  
You work it out and let me know

Maybe somewhere down there  
Bells of trouble toll  
Your middle-classiness  
Maybe wrong for me  
And might numb me in the end  
Like your maybe smile

9/6/1989

## 205. EUREKA!

For the first time  
We played a piece of yours  
Simple, delightful harmonies  
Without the usual trauma and  
The billowing, diaphanous animosity  
(Jealousy?)  
That reaches back forever it seems

And B  
Brutally betrayed  
By a would-be friend  
(Fair-weather?)  
Choking on the shame of it  
And the terror these actions  
(So human)  
Bring

So I took solace  
In our new found peace  
(As did B)  
Taking in the generosity  
As if the long denied truce  
Between us  
Could also be an olive branch?  
To reach her

Do things really change though?  
(I doubt it)  
Perhaps we have actually become  
Comrades  
As I am always saying  
(Hoping)  
For the first time I felt  
Encouraged, welcome and loved  
Eureka!

*20/6/1989*

## 206. PAIR BONDING

This pair bonding stuff  
Is a peculiar nuisance  
Surely a genetic glitch  
Destined to go the way  
Of the monkey tail

*20/6/1989*

## 207. COCKSURE COMMUNIST

I was glad to receive the GAPY newsletter advising me of the AGM. It is always full of good advice! The other piece of good advice was to jot down some ideas and thoughts about the past and future of our organisation, which I did one cold morning when I was feeling both brave and reflective. So here goes...

I have been in this organisation for over a decade, in various roles and varying degrees of participation. The year just past has perhaps been the most inactive for me, just attending a few functions here and there, but no longer on the Central Committee or any of the subcommittees. I have kept up with the debate however, and thought quite a lot about the Greek Australian Progressive Youth. Some things seem very positive. For example, the formation of the women's group could promote at least some discussion of issues not only seldom mentioned in GAPY, but rarely taken seriously by those of the hard political core of the organisation; issues of a personal nature (it is claimed), about how we as individuals treat each other within the living organism of an organisation.

Now I am the first to concede we all have our personal lives (and consciences), to live with. Nevertheless, our actions as individuals can affect the health of the organisation directly. People within the organisation form intimate relationships and this has always occurred even though rarely acknowledged. How those relationships are conducted does affect the morale and effectiveness of our organisation. When prominent people (so-called leaders) behave so contemptibly towards their comrades, when they betray them personally on a daily basis, when they habitually lie to cover their own gutlessness, not only is that relationship imperiled but the entire organisation faces paralysis. So sadly, this appears to be what has happened within GAPY over the last few years.

I believe people need to have (at a bare minimum) a basic respect for each other to work together, let alone to sleep together! And the golden rule of respect is honesty; I think you all would agree. Honesty builds trust. So the lies, secrecy and character assassination that has gone on to protect, what can only be described as the selfish sex-life of one prominent person has driven away many good comrades and perhaps mortally wounded our organisation.

When a so-called 'comrade' says shamelessly to another (in an attempt to prevent her from spilling the beans), that "*where I put my cock is my business*", it sure makes you wonder.

It makes you wonder what sort of person has so little political nous not to realise that the how, why, where and when of where he is putting his cock has become our business courtesy of the damage it has done to this organisation. It shouldn't, but unfortunately it has. It makes you wonder what sort of individual it is that professes to have loved two people at the same time, yet that very love is so self-focused, so weak that rather than face the fact honestly with those involved, he creates a set of deceptions and intrigues (that we all actively or benignly get drawn into) to protect the friskiness of his

cock. It makes you wonder what sort of person (is he running for president again this year?) is capable of, and prepared to not only inflict prolonged suffering upon individuals he professes to love through his lies, denials and half-truths, but also to risk the very organisation he is a leader in (and says he believes in) because he hides his brain in his cock.

It makes me wonder what sort of comrade can mouth off about the oppression, exploitation and injustice of capitalism and blithely inflict the same tortures within the confines of his own personal life. Socialists have enough to worry about in Australia today, without being hypocrites in the bargain.

It should make us all wonder what sort of human being has his official, public lover writing his university essays while he is out fucking God-knows how many unofficial lovers (three at last count).

It makes you wonder how we've permitted such fascist behavior to take root and destroy our credibility.

And so that is why my good friends, to borrow a phrase "*where he puts his cock*" is extremely important to us today. If he had thought about it just a tiny bit more over the years (and it has been going on for years); if he had just a little more respect for his comrades, been more honest, rather than using his position of power to poison one member's opinion of another, then we probably would not find ourselves in half as much mess as an organisation today.

The purpose of this discussion is not to denigrate one individual (I leave that to others). It is to examine how individuals relate to organisations, in other words how we function as a collective of individuals. What has occurred is symptomatic of the malaise we find ourselves in with GAPY. Are we incapable of offering real support to people who have been deceived, manipulated and hurt? Do we feel no collective anger and shame? Is any behavior in the personal sphere acceptable to us, even when it affects the organisation greatly?

How many times do we hear it said, "*Oh, she's getting hysterical*"? Well, she's not hysterical, she is just trying to deal with this rotten shit, as others before have had to deal with it. There is no need to close ranks, cloaking everything in mystery and silence. It happened, and as an organisation we should be good enough to deal with it. We need discussion around issues of morality, support, exploitation and friendship and not just assume that silence means business as usual.

I have always believed that GAPY was established all those years ago to be of service to young Greek-Australian migrants. Today we not only don't attract new members, but old ones are abandoning us at a rate of knots. It is no wonder. What do we offer? We certainly have no mechanism for dealing with the everyday problems people experience. When we make our Marxist analyses proudly trumpeted at pompous seminars, they are shrouded in clinical, quasi-political claptrap. In effect we attempt to ignore or bury the real issues. People just hurt in silence, or form antagonistic, warring factions, or just get disillusioned, or bored and leave.



And even worse, we peddle fake arguments to prevent honest discussion around calamitous actions. How many times have I heard it said, “*be quiet, a meeting is not the right place*”, or “*the collective is more important than the individual*” or “*I was hurt too, just be quiet and get over it*”.

We all have tolerated the exploitation of women by some men in this organisation. That such an extreme example of this exploitation has been festering in our midst for over four years now is proof of our neglect and an indictment of us all. The personal is political because our individual honesty and integrity is reflected in the health (or lack thereof) of the organisation we seek to progress. If GAPY is ever to become a vital force again, I believe those difficult issues need to be faced. The silence and distrust is a cancer promoted by, and serves the interests of the exploiters. Maybe it is already too late for us. Let’s talk. Any questions?

Postscript: This text was circulated prior to the AGM. The AGM was cancelled and the organisation folded.

*June 1989*

## 208. BRITTLE LINE

You rang  
Just as I had  
Thoughts of you  
Drift across  
A tranquil synapse

No longer a thought  
Or a fantasy  
You were there  
Scratchy voiced  
Connected  
For a trifle of time

Then click  
You were gone  
So I played a little music  
Did you?  
Your solution  
My problem  
Seemed to work  
For the rest of the day  
Was a smile

*4/7/1989*

209. DE BEAUVOIR

Simone  
Perhaps we all feel  
Like 'the other'  
As we try  
Searching  
To reconcile  
Our freedom  
With loyalty  
Fidelity  
Loneliness  
Old age  
With being  
And our own sense of  
Nothingness

And when I'd almost  
Forgotten  
Almost given up  
Almost capitulated  
You reminded me  
Of the importance  
The necessity  
The meaning  
Of the struggle

*19/7/1989*

210. INTERROGATION

B  
The difference between  
Her blunt question  
And an interrogation  
Is that she cares

*19/7/1989*

## 211. SOME MORNINGS

Some mornings  
I wake up alone  
Some mornings  
I wake up scared  
To go on  
Some mornings  
I wake up empty  
Or hungry  
Some mornings  
I wake up chilled  
Some mornings  
I wake up swallowing hard  
Some mornings  
I wake up snide  
Some mornings  
I wake up clotted  
Some mornings  
I wake up with drool  
Or tears or sperm  
Some mornings  
I wake up with nothing  
Thankfully

26/7/1989

## 212. HE RETURNS

And now  
Tired and alone  
What have I to hang on to?

In just three weeks  
A nightmare blink  
He returns  
And we must  
Slam the gate tight  
On our fantasy

I want to be rational  
But not to rationalise away  
Every feeling  
B says I can do it!  
But I wonder whether the  
Clean, hot cut of the knife  
Might not be better?

Today on so little sleep  
Perhaps knowing the date  
Of the return  
Has ended us already  
That your eyelash strokes  
Are no more  
That you too must prepare  
Counting days  
In a haze  
What do I have to hang on to?  
To stop bitterness and anger  
And worse  
Self-pity

Your honesty with me  
For one  
And certain knowledge  
That this weird relationship  
Has been good  
Mutually healing  
And made me simply happy  
This I will try to hang on to

The trust I place in you  
The gift of support  
On your terms  
And to build a friendship  
Of another kind  
But still warm, loving and intimate  
Time will tell  
For my part

I hope I can  
Hang on

29/7/1989

### 213. TENURE

What a wonderful thing is tenure!  
Old B, love  
Smiling his way through  
His umpteenth lecture  
On a musical obscurity  
All of his own making

Yes what a wonderful thing is tenure!  
Eccentricities abound  
His little white goatee  
Framing the softest of smiles  
Blushing girl dimples  
As his mirth rises  
At jokes sprinkled as much for  
His own benefit as ours  
Rightly so, as we laugh not at the jokes  
(God only knows if they are funny)  
But at his sprightly (secure) manner

The lucky, happy academic  
Housed, clothed and fed  
By hallowed university  
Ah, wonderful tenure  
To be paid to be  
Mad as a cut snake!

2/8/1989

214. CATHERINE

Catherine B  
Or just plain 'Cath'  
Formidable  
And puzzling  
Her hair  
Grey on top  
Brown at waist  
In a long girlish plait  
Her mother's hairstyle still  
Worn closed like a chastity-belt  
Tight like her face  
Has she ever cut it?  
Ever cut loose?  
The chosen lecture topic  
Percy Grainger and his mother  
The composer with the hidden box  
Of whips and blond boys  
Of Country Gardens  
And Shepherd's Hay  
Very strange

*2/8/1989*

215. KP

KP  
Small, librarian thin  
English toffee  
An uncanny resemblance  
To the queen and  
Me mum  
Slight rising of leverets  
On the back of my neck  
Whenever I look!

*2/8/1989*

216. CATASTROPHE 1

Why are these minute events  
Of such significance?  
That I can be thrown into  
Utter panic  
By a foiled rendezvous  
Merde! I didn't see the note!

Such a little thing  
So insignificant  
And yet...terror  
Not rejection at all  
But resulting in the feeling  
Of being a used tissue  
Blown and thrown

And then to watch you  
Voyeuristically  
Transform  
Impregnable  
Behind the public barrier  
The hideous wall  
Confounding my vulnerability  
Stimulating my panic  
Bitching anger

And to part  
Clumsily  
Without embrace or touch  
To be home alone  
And search for calm  
In kettle's brew  
And speculate  
Upon my buffoonery  
And upon you

14/8/1989

217. FICTION

For a moment  
I lost sight of what we are  
And was struggling to  
Maintain a fiction

As a result  
I allowed myself  
To get hurt  
By the tactless patter  
About your dream of the other  
Your plans  
Your confusions  
Your attraction to the 'powerful one'  
Who you said  
Was only interested in your body

But here I go again  
Snared by speculation  
Unbecoming  
I must remember what we are  
Band-Aids for each other  
Getting old and worn now  
Fraying  
Almost ready to come off

*18/8/1989*



218. RAW

Why do you humiliate me?  
I've laid awake here for two hours  
Or more  
So far  
Why do you humiliate me?  
I never deny you  
But so cleverly  
You play the 'maybe' game  
Why do you humiliate me?  
Make me beg  
Tell you why I want you  
And then say  
No  
It's too far  
Too late  
Too much bullshit  
Ignore my needs  
Why do you humiliate me?  
Kick me raw  
Trample my trust  
Humiliate me

*20/8/1989*

## 219. CARNATIC MUSIC 1

Sitting here  
Not knowing enough  
About your music  
Your culture  
Its meaning  
Its symbols  
Not belonging

I think  
About spectacle  
B plays with her hair  
I count the pipes  
On the organ  
(362 I reckon)  
And drift in and out

I think about  
Adzohu  
How great their spectacle is  
And therefore why it works  
On one level at any rate

But on this night  
The spectacle  
Struggles to outweigh  
My frustration  
Born of my ignorance

*26/8/1989*

## 220. CARNATIC MUSIC 2

Old woman  
From an old sub-continent  
With pitch hair  
Now tight in a long  
Greying plait  
What thoughts  
As they play  
'Little dancer'  
And it makes  
One thousand images for me  
Memories, feelings  
'Ο ΚΟΣΜΟΣ'  
Not counting organ pipes now

*26/8/1989*

### 221. CARNATIC MUSIC 3

You ask me  
What's wrong with a didgeridoo?  
In a multicultural, cross-fertilisation, world music fusion, shared musical  
experience?  
Along with the moog synth,  
Twenty tablas and gong

I don't know for sure  
It's not just your pale, milky skin  
Or that you play standing erect  
Like a violin concerto  
Or that you have two  
Exquisitely decorated didges  
When you can barely play one

No Kooris in the audience  
So cannot know their views  
But I have a hunch  
There might be some curry  
Some hell to pay  
For this little play

*26/8/1989*

### 222. CARNATIC MUSIC 4

Two didgeridoos  
Perched  
Precariously  
On a music stand  
Hmmm...

*26/8/1989*

## 223. CARNATIC MUSIC 5

For a moment

B

I adored you

So relaxed

So comfortable

In quiet communication

With your sarod

You dangled the feat

Of all incomparable musicians

Playfully in front of us

With consummate ease and grace

The defeat of time

The transcendence of technique

The rare and blissful state

Musical meditation

And communal consciousness

I in you and you in me in us

I forgot for an hour

Your odd awkwardness

Your abrasive manner

The tyranny of the Guru

Alchemist

You convert suffering

Into golden musical delight

In that instant

Doing what you do sublimely

Nothing else mattered but

Calm

Placid control

Refusal of ego

I felt like it was just me and you

Sitting among the many

That you were my smile

And as you played

That permanent fixture

Adorned us both

*26/8/1989*

## 224. THE SCOT AND THE ARISTOCRAT

She treats herself  
Like a precious orchid  
Not to be touched  
In her preened, velvet finery

Knowing she is out of place  
On a grotty suburban train station  
She scowls  
And picks off imagined  
Deflowering dirt

On the cold platform  
The waiting ritual  
Coats pulled tight against the fine Melbourne mist  
Foot stamping and heavy breathing  
A Scot, singing brogue  
Old  
In workers' overalls  
Merry and full  
A belly-girth bigger than her body  
Swaggers toward her  
Surprisingly light-footed now  
(The pirate has his sea legs)  
He bows and compliments her

Her escort  
In prim bow tie and dinner suit  
Forces a grin  
And is ignored by the Scot  
Who continues talking to 'the fine lady'  
And feast on her curves

Suddenly he removes his parker  
And in florid, chivalrous parody  
Places it across her bare shoulders  
'To keep you warm, madam'  
A smile-tinge reaction  
But she wears it all the same  
He begins to sing again  
And she is saved by the train

6/9/1989

225. MIGRANT

The Latvian migrant  
Second generation  
Political refugee from  
Soviet oppression  
So she says

Now in Australia  
Studying music historiography  
Confident, self professed  
Champion of Wagner  
(Like he needs another)  
Baltic States nationalist  
Liberal with two Ls  
Today's conservative  
Yesterday's fascist?  
Me thinks

13/9/1989

## 226. GNOSSIENNES

The new Satie record  
In perfect accord with  
My calm  
Gnossiennes – mastery  
Played slow  
Defeating time  
Like a long shiatsu massage  
Or a glass of seven star metaxa  
Or both!

Relaxed now after a day  
Of heightened feeling  
A warm body's embrace  
Stupid battle with condom-madness!  
A Turkish game of laughs  
A Tiff with B  
(The first in quite a while!)

The cozy demon authority  
Not at all liking it  
When told to play rattle  
Rather than drum  
(Odd hierarchy, this one!)  
Corralling rejection  
With hard swallows and upset tum  
Then Monash and thankfully  
A kind class  
Finishing with languorous  
Flirty phone calls  
To different friends  
Warm, open chitchat  
Easing brain anxiety  
Smoothing the way  
For calm  
And happy communion

*13/9/1989*

## 227. TIME TIME

Time  
Slow time  
Selfish me time  
Calm time  
Time  
Alone time  
Quiet thought time  
Listen time  
Time

13/9/1989

## 228. ROLE MODEL

B  
You are a role model  
For me  
You hang in  
You make choices  
Political, idealistic  
In a world of  
Dollar worship

B  
You scare the shit out of me  
When your anxiety  
Overcomes you  
When it is clear  
How lonely you can be  
How you doubt that wonderful ability  
And how you, like me  
Can turn on friends  
In acts of self-destruction  
How you hurt

Perhaps role models are unfair  
Perhaps I pedestal you  
Put a plinth where your vulnerability lies  
Refuse your human foibles  
Your flaking tears  
So when you break  
A quake of fear and doubt  
Splits around me

13/9/1989



229. HAUNTED

Today an hallucination  
In the dizzy drizzle  
Two scenes from childhood

A young lad on the train  
Stares at me brazenly  
Decked in Geelong  
Blue and white hoops  
Shorts too big  
Footy tucked under an arm  
Like a big furry cat  
Number 23 on the jersey  
Adoration of a bygone hero  
Doug Wade?

Flinders street station  
A concert band plays  
Hilariously out of tune  
Two many clarinets and  
Slack-embouchure flutes  
All starry-eyed teens  
Under the baton of an  
Ex-army tyrant  
Surrounded by cheering parents  
Ecstatic  
And bored siblings  
Fiddling, fidgeting  
Oblivious to the music

My past  
Another's present  
Queer Reliving

17/9/1989

## 230. PREMONITION

A secret pact  
Between these lines  
And the conspiracy I am  
For up until this day  
I have shown you all

With these lines  
I make preparation  
For the great reclamation  
Me torn out from you

It is true  
Nobody knows how it will pan out  
But in my guts  
The choice feels made

B is safe  
And safety is first cousins to security  
So what can I offer?  
Without our intimacy  
I must tire of you

Bodies separated  
Blackens the  
Precarious bonds  
Of vulnerability  
Littleness  
Honesty  
That we brazenly kindled  
Illogically and illegally  
Doused now  
As reality reasserts

*20/9/1989*

## 231. NAMING RIGHTS

What's in a name?  
Yours made-up  
Replacing the one given  
With too many burdens  
From ancient Greece to bear

Out of spite  
I want to use that name  
Its Hellenic totem  
An aphrodisiac for some

But maybe my moniker  
Is not such a turn on?  
A little too protestant  
Even though in St James  
It seems the most humane  
Of gospels

Why do we change names?  
Nuns do it all the time  
A giving to Christ  
And Muslims all seem to take  
Variations on the same name  
In homage to their prophet

So perhaps we change names  
As example  
To show others a better path

*20/9/1989*

232. ADRIFT

Frozen  
Your 'I love you'  
Over the phone  
Turned my cold  
To quartz

Played the fool  
I despise myself  
For depending  
For expecting  
For making a request  
For wishing it might be met

And then later  
In a different solitude  
Glacier and lava collide  
Defying sleep  
And even more infuriating  
Every car stopping  
Every creak  
Every footfall  
Every laugh  
From homeward pub crawl  
Every key jingle  
Every tree whisper  
Every phone ring from  
Another living box  
Is you

*30/9/1989*

### 233. MOTIVE

Why powerful one  
Are you so defensive?  
It is you  
That grades our work  
Even though you profess  
To not like doing it  
That seems disingenuous  
To me  
Or am I being ungenerous  
To you?

What insecurity befuddles you?  
Someone records your talk  
And you jump  
(Most would be flattered!)  
As if your words  
Might come back and bite you  
Or be held as evidence  
Against you

So why do this job?  
If it makes you so uncomfortable  
The money?  
The C.V.?  
The ego?  
Why?

4/10/1989

234. CLASS PAPER

It is a weird world all right

Paper title:

'The treatment of a manuscript as an aesthetic object'

Presented manfully

By B

Without humour alas

So, boring-as-bat's

And B

Overweight, unkempt, a little acne

Academia stereotype

Hiding some pathology

Courtesy perhaps of our aesthetic society

A world in love with beauty unobtainable

But at least the promises can be bought

B in his baggies

Getting larger as the year progresses

Growing doubt too

That he makes the grade

In the 'aesthetic object' stakes

(Do I, or any of us?)

So we all fail

Fail ourselves

Fail utterly

I catch myself musing

During the talk

Without judgment, pity or disgust

Wondering where you get your love?

And get an ego pampered

In a desolate moment

Do you head for the street?

Or the parlour?

(As I have)

Where bucks slacken rejection

Have the 'sisters of mercy'

Brought comfort of a kind

When the 'aesthetic object'

Seems as valueless as spent semen?

11/10/1989

### 235. RUNNING

Plans breed security  
I'm thinking  
Just eight months  
I'm away, out of here  
To the poem in the sun  
Away from you  
Freedom I can trust

Or I might just  
Defer all plans  
I can if I want to  
You know  
(The bargaining of the dispossessed)  
You give me the reason  
But I hold the fear  
Tight to my pulling chest

*22/10/1989*

### 236. CORRECT THINKING

What then are the risks  
With this separation?

Is it that you might find someone else  
You prefer?  
That can happen anytime  
But while I'm gone  
You may be tempted to look!

Then again, I might find someone else  
But that's not a risk for me  
It would make me happy  
I'd call it luck or fate!

Waiting seems fraught  
With double standards doesn't it?  
So easy to see things from one vantage  
So hard to trust  
To sit with the bad possibility  
Truly

*23/10/1989*

237. JUMP

She jumped  
When B said 'fuck'  
And for a moment  
Her repression bare  
For all to see  
I saw my mother  
Jump  
All those years ago  
When I said 'fuck'

25/10/1989

238. ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥΛΑ 1

'I hate Greek School'  
'COW εισαι'  
'Η δασκαλα ειναι a pain in the neck'  
Yeah!! (πολυ δυνατα φοναζει)  
'Δεν το ξερο'  
Η Στεφανουλα η Η Στεφανια  
Stephanie or Steph?  
I wonder which she prefers?  
In her little world  
Performing  
Half English, half Greek  
'You got dark face, wog face'  
In a family as big as hers  
(Kids tumble from Tarago)  
It's hard to get attention  
But she manages OK I bet  
Στεφανουλα! βψεσ εξω!  
Τι;  
Εξω τορα  
Οχι, ψιατι;  
Εξω!  
She returns  
Smiles  
Does a little work  
Well sort of...  
And begins her real vocation  
To create chaos

11/11/1989



239. ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥΛΑ 2

Sometimes she just sits quietly  
In her created fantasy  
Drawing animals  
Singing to herself  
Smiling at nothing  
Wisps of hair  
Fall across her mouth  
And are lured in  
Jail-breaking mamma's tight  
Plait-prison again

As chief mischief maker  
Sometimes she is oblivious  
To the chaos around her  
The classroom cracks  
But she is no longer here  
The teacher yells  
But she does not hear  
And then as the ruler  
Threatens  
She looks up  
Smiles disarmingly  
Who could resist the  
Young coquette?  
Hundreds of generations of  
Good breeding have perfected  
That killer look!

*11/11/1989*

240. ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥΛΑ 3

Remembrance Day 1989  
At Greek school, Caulfield High  
At the eleventh hour  
Everything stops to stand  
The kids in mock seriousness  
To think of a war  
(Two minutes silence)  
Incomprehensible  
What for?

ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥΛΑ jumps surprisingly  
Onto her desk!  
Hands clasped for a prayer  
She looks at all looking  
A joke  
She smiles  
Sticks out her tongue  
Laughs out loud  
Still one minute to go  
Teacher gets fidgety  
Kids titter  
She jumps up and down  
Still on the desk  
Kids laugh  
She asks 'What for?'  
'Why are we being still?'  
Crackling over the PA  
BBC voice extolls the great and brave  
And how lucky we are  
Australia  
In bland formula  
And I remember too  
Identical moments  
In school  
And mindless propaganda  
Minus the delightful  
Anarchy and iconoclastic  
ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥΛΑ

11/11/1989

## 241. LYING

Lying here on this bed  
Just a thin veneer between us  
Clandestine listening  
While you play your latest to her  
And she plays hers to you  
Guitar, accordion, giggles  
As you learn, teach, share

Filtering through membrane wall  
All the things we no longer do  
Feeling bruised or punished  
I'm sure you know I can hear  
Every sweet note  
Every flirty joke

Voice in brain makes me dizzy  
Do you hate me now?  
Why don't you show me these things?  
Have I intimidated you so much?

Counter voice kicks in (more rational)  
Are you exposing me to an  
Insecurity long denied?

Gulping the anger-swell  
Do I hate you now?

Lives so enmeshed for so long  
Apprentice now more than equal  
So threat becomes the dominant song  
Beneath the respect  
A veiled critic  
Confused and wrong

*18/11/1989*

242. EASY

It would be so easy  
For me to say  
'That's a gorgeous song'  
(Especially as I wouldn't be fibbing)  
But I don't

It would be so easy  
For you to say  
A little something in Greek  
To help me along  
(As it is your mother tongue)  
But you don't

No we don't

*18/11/1989*

243. BETTER

When the wall teetered and tumbled  
In Berlin  
I cried  
Not for the crumbling  
Half socialist societies  
Crawling with spies  
But for the people  
Like B and her young daughter

When Zhidkov finally jumped  
In Bulgaria  
I thought  
People can actually make a difference  
Can change things  
Cut loose  
And build again

When 500,000 people  
Marched in Leipzig  
Out of a population of 700,000  
I laughed  
In joy and then in bitterness  
As I thought of the cloying apathy  
Of comfortable, middle class Australia  
I basked in the excitement of  
Revolutionary change  
And shook with its fear  
All the while eyeing  
The possibility of a better world

*20/11/1989*

244. STRAW

It appears that  
When I talk of my past  
I risk my future

My fickleness is exposed  
By lists of faded past lovers  
(It never seemed that prolific before)  
All begun with verve and bliss  
Too soon washed out  
A white noise receding hiss

Alongside your colossus  
Of four years  
I am a builder  
Of straw houses

The slightest mistral  
Brings them toppling down  
While you weather any storm  
It seems

It is small wonder then  
As we approach our eighth month  
Of coupledness  
And as you study my past  
With a microscope scrutiny  
That you feel me different  
And that scares you  
I understand  
It scares me too

But doesn't quantum physics  
Teach us in part  
That the act of observation  
Alters the result?

*10/12/1989*

245. PRIMAL PAST

Mother  
Why is a simple question  
So hard?  
To form the sentences  
Just right  
To confront  
The long buried moment  
To relive it  
With the same intensity of fear  
To know it needn't be faced  
We could both well ignore it  
We both would prefer that  
I prefer that  
Out of trepidation and  
Laziness of self  
I prefer we face it squarely too  
Have it in the open  
Not slanted behind comment  
The air cleansed  
Us affirmed  
I need the acceptance  
That was so long ago denied  
To beat the rejection  
So I may risk again inside

*25/12/1989*

246. UNCLE B

Uncle B  
Not real blood  
But the name  
We gave you  
I'd forgotten how much  
Of you lives in me  
The skeptic  
The rationalist  
The progressive  
The socialist  
The worker  
The joker  
The humanist  
The idealist  
The activist  
The unionist  
The list goes on

Hour many hours of discussion  
Did I sit wondrously  
At your feet  
As a young'un  
Then later engaging  
In debate and fiery discussion  
About Stalin, or Menzies  
Or Whitlam!

And now decades later  
I hear my own positions  
My own defenses  
My own hopes  
Exactly as I would say them  
From your cheery mouth  
The wheezy laugh into smoker's rumble  
Puts me so at ease  
Throwing me back to a mythical time  
Of my childhood  
And I realise that  
While not real blood  
You are one of my  
True fathers

26/12/1989

247. MANDELA

Today amazing  
They freed Mandela  
A short while back  
I recall an ANC delegation  
Black, bleak and tall  
Speak grimly of the possibility  
Of the regime using nuclear  
Weapons rather than fall

And yet today he is free!  
Twenty-seven years  
Locked on that island  
Amazing  
He is free at seventy-one  
Today they freed him  
Now with so much expectation  
For him  
The hardest part  
Is to come

*12/2/1990*



## 248. CYCLES

I read the old scribbles  
And wonder at the passion  
How easily I loved then  
When now I struggle  
The tired pattern treads familiar boards  
(I used to say neurosis – bit harsh don't you think?)  
Whatever it is  
It blocks spontaneity!

Your ghostly love now looms  
I fear it  
Or feel stifled and bored  
Short-tempered, ignored  
Then angry for nothing  
Passive aggressive

Then we are apart for a week  
And I miss you!  
I think  
What a fool  
Eventually you will tire of this  
(I would)  
And go

Don't go  
Help me work it through  
Pace with me  
Tutor me in durability  
Tackle these  
Obsession-boredom cycles  
Once and for all  
And uncover at last  
The love I know  
I hold for you in thrall

*12/2/1990*

## 249. FOUR STEPS

1.

Play hard to get

Turn over

Feign sleep

Tired, headache

2.

Deny body

Resist attraction

3.

Sex as possession

Focus on penetration

Be quick

Hurt

4.

Sleep to forget

Quick

Without caress

*12/2/1990*