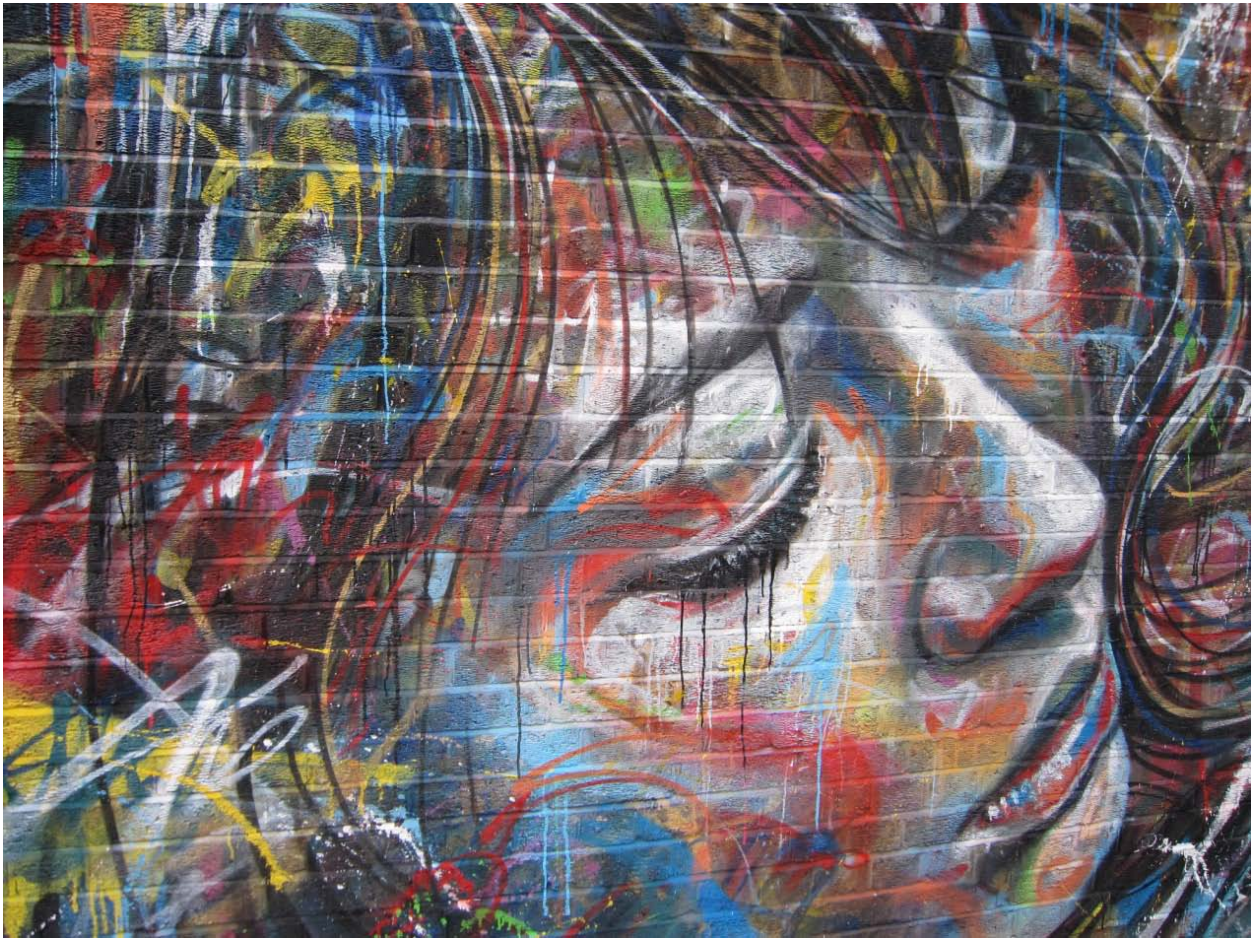


issue 15
streetcake



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SPIT & PRAXIS: DOG MAN SPEAKS

~~FAKE~~
~~COCKNEY~~
~~PIGEON~~
~~DEATH~~
~~DOG~~
~~TONGUE~~
~~ENDS~~
~~GLOBAL~~
~~RECESSION~~
~~OWN~~
~~TAIL~~

..... WAS THAT DOG MAN'S DATA STICK?

BEAT THE RECESSION WITH SALT BEEF

BETTER SEX THE PRIMARK WAY

DOG MAN INVENTS AIRPLANE

DOG MAN!
YOU CAN'T DIE!
I'VE GOT THAT
LAMB CHOP
FAMILY PACK
TO GET THROUGH
DON'T BE SO
FUCKING SELFISH
I LOVE YOU

Dog Man does not travel
but if he did it would be
on Air New Zealand

DOG MAN TELLS FUTURES
(EMPTIES SALT AND VINEGAR CRISPS ON THE TABLE)
DOG MAN USED TO BE MISTER CHICKEN
MILLIONS ATTEND DOG MAN FUNERAL
DOG MAN SCARES DOG ADMITS DOG
DOG MAN EATS OWN TAIL TO SAFEGUARD JOBS
(BUT DOESN'T LOOK WHEN CROSSING THE ROAD)
DOG MAN'S LAUNDERETTE MISERY
TO CHEER HIMSELF UP DOG MAN
S/E/L/F/ L/E/V//T/A/T//N/G/ B//S/C/U//T
ALWAYS BROUGHT A SMILE

TALKS ABOUT HIS CHANGING
RELATIONSHIP TO SURREALISM OUTSIDE THE
BRICK LANE BAGEL SHOP 3.15AM ON
NOVEMBER 15TH 2050

GLORIOUSLY-FUN-IN-AN- EMERGENCY

WITH-GREAT-BUTTERY-TASTE-

FOR-YOUR-IMAGINATION

DOG MAN
BRITAIN'S FAVORITE BOLOGNESE

DOG MAN CAN'T
TELL HIS
MICHAEL
JACKSON JOKES
ANYMORE
PLEASE GOD
LET NOTHING
HAPPEN TO
MADONNA

DOG MAN'S DREAM ASLEEP ON THE NO.8 BUS

FISH WITH MASH
IN A HUGE MOUND
WITH CHEESE SAUCE

END OF THE WORLD? DOG MAN
FRIES THE PORK CHOP ANYWAY

john burton

The splinter in my skin sits & it drags me
from what I'm running from.

DEEP

back ←

p
u t
r s

It whispers to me when Ecstasy e inside
killing all optimism and hope

The splinter in my skin sits dormant waiting to **STRIKE** imbedded in infected
flesh,
But I need it with me.

My	cage	sleeps
body	in	sinking
is	which	deeper
a	it	down

craving respect for all it's done and how long it's been around,

a of forgotten past, discarded into me.
fragment

matthew dickens

-what do i know about poetry?-

i know the poet must starve
to find the words
to show us how a hunger hurts
below the bottom rib

i
know poetry is free
i know poetry is free
i know poetry can be quite repetitive

(trite
even) simple as popping a pimple
and smearing the pus on a line

i know poems have meanings no man commands
and feelings no woman can numb

i know some are vague, a few pretentious
i know they will bring only crumbs

i know poetry must roam about the Island
where i dream until i wake up on a 12 pitch
with inch and quarter nails sunk
deep into my shoe
i will not study poetry
nor will i survive
how she will study me
until she buries me alive
(the fucking whore)

i know that i will love her then the most

From *Garage*

you've committed to a very a very spare
approach to showing art the bits
and bits stained by other bits pinned
or staple-gunned to the wall maybe
it's a little too spare, spare to the point
of belligerent, could be i know we don't
want something grander, or greedier but
maybe warmer, anyway i only said it, it's
not a deal-breaker. i do believe in this.

*

all heart and o t t touchy. the light really
bright so that there's a streak of blue cutting
the centre of the screen, basically where the
man is standing, making a speech on the
topic of how to answer a business phone
correctly. one of those light fittings that also
has a fan, spinning so the shadow makes the
blue shaft wobble and flicker.

joshua jones

Storm

There are lives
in its

landless earthquake
hail of applause

mocking the ground
from offstage.

It pushes now out of itself
as if the room had started to burn.

It sounds

like someone could be

snapping their spine
into new shapes

another watching
through lightning-fresh glass.

Or maybe there is only

changing air
underfoot splash-debris

and the anti-epiphany
of a doorway

hidden
but for the flash.

david mac

You Turn Up Unannounced

You creep into my dreams the same way you creep into my poems.
In my dream last night I was driving my car. But I heard your voice.
You were far off, talking to my mum.
Then you walked into my old bedroom.
And I got up off the bed and went over to you, and
kissed you on the cheek,
not the lips.
See?
Even in my dreams I know we're over.

Dream Feed

The first time I heard the voice, I thought I had imagined it.

I put it down to tiredness. After three months of sleep-disrupted nights, we had finally moved Emma into her own room. She took to it brilliantly, going down without fuss and sleeping almost immediately in the cot that we'd borrowed from Jen's sister. We waited outside the bedroom door for the cries to come but, when none did, Jen and I collapsed into each other's arms, unsure whether to laugh or cry. In the end, I think we did a bit of both.

That first night, after Jen had gone to bed herself, I sat up waiting to do Emma's dream-feed at 11.30. The TV was on quietly in the background, the fire was crackling contentedly and the sibilant hiss of the baby monitor conveyed Emma's gentle breathing. I'll admit that I was getting drowsy, curled up in the armchair with the remains of the paper and a mug of tea for company. Tiredness was catching up with me, the three months of endless activity and no sleep since Emma's birth finally taking their toll. I jerked myself awake a couple of times, at least. So it was easy to put it down to tiredness.

...dormitum...

One word, almost lost in the background white noise of the monitor, like a whisper. It was enough to make me sit up though. I rubbed my eyes and picked up the monitor, as if that would help me hear it better. After a gulp of cold tea I remembered I could just turn the volume up, but there was no repeat of the word, just that white noise.

I jumped in my chair as the monitor started to vibrate in my hands. The temperature warning - Emma's room was getting too cold. Choosing to ignore the way the alarm had made my pulse quicken, I hurried upstairs to the nursery. Emma seemed completely untroubled though, her breathing soft, slow and regular. I checked her tiny hands and they were chilly, so I popped some scratch-mitts on her as gently as I could, then checked the zip on her sleeping bag was fastened all the way up. Emma didn't murmur, merely stretching out one arm to pull Rabbit, the unimaginatively named soft toy, closer to her. By the time I got back downstairs, that whispered word was a fading memory, lost like a dream on waking.

That first week, Emma slept so well that we started to fantasise about her sleeping through the night. "Can you imagine," Jen had said, "a whole night's uninterrupted sleep?" She laughed, but her tiredness gave that laughter an edge. "No, I can't even *begin* to imagine," I replied, laughing too. But Emma was undeniably sleeping better in the nursery than she had in our room, even though it was pretty chilly in there and we had to leave the radiator on all night. I wondered if she just preferred the cot to the Moses basket, or perhaps that she had been disturbed by Jen and I being in the same room as her. Whatever the reason, we were able to start

moving her 3am feed back and, after another week in the nursery, that had become her 5am feed. Even then, Emma barely stirred as I lifted her from the basket and slipped the teat into her Cupid's bow mouth. She fed as vigorously as ever though, one hand resting gently on the bottle.

The second time I heard the voice, I was wide awake. I was whiling away the time until Emma's dream-feed by watching Match Of The Day. The game itself was dull and I had lost interest, but was sort of half-listening to the puerile banter subsequently batted back and forth between Lineker and Hansen.

...I dormitum...

Two words, quiet but unmistakable, like someone had whispered them at the furthest point of the monitor's range. I leant forward in my chair to listen more carefully, eyes half closed, head canted over to one side. There was no repeat. I sat listening until the hairs on my arms went back down and the goose bumps smoothed out. I had just sat back in my chair, dismissing it as interference from a radio station or something similar, when the monitor started to vibrate harshly from the coffee table. Its blue LEDs read 16.9 – surprisingly cold, given how mild the day had been for late November. I left Lineker and Hansen to their squabble, and went upstairs to check on Emma and adjust the radiator.

She slept through until seven for the first time that night.

I heard the voice twice more the following week, always after Jen had gone to bed and I was sitting up waiting to do the dream-feed. The first of these was much louder than the previous occasions... *I dormitum...* like whoever had spoken was right next to the monitor. I jumped in my seat at that, and was so convinced that whoever had said those words was in the nursery with Emma that I burst out of the living room and ran upstairs to check on her. She was fast asleep, her breathing – indiscernible on the monitor – was soft and shallow but regular. I moved her toy rabbit back within arms range, then turned the radiator up half a notch before I left the room. Jenny was standing on the landing, rubbing her eyes with the backs of her hands and shivering in her nightie.

“Everything alright?” she asked.

“Fine, just thought I heard something. Go back to bed, I'll be up soon.”

And that was as close as we came to talking about the voice until afterwards.

The next night, waiting up to give Emma her last feed of the day, I turned the television off and sat listening. For an hour and a half I listened to the assonant hiss of the monitor, and during that time I heard nothing out of the ordinary, save for the woodpecker *ter-terter-tert* interference from my mobile when I received a text from Jack. Did I fancy a pint after work tomorrow? Well, I did – I hadn't caught up with him properly since Emma was born, and besides it would be a chance to wet the baby's head. I was about to text my reply when I heard the voice again. This time, it said something different.

... *veni et lude*...

I dropped my phone. The voice was so clear, it could almost have been in the living room with me. I bounded up the stairs two at a time and burst into the nursery so loudly I felt sure I would wake the baby. But she didn't move. I peered over the side of the cot to look more closely; Emma had a little half-smile on her face, but looked pale in the blue glow of the nightlight. I couldn't hear her breathing, however much I leant over, so placed a hand lightly on her chest until I could feel its gentle rise and fall. When I was finally sure that everything was alright, I turned the radiator up a notch and went back downstairs. Later, as I prepared Emma's dream-feed in the bottle warmer, I tried to convince myself that what I was hearing must be interference from something, or somewhere. I'd heard the urban myths – if a little old lady somewhere could pick up Radio 2 through her fillings, then why not this? But what kind of words were they? If it was a radio signal, even pirate radio, what language were they broadcasting in? I think even then I knew that it wasn't radio – I just didn't want to rule out the only plausible explanation.

The next morning, Jen had lifted Emma out of the cot and had her half undressed for a nappy change before our daughter woke up.

Last Friday, I heard the voice again. Although the television was on for background noise, a bit of late-night chat show company, I had to rely on the day before's Guardian crossword to keep me awake. The monitor was in its usual place on the coffee table next to me, steadily conveying static. If I'd been watching, I could have seen the temperature display slowly dropping: 19.8... 19.3... 18.4... 17.2... But I wasn't. In truth, I was focused on thirteen across, and the voice was far from my mind. So when it spoke again, it was such a shock that the newspaper jerked violently in my hands.

... *veni et lude... lude nobiscum*...

There was something different about the voice this time – you know how you can hear in someone's voice when they're smiling? Or laughing? That's what I heard. And this was no interference, radio or otherwise – there was no crackle, no wow or flutter, no hiss beyond the normal background hum of the monitor.

Somebody was in the nursery with Emma.

I ran upstairs, throwing on every light as I went. Flinging open the nursery door, I braced myself, ready to confront whoever was there. But there was no-one.

I crossed to the cot, taking immediate comfort from the pink and white stripes of Emma's sleeping bag. In the diffused blue of the nightlight I could see her much-chewed toy rabbit, and underneath that a glimpse of white sleep suit. But something... something was *off*. I rubbed my eyes and pushed aside the flowers and bumble-bee of the cot mobile. Though her sleep suit was lying neatly inside her tightly-zipped sleeping bag, and her still-warm nappy tucked inside that, of Emma there was no sign.

I heard another voice then – a rough, jagged, inhuman voice. *Emma? Christ, Jesus, Jen! JENNY!* It was only when Jen came stumbling into the room that I

recognised this voice as mine. For the first time since our daughter had moved into her own room, the nursery was suddenly filled with crying.

kristian wiese

Morning itches light and night sky falls
into thin air. Sounds of expectations
penetrates every expectation, I grow & grow
beyond my photos wherever I'll end up
between pages and pages of tranquilizing languages
the air is cold without the rhythm of a typewriter
 & who gives a fuck, really
on a London Friday and the kitten mews.
I want to know the flow of time
the falling of a star,
some nice girls who look like you
my singular friend I'm sweating by now
 &
I open my eyes to the most exquisite moment.