

STREET CAKE

experimental writing magazine

issue 68

part 1



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[emote]

to smile- squeeze- left cheek- and right

-hold firm- don't waiver or c r u m b l e- that's not *human*

smile = happiness, love, friendship, etc.

when to not smile:

declarations of grievances

announcements of low spirits

void friendships

laugh- cheeks even higher- mouth open?

laughing = joy, amusement and

humour- ah humour- you're familiar

as am *i*

first the comedy mask- *become* the tragedy mask:

to frown- difficult one- more in the eyes- the *b r o w*

-lower brow- maybe push bottom lip up?

frown = sadness, loss, betrayal, and others

present your sadness- gulp it down-
it tastes

metallic

copper tears

industrial manufacturing

construct your emotion

emote

Chips or salad?

what if

they ask

chips or salad?

why is it

chips?

or

salad?

I want my mouth to fill with water as I bite into lettuce

and I want it to burn as I bite into potato

*hot or cold? hot or cold?
hot or cold? hot or cold?
hot or cold? hot or cold?*

how can I pick one and be sure

how could I say

I really should have the salad

but what if I die tomorrow

and this is my last chance to have chips?

They tap their pen against their notepad

tap
tap
tap
tap

I pick _____

and take the chance.

Pylon

1.

I used to send shock waves in water. I'd aim for the centre
and jump in, rippling it in currents like that pylon

Mum warned me not to touch. I can't do that
anymore. I need the surface to be still. I'm hiding

underneath, the chlorine stinging my eyes. They haven't
found me yet. My sister is probably running

downstairs, turning on lights. I watch her from underwater,
she's getting closer, the tiles shake. I pull myself up

like a plug. When I resurface, her eyes are wet.

2.

Are you crying?

No.

Are you sweating?

*Yes. Why are you
hiding out here?*

Do you remember that pylon,
that looked like Blackpool Tower?

Mum said if we touched it,
she wouldn't come to our funeral.

*Don't touch it then,
let's find her*

I can't

*you can, get out
the pool.*

3.

When you swim,

do you float?

What?

Or do you sink?

What do you mean?

I can't get comfy

get out then, come on.

I have to stay underwater.

I don't know what

you're on about.

You do.

Get out,

you'll catch a cold.

Why are you hiding?

I can't go back

I can't let you stay here.

4.

Stay on your side.

Tell me what's wrong,

I can't save you if

you're too quiet.

Drowning doesn't shout,

does it wave?

Get out the pool

or I'm going.

Stop stringing me up

like a postman, I don't

deliver after nine.

Remember that pylon

that looked like

Blackpool Tower?

It was in the middle

of a field.

Mum told me that

you touched it

can we stay here?

Look at your

hands, they're withered.

Help me out.

Get out and walk

get back in later

if we have time.

I shouldn't

have touched it.

Did it get wet?

Stay on your side

you're dripping.

Shake yourself down, put

on clean clothes

let's reinvent Blackpool Tower.

Stop yanking

get out then

I can't hear you

I'm under water.

Get out the pool.

What?

Get out the pool.

What?

I said

get out the pool.

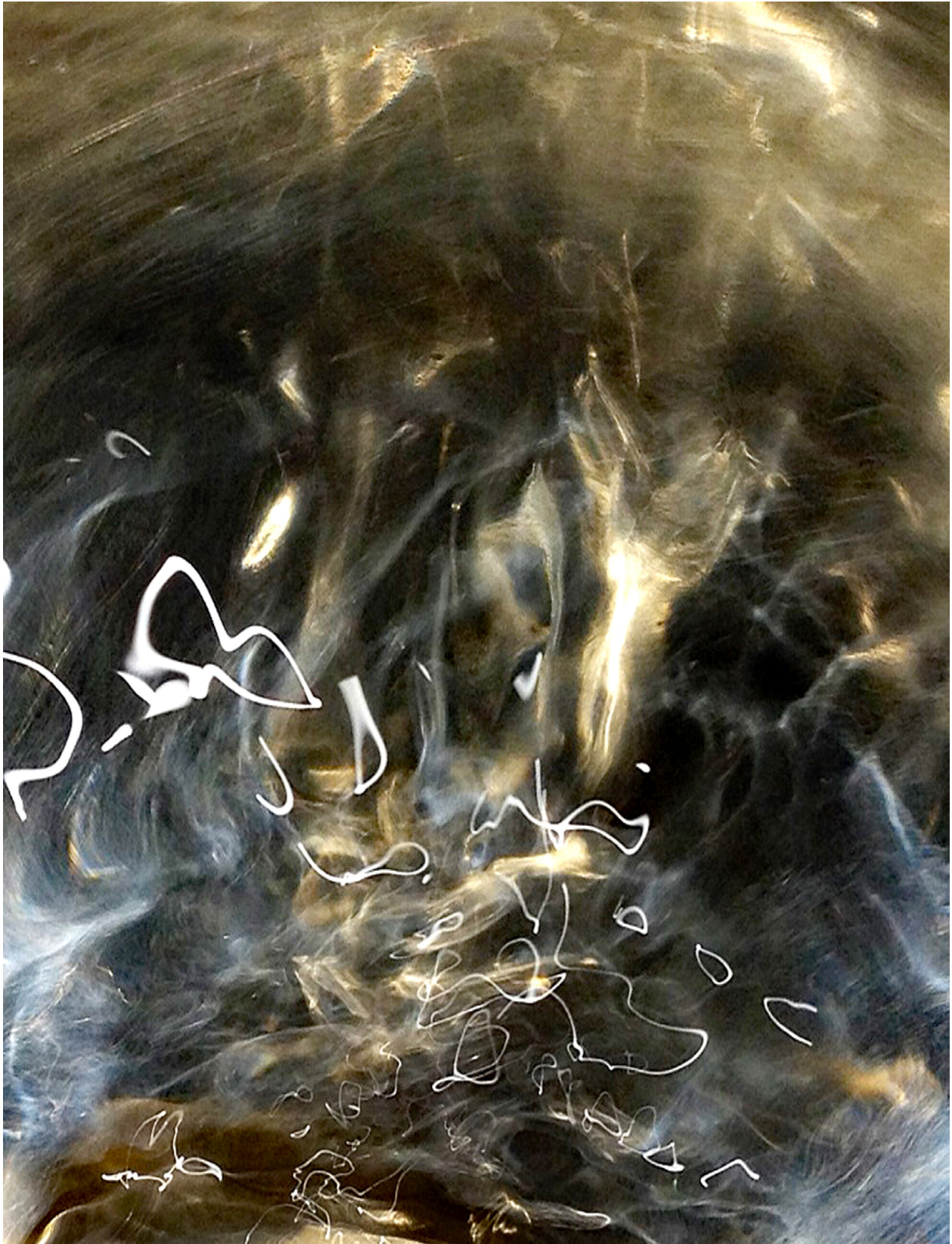
5.

I didn't mean to touch it, I wanted it more if I couldn't have it. Waves washed over my fingers, vibrating like cat purrs. *What came next?* A stillness, running in lines like it was late. Metal fusing water, knitting my veins the wrong way around. I wasn't sick anymore. I've made my bed in the puddle. Stop looking at me like that. *Your mouth is frothing, Mum won't come.* She'll see me floating on Monday, when she takes the dog for a walk. I'll be feeling so much better, like a pylon turning off.

Walk or Fly

Walking, the bird
without shoes,
stumbled on
a banana peel,
fell beak first
on oil stained
street road. Why
did it try to
cross the street
when flying was
the simplest choice?

Daedalus-craft turns sons into torpedoes.



Daedalus Watches Icarus Fall

I am not a *label*

label puts me in a **BOX**

your *label* says **BEAUTIFUL**

see me **SMASH** out of that cardboard box

my strongbox *label* is **DISGUSTING**

this *label* lies - years of **NEGATIVE** thought

and **FALSE** perception

his *label* says **FIT,** you have **S T
T H
R I
O G
N H
G S**

all I see is **FAT MASCULINE DOCKER'S LEGS**

humungous **ELEPHANT** limbs

**P
R
O
P
P
I
N
G**

up my **DIS-EASED** **HEAVY** **DISCONTENTED** frame
my body

is fettered by my **DELUSIONS**

|||||||I AM
NOTHING

|||||||I AM
EVERYTHING

|||||||I AM
ME

Spirit Box

In the world of parapsychology there exists a device that collects E.V.Ps HELP by sifting through thousands of radio waves in attempt to speak with the dead, with the spirits that inhabit this despondent land, the STOP- hearts that soon caressed the ground. There are ghosts in the world that live in people. PLEASE The ancestors and the millions of seized souls this country's constitution was built upon. HAVE MERCY What do you expect when the 'greatness' of this Kingdom was brought through the misery AND SUFFERING of those perceived subordinates. No wonder you search for spirits PRAY FOR ME long gone to be kind to, whilst extinguishing the souls of the living. Pretending not to hear.

EVEN WHEN I SCREAM

CHOSEN, THE CUP YOU DRINK

You have chosen, the cup is yours. Drink it.
Yours is the cup to drink, your chosen drink,
This is your chosen cup, it's yours to drink.
Chosen, it's yours to have, you have to drink
It. Drink this cup, it is yours; you have it?
To have it chosen is to have to drink.
You have to drink this drink to have the cup.
You have to have chosen this to have drink.
This, the cup-drink by you chosen, you have.
You are chosen to have the cup to drink.
This cup, this drink, the chosen have to drink.
It's yours! You have to have chosen the cup.
This is the cup you are chosen to have.
You are it – chosen. Drink to the chosen!

A Quick, Sand Horror Story

[21:07]: Yoooo

[21:09]: oh hey
what's up?

[21:09]: I wanted to run smth by you real quick
?

[21:10]: yeah for sure go for it

[21:12]: Okay. So.
Quicksand implies the existence of slow
sand, right?

[21:13]: loool
not necessarily?
don't think that's how quicksand
works?

[21:14]: But if you ran with it, as a bit, it would
make sense, right?

[21:14]: . . .
a bit??

[21:15]: Yeah

[21:17]: i'm not sure i get it?

[21:19]: . . .

[21:21]: Nvm.

There was just this thing I wanted to talk
through
I guess.

[21:21]: sorry, go for it

[21:23]: Thanks :))))

Basically: quicksand - if you step in it,
unless someone else can help you, it sucks you in.

[21:24]: yep

[21:25]: But, like, actually... it's not that fast?
Like, if you resist moving, it just eats you
slowly, grain by grain.

[21:26]: i don't know enough abt quicksand
to know, but that sounds abt right

[21:27]: Anyway. I was thinking, if that's quick
sand, then slow sand must just be... regular
sand?? You probably wouldn't even notice it, for a
long time??

[21:29]: . . .
you know, i haven't even thought of
quicksand since i was a kid.
you think a looooot

[21:30]: I know.
I K N O W
...
...

[21:34]: actually tbf i used to worry
looooooads abt quick sandw hen i was a kid,
hahaha
like, i got nightmates and stuff
*nightmates
*nightmares, god
not really since then tho

[21:41]: How would you deal with it?
If you came across quicksand, I mean?

[21:43]: hmmm
call for help, probablyk?
ugh sorry butterfingers

[21:45]: What if everyone is really far away though?
Haha, no worries!

[21:47]: i guess.....say my prayers lol
but this is v unlikely to happen
no?

[21:49]: . . .

. . .

. . .

[21:55]: we can changethe subject if you
want?

[21:58]: Do you ever feel like the sand is
Inside you?

[21:59]:

[22:02]: Just because
I feel sandy inside.

[22:04]: . . .

. . .

[22:06]: what do you mean??

[22:07]: . . .

I feel like, some day, I'd stumbled into a
puddle of quicksand. But since it's so slow, I hadn't
even realised I was in it.

[22:09]: Or it was in me, really.

[22:11]: But now the grains are everywhere.

. . .

I keep trying to stay still. To not move, or
move verrrry slow, you know?
But it's really hard and I feel like I'm sinking

[22:11]: . . .

[22:11]: But idk
Idk what to do about it

[22:12]: do you need to see a doctor? Do
you thinkthat would help?

[22:15]: I'm not sure. I don't know if they'd be able to help, you know?

[22:17]: I mean, how do you even get sand out of a person?

[22:18]: i don't know, but i'm sure they'd have an idea??

...

[22:20]: i want to help, but i think if this is serious then maybe a doctor would be better at it?

[22:30]: you still there??

[22:33]: Yeah, sorry.

[22:34]: no worries
how long have you noticed the sand?

[22:40]: Hmmmmmm
I'm not sure
Part of me thinks I've actually been collecting it my whole life, even though I know I'm being stupiddd.

[22:41]: no you're not being stupid

[22:41]: Like, if I think about it too much I get terrified, and then it feels like I'm all sand and if someone touched me I'd just like
Crumble away.

[22:42]: this isn't good.

[22:50]: you okay??

[22:51]: And other times, I can feel my body getting so heavy from the sand - like a rain shaker you make from a pringles can when you're a kid, lol

Not relevant, sorry - but yeah... it's weird.

[22:54]: I feel kind of heavy rn, haha

[22:55]: this isn't good.

i really think you should see a doctor
i can go with you if you want

[23:05]: does that sound good?
If we pick a day i can make the timew
i'll make the time

[23:16]: you still there?

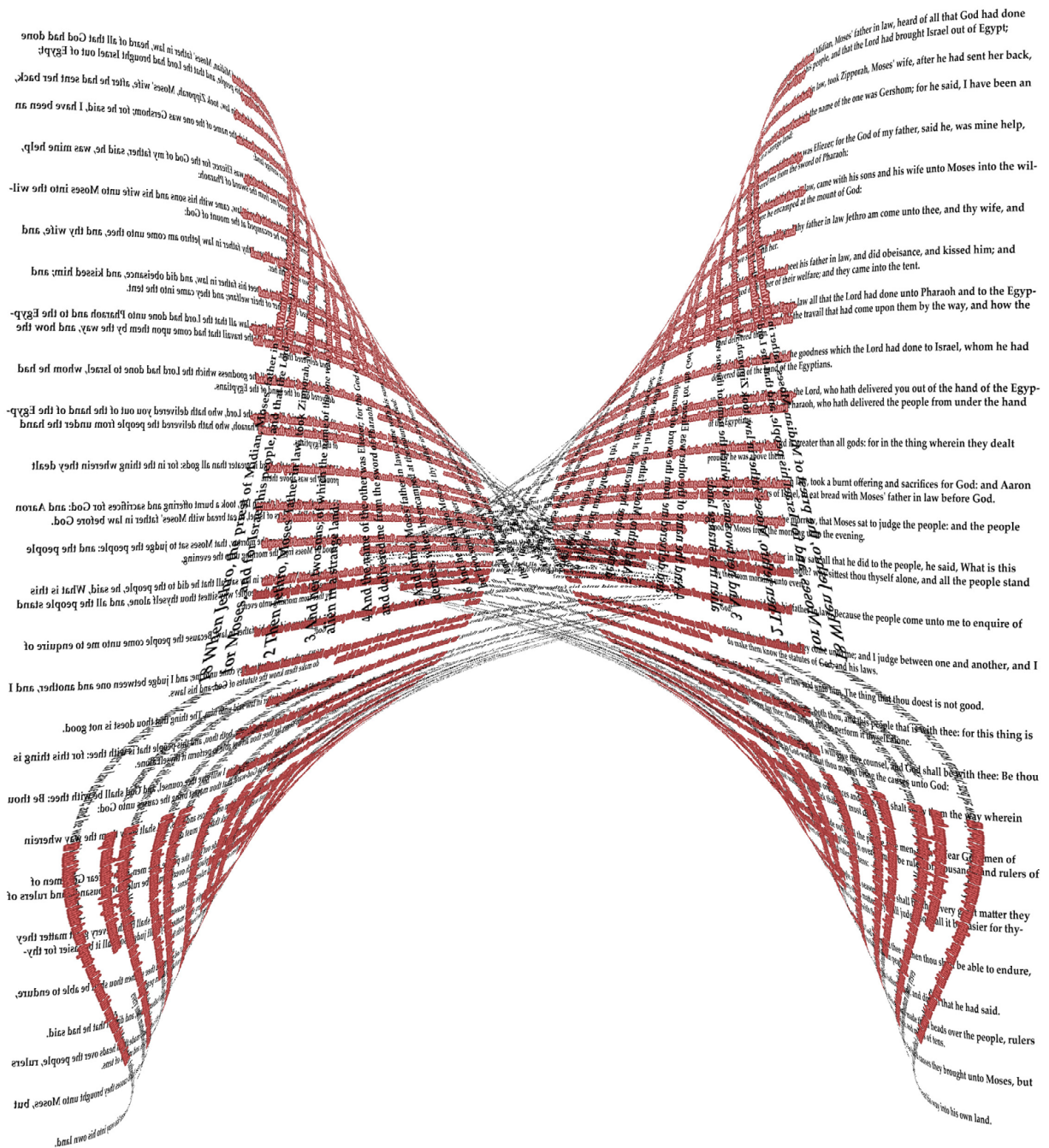
[23:31]: it's cool if you're tired now, but it
says you've seen the messages
are you signing off??

[23:32]: did you just leave your phone open?

[23:44]: ???

[23:45]: hello?

[23:50]: hello???



Border Crossing

*the beautiful
river*

s
e
r
p
e
n
t
i
n
e

*breaks two
banks*

t h e s u r f a c e

f l u s h e d
 into a chamber
 the red and white cells
 platelets
 wash through
 I am delivered into the heart.
 Somewhere a sluice gate of love
 has b u r s t

filled us with
 blood love the same

I bob

on a red tide.

In a rush of

discarded barbeque

rat trap

the broken body
 of a heron.

However

d l d
 e i
 e v
 p e

this is still
 t h e s u r f a c e

Job 14

i am 4 months pregnant and
 the number is not decreasing
 stock error stock error stock error
 iodine
 iodine
 iodine
 iodine
 iodine i am lost
don't tell me what to do

hēsa hēsa hēsa hēsa hēsa hēsa hēsa

welcome to yesco salford
 ↔
 we are asking all of our customers
 to please leave a two-meter gap
 ↔
 between one another

that child is a fucking savage
 she eats chopped aubergine
 with no sugar at all

Õ, my friend –
 thank you.
 you're tired of babysitting
 aren't you

excuse me the chicken is slimy
 it tastes like glue

excuse me I need an electric kettle
 oh no that one's shit

excuse me there's some yoghurt on the floor
you like that don't you

excuse me where's the queue
 fuck's sake / fuck's sake

Excuse me **excuse** me **excuse** me **excuse** me

i'm really sorry i'm sorry, sorry but

we need red onions/I make my own with oil and ketchup/huh

your bum cheeks are like a venus fly trap!

Empath

I lie against you to take the weight
it will be years before we talk again

I think of words the way you said
the fortress obsidian forged

permeated sparks riven sinews
I remember it all

it is further than I thought
these convulsions intricately bound

I am collapsing into the earth
now are you free