

Barcelona's Sun

by Georgia Johnstone

You would love it here
you would.
The doors arching up
push past the sky line
cool clay walls
we lean on, bend in the breeze.

We're always trying to get out
of the swollen sweating sun here.
La mañana es muy calienté para a mi.

We walked, walked up steps today
my lungs bursting thought of you
as I gasped for the air I couldn't have.
Apparently it's hard to suck it in at high altitude
usted debe venir.
You should come.

Barcelona flaunts enthusiasm
local bartering is shameless
blistered carts sag heavy
yo tengo yo tengo yo tengo
do you want some spice?
Precious threads, exotic grape.
No me gustar, gracias senor.

You would love it here
you really would.
It's a shame you're in Zurich
learning the wrong language.



Distance

by Dylan Wharton

Lonely Star,

All by yourself,

Your closest friend,

So far away.

No tears left to cry,

Burning all through night,

Rage that builds,

Inside your soul,

Desperate to love,

To be made whole,

Till all hope is lost,

Burnt to black hole.



Eighteen and Counting

by Alisha Lewis

I thought of you in New York
On the corner of Lexington Ave and 53rd
I wrote a poem about Starbucks after five
and texting during maths
Root beer tastes disgusting by the way.

Subway seats and a Spanish newspaper
folded carefully and tucked
into a purple purse.
A tired train, women gossiped
Loehmans is having a sale
the men yawned
and complained about the weather.
My window was dirty
scratched with grafitti
- Shanice luvz Andre 4eva.
Counting all the station signs
*Telling someone you love them
is like counting to a thousand*
I only got to one hundred and thirty
before I gave up.

I am shopping for shoes and somewhere
in the middle of the crowded sidewalk
past the man selling six dollar scarves
and the lady with the counterfeit purses
but about a block before Bloomingdales

I wondered what you were doing.



Gambling With Matches

by Toni Ouder

The day I was born you memorised the headlines
'Further Escapades Into Space'
I wish someone could have done that for you.
Your own small orbit:
the toffee jar routine
(*Nan, I don't eat toffee all over again*)
and the ants in neat lines
following your jam drips.

While I get older
age places itself on your shoulders
so you stoop and shuffle around
each autumn needing
more and more help to pick the feijoas
before they fall and burst under the lawn mower.
Each time I leave I wonder what you do
alone on top of the hill
as your house raises its shadows,
pulling the night around you.

But there are small wonders:
Gambling with matches,
Ready Steady Cook,
the sleeping piano in the back room
that comes alive sometimes
when I'm playing in the garden.

And the angels sitting on top of your TV
tell me that you keep your ghosts
folded like clean handkerchiefs
in your breast pocket.



Home

by Georgia Boyce

**Kumara and smoked roe brunch fritters,
watercress and manuka smoked pipi,
have you been cooking as much as always?
An old French watering can stands at the door
and your walls are plastered with paintings.
Your fridge is always an inspiration,
the quote of the day held firmly by a magnet,
sometimes they're simple, one word, live.**

**Banana and coconut pancakes, wine and
Cadbury roses, I'm coming home, stepping
back in time where the past is still present
and the memories hang from the ceilings
and the walls. Wait for me on the old
wooden swing under our favourite tree.**

**Champagne jelly, peach tea and of course
your favourite raspberry ice cream, melts
softly under the sun. Watch me floating
face down feeding the translucent fish
that swarm below. The catalyst of escape,
a weapon of distraction, I'm coming home.**

**Tomorrow I will see you for the first time
in seven years, I hope you haven't changed.
I hope you'll be ready with your cinnamon
fruit fritters, lemon citrus slice and peach tea.
I hope you'll remember me like I do you.**



In Praise of the Girl Next Door

by Charlotte Agnew-Harington

You're the one who trims the leaves
from the mouth of the letterbox
and watches pink petals drip from the
ledge and fall to the ground.

You're the one who brings in the mail
when it's threatening to rain,
the one who peels canaries
from the claws of our cat
and buries the egg-yolk feathers
beneath the plum tree.

You're the one whose door I can knock on
at 4am because it's raining outside
and the thunder is pressing against the window panes
like silence in the library in the city
on a cold and dreary day.

You're the one who spies me early morning
smeared in toothpaste,
dark eyed with left-over mascara
and rouge cheeked with cold and naiveté
and doesn't say a thing.

So thanks.
Next time your key gets stuck in the lock,
and you can't get in
and the cat is peering at you through the grimy window,
I'll let you in.
Ok?



Lost Hope.

by Michelle Grafton

Another dawn, Another dusk.
I ready myself
For what I hope
Could, finally, be the first step.

My mind ticks over and over again
Thoughts of yesterday's escape
Failure knocks at the door
Struggling to close it,
Remembering it belongs to the past.

I stand there believing
For the next path to appear
What my heart longs for,
What my mind knows,
Already light shadows dim.

I stood there all day hoping
For change, knowing dusk
Would be here sooner.
Twelve years of mess,
Four years of tragedy.
My hope wouldn't even come
to the fence.

Standing here every year
Right in this place
Knowing you're missing her.
You are too stubborn
To fix what is left.

A father, A daughter
Miles apart.
Separated by their loved one.
Destroyed by life's changes.
Tomorrow's dream?
Another dawn, Another dusk.



Spanish Heat

by Charlotte Priestley

Tijuana streets, an endless grey ribbon
running, curving around block buildings.
Shops are heated with warm colours and
mirages linger over the cracked asphalt
where children cry playfully
Entre en esta tienda!

Like I could ever understand them.

Half-painted as zebras
donkeys remind me of you
Not that you are a Mexican donkey,
but you can make something dull into anything but.
Strumming Spanish guitars echo from street parties,
at night weaving through the city

You were quite the party animal.

I remember you teaching me the Macarena
at your old house with the yellow roof.
We would swirl and spin until our feet hurt.
I often wonder what your new home is like.
Dad said you are in India and that is why
we all got colourful saris for Christmas.

Please don't move before this gets to you.



To a sister

by Charlotte Trevella

Our cat caught
an owl and brought
it to our doorstep: a
contorted parcel
of tendon and flight,

what a gift
it was, the hollow
scaffolding of wings
and the blood;
urgent viscous red

*

There are reminders:
the tessellation of our
hands, bees
stealing sweetness
from clover to feed their
pale, squirming larvae,
the dresses
hanging in our wardrobes:

hand wash dry in shade
bright colours may fade over time.

*

You are thirteen years
old and
the light shines
through you, a
stained glass window
of clavicle and
brightness as you place

a bird
in the waiting
earth, above you,
the macrocarpas
swallowing the
syrupy evening of
a hot and
helpless day.



To My Ten-Year-Old-Self

by Birgitta Swanberg

When you turn eleven,
You'll be angry Grandpa died two weeks ago,
You'll get your ears pierced,
You'll eat a lot of kitkats,
You'll like a boy and giggle,
You'll meet your best friend,
You'll worry about the car being towed away.

When you turn twelve,
You'll have a boy's number written on your arm in blue highlighter,
You'll get your first bra,
You'll start playing soccer,
You'll care what everyone thinks,
You'll have a growth spurt,
You'll worry about the sick hedgehog in the garden.

When you turn thirteen,
You'll appreciate your family,
You'll join student council,
You'll be cheeky and artistic,
You'll start shaving your legs,
You'll dance with a boy you like,
You'll worry about getting your period.

When you turn fourteen,
You'll get your first kiss,
You'll feel nostalgic,
You'll think about fate and free will,
You'll go to Greece and feel grown up,
You'll be proud of yourself,
You'll worry about the future.

When you turn fifteen,
You'll find somewhere you belong,
You'll get braces,
You'll dissect a rat and enjoy it,
You'll realise that people care what you think,
You'll start watching scary movies,
You'll worry about who you'd live with if your parents split up.

When you turn sixteen,
You'll have a combined birthday party,
You'll fall in love,
You'll chew a lot of gum,
You'll do the Tongariro crossing,
You'll get drunk,
You'll worry about the time you have left.

When you turn seventeen,
You'll think you know who you are,
You'll learn how to surf,
You'll say goodbye crying,
You'll keep your room clean,
You'll write to your ten-year-old self,
You'll worry about being forgotten.



You just can't see it

by Sammy Hickson

1.

You think you're standing on your head
Because everything is upside-down
Lights are flashing, always red
Can't lift your ugly frown

Chorus

You're trying to set a bar you can't limbo
Hurdles that you can't jump
Run a race you can't finish
You've been worn down like a rock by the tide

2.

You're walking in the circle of confusion
Every step is one closer to where you started
You take a step away and it follows you
Its voice echoes in your steps

Chorus

There's no use being on the beach at sundown
If you can't see the sunset
There's no use being under water
If you're drowning

3.

You're trapped by a box
You think you can't escape
But the secret is the door's wide open
You just can't see it

