
A Diary of Dedications

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1.
I sit now waiting
Now and then getting up to face the urinal.
Why? I'm not quite sure,
Though I do know that apart from the writing on the wall,
It is the only place of interest,
Where I,
So they, the two my crimes were against, thought I belonged.
I know that's where I'll be too,
With all the others crims in the sewer.
Monotony!
Walking, pacing,
What else can I do while I wait,
"Sit down!" someone in my overcrowded cell will say
"You're making me nervous" will continue another.
"O.K." I'll reply and sit with a heavy thud
In my finely furnished cell,
Three planks of wood as beds
One or two blankets per person
Not that that was any good for this lot,
The stench of urine and shit,
And a loo.
The walls are painted in institutional green.
The cell door and bars institutional grey.
Yet these were not always the colour,
There have been many.

2.
I begin wondering what will happen to me,
How long will I be sentenced?
Will they, he, the big man, have any sympathy,
For me?
The monotony of the cell is broken as a new guy is thrown in.
I'm called out;
My heart starts pounding.
Guilty screams in my head.
Fear is at work on my already trembling hands.
As we near the courtroom
The pig offers me a cigarette and smiles,
Knowing only too well that before we enter
I'll have to stub it out.
We enter the courtroom where he sits,

The pig bows,
Pays homage to the fearless magistrate,
The big man.
“Are you Mr Popakavitch?” he asks
“Yes” I reply wishing I had said
“No! I’m Frankenstein junior – who are you?”
“You have been charged with

The charges are read out.
“Do you understand the charges?”
My mind is boggled,
I am confused, yet, I’ve been here before.
“Christ!” I cry to myself, “why always me?”
He repeats his question
“Mr Popakavitch, do you understand the charges?”
“Yes” I reply.
But I don’t understand.
I’d say anything to have it end quickly,
But despite my answer, it was long and drawn out
Making my peril worse.
I tried willing myself to death
But my luck was as always,
Bad.
I try thinking of other things,
No that doesn’t work,
For every time I start to wonder
I am brought back by a voice saying
“Mr Popakavitch, did you hear what I said?”
“No” I reply
He would repeat,
And when he was satisfied,
We would continue.
The last I remember of the trauma,
Was the end
Found guilty of assault and malicious damage.
Sentenced.
“I hereby sentence you fourteen days hard labour”
I thought I was lucky;
Relieved and then again horrified.
He had more to say,
“Fourteen days for assault and fourteen days for malicious damage”
“Twenty eight days” I whispered
Can’t they see I’m innocent.
Don’t they understand.
“Please” I cry to myself “Don’t let this happen to me?”
My cry was never going to be of any use
Whether to myself in sobs,
Or
To them aloud.

3.

Waiting, thinking, planning.

There must be some escape.

“God! How I loathe this cell” I weep

“And how I want to be free”

My mind is racing,

Running from the world here and outside

But not without reason.

The hours tick by

And the van will be here soon and I don't want to be in that thing.

They don't care you know,

The drivers I mean.

What's it to them if were in the back, handcuffed

And they take the corners so bloody fast.

Knowing there's nothing to stop one being tossed about.

I hear doors unlocking.

My heart sinks

They're here waiting outside

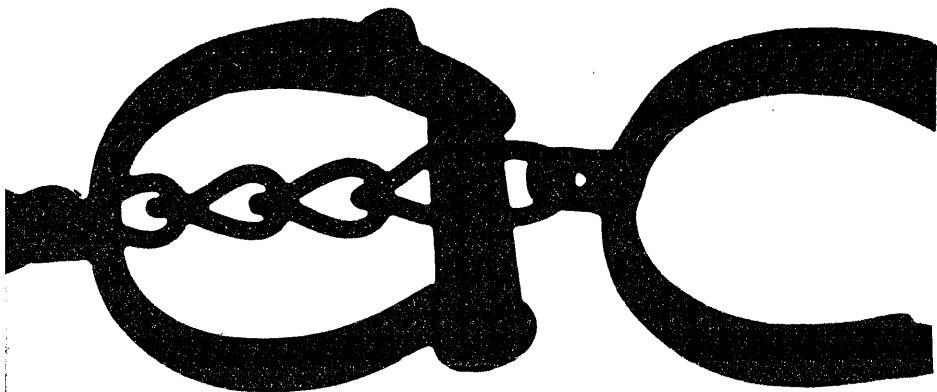
Ready for us

Handcuffs poised,

Ready to put on us.

Great hunks of ugly steel around my wrists

Aching.



4.

The journey is long and rough
Many times I could forsee a smash
But for me
There's no such luck
God only knows where the driver gets his license
The trashcars most probably
Time now is oblivion
It seems so long since the court saw me
and it's been such a long day
When will it end.
Why don't they slow down?
It's no emergency for me or the others.

5.

We arrive at Long Bay,
I know this because I can hear the main gates being opened
Large, undoubtedly grey, steel gates.
There are many shuffled footsteps
And shouting voices.
Soon the van moves forward,
We're inside.
The main gates are closed
The pigs get out of the van to hand our Papers over.
The second gate is opened;
In hop the pigs,
We move another short distance,
Come to a halt and we're well and truly there;
Battered and bruised.
One of the pigs opens the van,
Out we get.
Briskly, as to avoid us wandering away,
We are lined up.
The god forsaken hunks of steel are removed.
I rub my wrists, so as to relieve them.
The change of light,
Makes necessary,
The need for adjusting one's eyes
By method of rubbing, as when one wakes.
I take a quick gawk of the place,
And wonder,
How many times one must see this place,
To grow to like it?
I try to be sociable to one of the other crims,
But we are told to shut up and get back in line
The pigs soon depart
Leaving us in Capable hands.
Capital "c" in Capable
For I want my sarcasm to be felt.

The screw looks us over,
Then proceeds calling out our names,
I'm third in line.
He comes to me,
"Grendle Pop ... aka ... fish"
I correct his pronunciation,
He looks at me and smirks
By now I've had so much that tears are in my eyes
But he doesn't understand
And if he has any heart
It's in his big toe going to waste.
I go into reception Searched.
Then given an outfit of prison uniform
My clothes are gone till the day I get out
Maybe sooner than they think
I laugh at the idea.
After reception has finished
We are whisked off to our respective sections
Given a meal and placed in our cells
Mine is empty
So I can't make an association with anyone until morning.

6

After the sun goes down
The jail seems to take on another voice
I say voice, because during the day it always seems hyperactive
But at night, well, it's solemn
One thinks of his past and future
Others prepare for a break
Yet again others just sleep.
It wasn't until I had been in jail for the first time
That I realised
That dreams and reality can be intermingled
Swapped about, played with.
I often found myself hoping the jail would blow up.
I wondered if I would stay or try getting out.
But this time it's different,
I know that I would stay
Where else could I go?
I hear someone speaking ... Screw?
No.... Most probably next cell
The night is long and dull
Noises can often be heard
Some are frightening.
To shut them out all one has to do is close his eyes
And sleep
Which I do.

7a

Green sticks,
The masks are white
With holes cut for their eyes
And mouth
And held at face level.
"What is it you want?" I ask
They shuffle closer
"Please what?" I started
"Fish!" cut in one of the figures
"Fish?" I question
"Poplar!" exclaims the second.
"Fish, poplar?" I whisper to myself
"What are you? Some kind of nuts?" I yelled,
Half scaring myself out of my wits
Least I wake the others.
The third one whispered in my ear.
"Tribunal, tribunal, tribunal, tribunal, tribunal."
I looked at them,
Scared.
Had I died during the night?
Was I dreaming?
I pinched myself to make sure.
It was for real alright
And I have a mark to prove it.
But the meaning is strange
They leave singing unmusically
Trout, tree, tribunal,
Trout, tree, tribunal,
Trout, tree, tribunal,
Trout, tree, tribunal,
Trout, tree, tribunal
The cell door slams I am once again alone.
What they say,
What does it mean?

7b

Morning comes about
And I was let out,
So as to be able to go and feed Maestro,
My pedigree Alsation,
Who, by now, would be missing me.
I left him in good hands at a young couples flat,
Their names skip my mind.
Why! I'm not quite sure
But they do.
It will take me all day to get to their place,
Which is at Bondi,

So I'll skip telling you about the journey.
I arrive at their flat at five.
I am greeted at the door by the woman,
Who is in her early twenties.
She has a beautiful face,
Unspoiled by blemishes,
And beautiful blue eyes.
Her hair is golden honey in colour,
And overall she is a very charming person,
To set your eyes upon.
Her husband,
Well I much rathered to be near him,
His eyes were kind,
His body strong and well groomed.
He was, to me, what every man,
In my eyes,
Should be,
Handsome, strong,
But above all – manly.
“We’re going out Grendle, is there anything you want from the shops?”
“No” I replied.
They both kissed me goodbye,
And left.
Maestro came bounding out of the bedroom
To the kitchen,
Where I was preparing his food.
He whimpered.
Something was wrong,
So I went to him.
He lay silent for a moment,
While I feel his heart.
The moment I took my hand away he was in pain.
“There is one way to heal you” I said,
“But first you must wait,
In case,
Your health picks up.”
He nodded.
The time past by,
But there was no improvement,
So it looked as though I would have to help him.
I went to the kitchen
And got a pair of scissors,
Sterilized them,
And went to Maestro,
Who by now,
Was lying sound asleep.
“Don’t wake my pet!” I whispered,
And taking a swab,
Washed the area for operation.
Once done,

I picked up the scissors
And cut,
Just above his heart.
After I had done that, I made to open the wound,
To stab directly in his heart with,
The carving knife,
Which had yet to be fetched.
I went into the kitchen to fetch it
But when I returned,
Maestro had gone.
"Ah well!" I sighed "he must be alright."
Many hours later
The young couple came home,
Maestro in their arms.
She turned to me
And spoke,
"The vet said that there's not much chance he'll live."
"It's my fault!"
I screamed
Crouching down to hug my dog
"He was sick,
And I had to ease him of all the pain,"
"He was sick" I said,
"So I tried to cut his heart out."
I broke down in sobs
And blacked out.
When I awoke
Tony was standing over me
I was on a couch
Naked.
He laughed insanely
And said,
"You've always wanted it,
And now,
I want to give you it."
I gasped as he lowered his naked body onto mine.
It was cold,
But I loved it
Although his intentions were rape.
Suddenly, he got off and stopped kissing me
And just as suddenly,
He turned me on my stomach,
Spread my legs violently,
And,
Left me waiting,
Waiting and crying,
Scared and bruised,
My ugly, naked body, trembling,
In hope and fear.
When all was quiet

I got up got dressed
And walked to an old church
I entered it's old gothic doors
To behold a spectacle of
People dressed in green.
I sat quickly,
As, so, not to be noticed.
A chamber orchestra started playing
Mendelson's: "Wedding March",
And down the aisle came the most glorious sight ever to behold
Priest, altar boys, nuns,
Flower girls,
All holding large white chandles.
The gothic arches lit up,
Like no one would have every seen them before,
Then the music changed,
Tschaiakowsky's "Love Theme" from Romeo and Juliet
Followed in cautious steps,
By the bride and groom,
Who were an elderly couple in their seventies,
At least.
The sight made me cry with joy
For only true love could exist between this couple.

*... All these years,
I'd have gone mad
without you,
Mabel ...*



7c

Flashes of red and black

Cross my eyes,

As the pain, near and in my right ear, grows worse.

A pain that would not go easily,

A pain that sent screams to ones head.

What is the cause of it?

Earwigs I thought to myself,

Then I dismissed it,

Pure fallacy.

Earwigs don't really do that,

They are just normal insects,

But my train of thought was broken

By hundreds of little black things,

Scuttling across my bed.

Onto my pillow,

Which had few crimson splotches.

From my pillow, they dissappeared from sight,

Then I had a tickling sensation on my right lobe,

And next came the crunch,

Earwigs!

Entering my ear,

Eating, feasting,

Making their way to my inner ear.

Crunching, chewing,

Soon they would be starting on the great grey matter,

My brains.

Was I going mad!

If I wasn't, I soon would be.

I screamed.

Thousands battling to get in,

Fighting the now torrid flow of blood

Trying to get out.

I screamed again,

And again,

And again,

But to no avail.

They just kept feeding.

My head began throbbing,

Pounding, beating,

But they just kept feeding,

Enjoying every morsel.

I screamed.

And woke!

I woke from a sleep,

A sleep I was glad to have finished

But the pain was still there,

And the blood still pouring out.

Was there earwigs there?

Were they feeding on my brains?

Were they?

8

Morning comes about
And we are let out of our cells
This was when I could associate
But the morning seemed like a dream
All the prisoners seemed fake
Unreal.
I felt alone,
Was I?
I felt strongly pent up
As though they were out there
And I was in my cell.
We go in for breakfast at eight
So I'd best get warmed up before they come
And put us back in cold damp cells.
I started walking to and fro
When I noticed unusual behaviour,
They, the cons, were all huddled together
Watching me.
Not nastily, but with strange admiration.
Then one by one, they joined my walk
Twenty or so
Walking to and fro
This way and that
Like a dream
Then I stopped
They gathered about me, expecting something.
Their shadows engulfing me,
Asking Pleading "Speak"
I'm not sure what, but it's there

Escape!
That's it, a good foolproof escape.
They wait for my plan,
So I start telling them
"We'll just bolt" I say
"What?" replies someone
Their stone figures closing in on me
"Fuck you" I scream "We'll just bolt
Jump the wall and be off."
They listen in awe.
"Screw" someone whispers
I start walking
Slowly they join in.
The screws glance freezes on us.
"Go away cunt" I think to myself
He goes.
Once again I stop walking,
It's time to go in.

9

The banging of cell doors is unbearable,
Only next to one's dreams, day or night.
The waiting for my plan of mass escape
Was the only thing out of prison life
That was the hardest thing to bear.
Waiting for that moment when,
We, the whole yard could escape.
Bolt and jump those confounded walls.
The rest of the day I just laze about
Thinking,
Was it?

Is it such a good idea?
Then the time came,
Just as we were headed for our cell block,
From the crumby exercise yard.
I didn't bother looking back.
I just kept on running,
No doubt the screws were boggled
What the hell....
If I'm going to escape this hold
So I ran,
Following the others.
They made the wall,
But just on the way over I heard a gunshot.
There I was,
Now here I am, begrudging
Every drop of blood.
For I'm determined to go,
And I will.
If it hadn't been for that
Crackshot Screw.....
The blood was going, going ... Gone.
Death was inevitable.

10

Morning comes about
And we are let out of our cells.
We have until eight,
As I have told you,
To exercise before breakfast.
I started walking,
To and fro,
This way and that.
Some guys are called out to leave
Some have to face further charges,
And face court.
I, like the rest, just walk, here to there
And there to here.
Misery I feel

But what of the other day?
Their faces are no longer stone.
They don't even look the same.
Maybe I was dreaming?
No
There's blood on my shirt,
From when I was shot.

Fuck Off, Says Court

The guarantee of the Australian constitution for a hearing in the High Court of Australia of all cases from all state Supreme Courts sounds like a bulwark against injustice wherever it may be in Australia. Not for crims though.

If you want to pursue an order to stop your neighbour's dog howling, fine. But if you're doing life having been set up by the cops, fooled into accepting poor advice or inadequate counsel at your first appeal then you can't be heard in the High Court of Australia to plead your case. It is yet another instance of the rich and influential protecting their property rights as first priority.

The High Court admitted its greater concern for its own pomposity when recently it rejected an application by a prisoner to speak from himself at his appeal – to get the hearing that Australia's Founding Fathers thought they had ensured. The case *Hass (Collins) v R* was taken up by the Prisoners Legal Cooperative as a test case for its uniqueness in that a barrister had been forced onto him for the hearing of the state appeal despite his protestations and the court's own open criticism of the presentation of the case, and his ability to argue the points of law quite fully before the Commonwealth court if permitted. This point was inadvertently admitted by the Chief Justice Sir Garfield Barwick when he commented upon the 41 page written appeal the prisoner had submitted saying: "It is quite evident that he had assistance from trained people people who have had some training in the law". Here indeed was the prisoner's and indeed is all Australians' problem. Professional arrogance that declares all law is the province of trained lawyers, and that the people must remain subservient to the pompous gang monopolising our judicial system. How many charged or appealing prisoners know, let alone trust, any lawyers? How many could pay for the man they want? How many could evaluate their skills, their dedication or integrity to the cause even if given the option of alternative representation? Isn't this briahegoosian buffoonery to offer every man a lawyer under such conditions, and upon whom the man's cherished liberty depends?

This prisoner was fighting for his right to fight for himself. Well, when that monopoly was under challenge and they in the High Court were confronted with the possibility of dirtying their hands and lowering their dignity by actually arguing with a crim, all stops were out.