

issue 9  
streetcake



image: joe ruddock ©

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**trini decombe**

What do I wanna paint?

1.

red and wine

maybe pink

yes I'll use

pink

which colour

shall I use

pink no

red

gosh which

colour?

2.

Have you

read

*What do I wanna*

*paint?*

I think

she

should use

pink

Why not?

*feverscapes*

The hardly noticeable face, shut up inside the head instead of a body, a raggedy  
Head, made into ashes, a single world made more by mirrors, obscured by denser  
images Of street locomotives. Unrecognisable suburbs appear and reappear, cars to  
and fro from Whereabouts we are

into a ditch immediately

Seatbelts undone

External phenomenon through the eyeball, exponents of outside, an indelible  
impression of optical electrics, the retina cannot focus, corrupted sensation of  
space, perspective indicates distance, everything at once in one space, interrelated  
forms running numbers against one another, dull receding colour like the reverse of  
curtains, refocusing creates a sensation, an appearance of intention, god is what's  
not there, non linear - what is is what's not - simultaneous experience of  
discontinuity, juxtaposed almost object of not there

Impressionist diptych - saints falling into the sea - a birch at daybreak

A hung

man

Splintered light  
Fractured radiant sublimations  
A screeching mouth of knives  
A snaggle of spittle and solitary confine  
The braches are the coastline they are the falling  
They are the washing away

Daubs of grey are remnants of lightning

Spliced downed worldliness

The stench of us in  
Prisms of drowned rain

A many headed instance  
Of the self

YOU TAKE THIS PATH

you take  
this path that you  
have taken  
every day you take  
you take to the sea

i have become  
the image that you  
want this image  
is  
the

image  
that you see  
but today  
i am alone  
today, this day  
i de

li be rate  
ly  
stray  
to di ss olve  
and  
sos olve my  
fro  
orf

sos love  
like a  
clam S.O.S  
so-so

like  
do  
re  
me  
mem  
ory  
omm  
ommmm  
ommmm re  
r e turned  
the  
same p a t h  
to find you  
but you had r e  
mained

behind

**Element**

Filament fading  
Flickering incandescent

Paranoid flinches  
Sparking in time  
To arbitrary rhythms

Cracks  
Refract beat  
Tinfoil crumpled in the fist  
Crunch

Silenced gun  
Fires into darkness  
A millisecond of electric  
Flash

Flies zipping across the room  
Fast as heartbeats  
Hitting walls  
Zap

Switch flicks on  
Current shoots ions  
Volt

Sizzling fat  
Spitting  
Increased pressure strained  
Snap

Lights out

## Goldfish

The fairground looks rickety in the daylight, like fun's getting old and could use an oil. Mom brought me here on summer evenings I think, when the sun made the sides of the rides shine and bent them with light. A fine rain hits the rivets bulging under the paint, visible rust gathering round the edges of the lips of the paintings of pretty girls painted having fun forever above the dodge cars and renditions of Evel Keneval's cape. I'm not sure who he is, just a man in stars and stripes on the wall of death ride. Without the night, the lights have little colour. There is no distraction from bolts and rivets on the cases of the rides, by seeing even one bolt I see that it could come loose and crumple the whole ride, a tin can around the fizz of laughter turning flat.

There are no queues. The plastic ducks bob as the water is pricked by rain. I wonder if their tank will overflow and they will float away on puddles, a bright yellow gush in the road. Red beaks like sudden smiles on passing drawn faces inside cars.

The guy at the prize stall is on his break. I see him outside the booth under the awning of the candy floss stand with a cigarette in his hand, looking into the smoulder of it like it's the light of the world. He flicks it on the ground and goes back to his stall, opens the wooden door and stoops beneath its plastic roof. He is always there, amongst a backdrop the playing cards, stuffed toys, plastic dress-up crowns and bulging bags of hanging goldfish like magnifying glasses. The water in the bags always looks blue under the canopy; the fish more orange than oranges.

The guy stretches out his arm as he rounds up the herd of ducks. He pulls down his sleeve over a heart tattoo, faded from being seen so many times. It's a skinny sort of heart tattoo, an askew heart from where I stand, an arrow from his point of view. In the middle is a name in flowing letters I can never quite read, it begins with a C, just like mine and Mom's. Then he'll move, fold his hand over his arm as he leans, drop ducks into the channel with a splash.

'Hey beautiful, my favourite customer,' he says, just like yesterday, always, as I hand over my coins.

I watch the ducks carefully as they bob round their circular blue watered river. I look at the slight imperfections on their painted eyes and beaks as I align my pole to the hook on the top of its head.

The hook a duck man lifts the duck from my hook, exhales like he's surprised as he shows me the cross on its base.

‘We have a winner, again. Girl, you’re breaking my heart,’ he says, running his hand through his greasy hair. ‘What’ll it be’, he says, ‘let me guess...’

He knows this. He knows, here, I always win, and when I do there’s no cuddle toy to interest me. He heads to the goldfish and hands me a bag, meeting my gaze for a second, before it roams out from the stall to more potential chancers and losers. I hold the bag to the light, the water clear now, the fins wavering as if they want to be touched, the bulbous eyes looking back at mine own.

‘How many fish you got now anyway?’ he says. I shrug.

Not many of them live past a day. I keep them in jam jars, vases, pans. Wavering orange in every corner of my room, swimming in circles just to keep breathing, growing only as big as the pond they’re given. Some go belly up when released from their bags, get flushed down the toilet and I wonder if they ever reach the ocean. Sometimes I flush live ones, watch the flickering tail disappear like a flame round the water filled bend. I keep winning, de-bagging or flushing. Look into the bowl imagining seeing orange, that tomorrow’s fish is the one that finds its way back.

**Camden Town**

this morning  
outside  
myself  
looking

in at an empty

window

you  
can  
see  
through