

Earl of Seacliff

Christmas Surprise 2007

Featuring new works by:

Michael O'Leary (Godfather, Editor in Chief)

Brian E. Turner (Technical Editor)

Mark Pirie (Friend of the Family)

Niel Wright (Friend of the Family)



Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop
Paekakariki
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Michael O'Leary, Brian E Turner, Mark Pirie and
Niel Wright

The cover shows a work entitled 'What a scream' from the Earl of Seacliff's exhibition 'A Helen Clark Retrospective' held in 2002 at One Eye Gallery, Paekakariki. The Earl is seen holding an original Edward Munch painting signed by Helen Clark. The photograph appears courtesy of the Dominion newspaper.

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PO Box 42

Paekakariki

Aotearoa, New Zealand

E-mail: pukapuka@paradise.net.nz

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*You may be a boy and you may be a girl
You may be bald or you may have a curl
You may dance a jig, waltz, or do a twirl
But wherever you are in the world
Its Christmas Surprise from the Earl*

Michael O'Leary

W.H.I.P. # 2

(**W**ork **H**aphazardly **I**n **P**rogress, number two)

Fred and Bruno were discussing their charge PMF, aka Mad Alex, *Moses and Monotheism* watching his REMS as he slept, having heard the Bishop's evidence and his trans parent (you see I told you there was a child and that the Bishop was a parent doesn't matter how it happened trans or other wise virgins its always been apparent) confidence to you to find a verdict truthfulness and accordingly I appeal with Not Guilty ... which was the judge meant and so it was and as Conlan and O'Reagan went off to get her in opposite directions him self stood looking, watching and waiting for his wife not his wife and as they embraced his head was full of skull ... a great sadness swept over him, overtime, all down the days he realised no matter how many lives he lead how many incarnations how many carnal dreams or spiritual thoughts how old they lived to be, how close they came to ... their love could not be of this world and he wept silent and inwardly for he knew that even if he lived to be a thousand year reich ora million dollar rich that he had met the woman he loved, which is more than a lot of people do, but that they could never be

of this world ... *Quando para mucho mi amore de felice, corazon, Mundo paparazzi mi amore chicka ferdy, para sol, Cuesto obrigado tanta mucho que can eat it, carousel* ... a great storm blew up and the sky darkened and her image also darkened but he knew she would always return with each flash of lightning, with each roll of thunder and then the rains would beat heavily completely engulfing the headland and he never felt more alone ... c1920 the head or rather the skull of becket into which they, deBal et al, drill a small, almost invisible, hole in the centre of the canvas and see the room through it, would not have been as well formed as it would come to be so, that when himself first discovered it it was more likely full of crecket or silent movies and after the trial of the child of Mrs Liston had been witnessed he picked up the empty skull holding it out stretched in one hand proclaiming alas poor sam we will know him well but at this stage we are still waiting for not I but you and your Nana in a green blouse ... are a simpleton ... but he loved the flight of the hawk and could distinguish it from all others, no wonder he called himself a conquistador. He would stand rapt, gazing at the long preenings, the quivering poise, the wings lifted for the plummet drop the wild re-ascend, fascinated by such extremes of need, of pride, of patience and solitude himself turned almost automatically from his wifeless reveries into a hawk

and with quick glance over his shoulder at what might have been he flew soaring southwards in the past ... ‘you know the trouble with Fred is’ Bruno was saying to Magic Alex, who had woken up for his afternoon tea and his cricket fix, ‘that Fred is too hasty to interpret people’s dreams. And you don’t get nowhere if yer too hasty, do yer, yer gotta, gotta, gotta, gotta, gotta tread softly, let them rise slowly like the yeast of dreams. Otherwise it just ain’t fair ...’

But Fred could see that Magic was about to take on one of his multiple personalities. He was turning into the PSM, which always led him to feel like he was about to lose control of his or his temper, his reason or his mind. It was also called nervous anxiety, the kind that engaged Fred the most: that which he enjoyed best about psychiatric nursing. In that sense he was not unlike Murphy, although he had never gone of his rocker himself. When the ego got caught and threatened by the clash of forces between the superego and the id, it would first struggle to deal with it. When the anxiety became too much for Alex he just became something or someone else, and usually led to a situation where there was a conflict between freedom and responsibility ... backdrops, and withered Mordor and unhealthy Heccate moves towards Magic’s latest design like a ghost. The man stands off-centre

stage right, aloof and judgemental in his Old School Tie and sporty sports jacket. Turn left at Greenland and see The Ice-man who from cometh from Iceland, Gandar Thor Cortes yodelling up the canyon, with the ice-pick that killed Trotsky held on high, while the woman, Nella Fantasia, is twisting something about in her hand as though she was making *Knodel* or dumplings, in long flowing skirts and chastity-belt blouse, she holds her hands to her forehead, a nude standing stage left, as though she is in Esseee-anguish. Above hovers the three Children of the Apocalypse, riding towards Valhalla in their little bright green pleasure machine ...

Sonnet for Lyndy McIntyre

(on her election campaign)

Listen, 'Our people, our place, our future'
Look at a political slogan like any others
See the smiling candidate's 'Cover
Of the Rolling Stone' confident features
But these do not tell the whole story
For Lyndy McIntyre is one politician
Whose fight for justice spurs her on
For everyone, and not personal glory
Whether it's a better deal for nurses
Or commuters travelling on the train
She has been there in the forefront of the battle
More pay in workers wallets or purses
Railways running on time again
Just two of the sabres her foes can hear rattle

Brian E Turner

Brandy Snaps

CAST:

JASON: A lawyer, father of Penny

PENNY: Penelope.

FRANCISCO: A waiter

SETTING:

A restaurant. Jason is sitting at table with menu. Penny enters. Jason rises, gives her a fatherly kiss. They sit.

JASON: Ah Penny at last, I thought you weren't coming for a moment.

PENNY: I got busy. How could I miss a treat?

JASON: What will you have? There's a chocolate gateau.

PENNY: I feel like a brandy snap.

JASON: You always used to like gateau. I remember when you were a toddler. You mother and I took you to a picnic and you smothered yourself in chocolate and cake.

PENNY: I'm not a toddler any more Dad.

JASON: All right. A brandy snap then. *(Pause)*
Cappuccino?

PENNY: I'll have black coffee today.

JASON: Oh?

PENNY: So I can see my reflection in the surface.

JASON: You always did have a... I might have a brandy snap myself.

(Jason signals for a waiter. Francisco arrives.)

You have brandy snaps?

FRANCISCO: Indeed, we have anything you might desire.

JASON: You might find me a million dollars then.

FRANCISCO: I shall write you a cheque.

JASON: Which will bounce no doubt.

FRANCISCO: Only if you present it to the bank.

Does signor wish to order?

JASON: Coffee black for each of us and two bandy snaps.

(Francisco goes.)

Cheeky fellow. Why did he call me 'signor'?

PENNY: All the waiters here pretend to be Italian.

JASON: I should have known.

PENNY: What?

JASON: You'd select a café where everyone was mad.

PENNY: But everyone is mad. It's a condition of normalcy.

JASON: Personally I would have preferred somewhere a little more up-market.

PENNY: Meaning I would have had to wear designer clothes.

JASON: Don't be foolish. A reasonable standard is all that's required. If you need money to dress well it's always available.

PENNY: I prefer my jumper and jeans.

(Francisco returns with coffee and brandy snaps.)

JASON: That was quick.

FRANCISCO: I am a magician also signor.

JASON: Tell me, why do you call me signor? You are not an Italian are you?

FRANCISCO: Indeed not. The management ask me to pretend to be, signor.

JASON: Is that so?

FRANCISCO: And, of course, we are what we pretend to be.

(Serves and goes.)

PENNY: *(Stirring two spoons of sugar into her coffee)*
He got you there.

JASON: Talking in riddles. Can you see your reflection?

PENNY: *(Looking down on her coffee)* I see a brown girl.

JASON: You are not a brown girl.

PENNY: The medium transforms the image. I saw a sunset.

JASON: They frequently occur.

(They are beginning to think their own thoughts, not talking to each other.)

PENNY: It was over the sea. A misty dusk. Rain clouds had come up from the south behind the island. Kapiti. A roiled lion sitting on the horizon. The sun was like a Chinese lantern. Misty. A suffusion of orange light glowing in the mist.

JASON: Those views are worth a million dollars. One street back from the beach and you can halve the value of a similar house.

PENNY: It was nothing. A vision. A transformation of the world. We see a vision and we do not react. We just carry on doing the same old things.

JASON: Real estate is always a sound investment. It can usually be relied upon to generate a tax free return. The main problem with real estate for the ordinary man is that it is not possible to invest in small amounts.

PENNY: I thought I saw a vision of eternity in the sun and the sea. But the glorious picture was a veil. We can't penetrate the fabric of the world of illusion. I would like to dismantle the stars in the blue dome of heaven, the sun and the sea and the earth. When they are gone what remains? The essence?

JASON: The market's volatile. Yes. Volatile I would say. Blue chips are preferable. Stay away from high risk investments.

PENNY: I think of a rose. Incarnadine beauty. Drenched with the blood of Christ. It flowed from the wounds made by the thorns. Imagine that Christ on the cross was crowned with a wreath of roses.

JASON: From the beginning I had ambition. Wanted to get ahead. Became a king in the world of commerce. My life is affluent. I have everything you might desire. And yet there is something missing... Look at her, smiling quietly to herself, content to abandon possessions, live an uncluttered life. Does she know anything that I don't?

PENNY: He has to cling to that world-stuff as though it is of some importance. I left that behind. I hate his principles... but I'm his daughter, I love him.

(They come out of their brown study.)

JASON: A Penny for your thoughts.
PENNY: Don't make terrible puns Dad,
JASON: But you must have been thinking of
something.
PENNY: I was thinking I might like another brandy
snap.

THE END

Mark Pirie

Before the End

i.m. Ted Hughes

Needless to say,
this will be of interest.
But how to start.
There's the girl who's left
of course, and the poet is still
ingesting accusations of libel
from even the best of his friends.
Nothing will be said, then,
but the poems may still incite opinion.
Think of the flowers outside, petals storming
with colour, against the sky so endless and vast,
the setting sun setting, a drink or two
being poured. There is just the poet. Relax,
this is the calm period,
no need of threats (death or otherwise).
It's the perfect plot, the poems
will be spoiled momentarily.
And everything and words must wait.

Slips

1
My first time
was at Junior
cricket

age 10,
and Jerry Coney
was there

telling me
to *get down low*.
I did

and was
promptly
hit hard by ball.

2
In an
Honours
exam

I put 'Vagina
Woolf' by
mistake

much to the
marker's delight
I'd imagine.

3
It's when
someone
sends

you a reply
with what
I call

a 'poetic
slip' – that's
when

a closet poet
has a subconscious
poetic thought.

On-line Blues

man nervously shakes
his mouse button finger
at Trade Me anonymous

The Actor

For Norris

You call by
like so many other times.
Yet maybe this

time it's different.
Something changes:
shade of eyes, tilt

of head, a hand-
shake, somehow tighter,
more affectionate.

In his lounge,
we talk of travel, look
at photos, years

of acting, and life:
his partner's broken limb,
those accidents of the aging.

And all the while
I get a sense
that things *are* changing,

his cup, for instance,
put down slower,
more deliberate.

Then he turns to me, time to go,
“...a few things to attend to,”
he tells me,

and I hear him say,
“Dear boy, I’m 89 now.
Let’s play golf soon.”

Niel Wright

THE LIKES

Young savage as I was ; were you the likes ?
Travelling by coach from the West Coast ;
Man of severe, eye catching good looks.

Young savage as I was ; were you the likes ?
Reserve and application making up for lacks,
However ruinous the cost.

Young savage as I was ; were you the likes ?
Travelling by coach from the West Coast.

METHOD III

Set up the universal signpost
Of number form myth exegesis ;
As best method the Muse so chooses ;
That obfuscation may be seen past.

His work as sure as night day follows ;
Serves : to illuminate his fellows' ;
So memes enlighten one ; oppressed
By darkness visible the rest.

SERAPEUM

i

What fates fates predetermine us ;
 Our moods and attitudes suggest.
Swarming from station and from terminus ;
 What fates fates predetermine us ;
Aptly fit creatures verminous ;
 With whom technologies so jest.
What fates fates predetermine us ;
 Our moods and attitudes suggest.

ii

Apart from neighbour, where still today
 The buses wheel ; she stole : to die,
Past monuments ; new carven.
 Under night sky : mere cavern,
Struck by a bus ; falls neighbour,
 The sea monstrous nearby her.

UP GOVERNOR RD

An ancient man long climbed
 These steps : a secret leftist ; so he claimed,
After his fashion
 Mad : an accountant by profession.

EPIPSYCHIDION 415 AD

Hypatia, come. Let us take flight
 From Alexandria ; ere too late
To do so : proves this ; fallen era.
 There is an island called Cythera,*
Too harbourless and isolate :
 To interest tourist or wayfarer.

There settled in a rustic cottage ;
 Of sea food, cereal made our pottage ;
Let us forget the life and name
 Of Alexandria enorm
With all its tumult and its bother ;
 Even the name and charge we bore there ;
As strangers on the island go ;
 Ancestry traced from long ago
 On public tablets ; there forgo
As rubbish ; all the pride of family
 That you as I exalted formerly. –

So spake Synesius, fifty five ;
 Hypatia learning : to survive
A dangerous age by taking cover
 With an ancient friend : if hardly lover.
How could Hypatia her election
 Make such an act of dereliction ?

*Cythera : isle of love
 Where Aphrodite came ashore,
First from the waves ; that lave ;
 Her boat : a sea shell drawn by dolphins sheer.

LA VIE DE PARIS

A simple life avoiding waste
 Of effort and resources ;
Is hardly to be thought the worst.
 A simple life avoiding waste ;
May not be greatly in request.
 But draws reward from deeper sources
A simple life ; avoiding waste
 Of effort and resources ;
May change and incident entail ;
 Though offering little : to retell.

NOT HALF TOO FAR

From my sixty year long pursuit
Of art as artform
 Have I exceeded reach and compass
For naked ape and man hirsute.

From my sixty year long pursuit
Of astral gleam remains : to suit
 My taste in library and on campus
Nout : to impart form.

From my sixty year long pursuit
Of art as artform
 Have I exceeded reach and compass.

COMMENT ON A NOVEL

No further than issues are scouted ;
 So far ethics of sex is skirted.