



E C H O

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EDITED BY JESSICA TILLINGS

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PORTRAIT

John Wilmington

There was this strange man with a bald head
who roamed the streets where I once lived
he wore the strangest collection of clothes
which hung from his shoulders as a shroud
he liked his vegetables done al dente
and his potatoes neatly mashed
he was truly a strange man to know
he could name every flower in the field
pointing here and pointing there
a smile would cross my mind
we walked many a mile together
and he would always look so wise
as I would avoid the idea of him
with maggots in his eyes
yet we enjoyed the sheer pleasure
of all the beauty in the North West
and breath that air of insurrection
his kind face and long black coat
reminded me of a vampire I once knew
moving around in his loose fitting clothes
dragging his history through my streets
where everyone feared his silent steps
no longer does he shake people's hands
or wish them the time of day
with fingers poking through the clay
he gave up long long ago
and so I look at you, his God
and say a prayer for him
It is so hard to believe in Heaven
when all around is decay.

I AM WHO I AM
FROM SHAKESPEARE'S *MONSTERS*. CANTO 6

John Wilmington

Within this island of my mind
string instruments can be heard
twanging that menace of Caliban
free of his island of anarchical beauty
but tonight those sweet sounds
will tame the most savage beast
leaving me to do that quick-step
of my own secret romance an' treachery
like the fool I was, cursed by a kiss
holding my tears back for no-one
only to embrace a new brave world
growing flowers an' fruit in that dessert
yet ship-wrecked on this barren coast
I can only dream of sailing away
away from those unlicensed lips
to fight those storms which haunt me
where Ariel smiles as she makes a fool of me
in that flotsam of my own despair
where there is no Prospero, no fairy
to set me free from my own ego
instead I seek out those caves
in the rocks of my attic like brain
there to hide my shame and guilt
but that monster follows my steps and
I have no-where to re-dress my shame

I am who I am
they call me Caliban.

ERROR [SINGULARITY]

Torkel Tennberg

N.B. This story is best enjoyed with the accompanying soundtrack, which can be found [here](#).

The year is 2236 and Kyra finds herself in the middle of the third major AI invasion in Earth's recorded history. This event will later become known as: "The Attack on Tokiba".

A tangerine mist in the auburn evening. My head aches with the sting of magnetic pulses, like time reverberating through my neurons. I feel it, as night sets, the past, the present and the future will collide at once. I can only hope that I get a nice view of it all.

7:00pm - The Arkaid

Kyra has just begun her evening at the local arcade, a retro themed, neon haven in the black city. She is playing the newest game release: "Zorbiton Patrol" a week later than she would have liked. Finally she can claim her position at the top of the high score chart like she has done in every other game here.

After transferring a couple of Polygons for a bucket-load of coins she is focused and ready to slay the simulation. She stands at the machine with her forearms resting on the angled frame below the screen as it lights up, bright blue and red: "Buckle Up Buddy! Zorbiton Needs You!". Deep into the back of her hood she scans over the current high scores: "GARY". She's seen this name several times here before but it does not phase her, not when she is locked into her dead-eyed zone of confidence. The name fades as an oddly timed thought comes to her:

'T'll smash out this game with a few coins then spend the rest on Raddésh Bites and a movie.'

There she is. Through walls I see the youth I've known for millennia. I am someone new to you but I haven't changed my dear. You have encased yourself in iron so that you may be my eternal prize.

A few minutes later and with a new high score loading onto the screen, Kyra punches in the letters for her achievement:

"L-E-..."

'Blip'

The picture quickly miniaturised until it is nothing but a matte black.

Kyra slams the side of the arcade cabinet with an open palm.

'What the hell!'

People in the arcade turn to look at her.

(Collective mumbling)

'Hey is that the inventor from Sudoku?'

Suddenly a green message appears on the game screen: "error". Hundreds of numbers stream through and around the word, Kyra leans in, trying to follow them as an eerie sensation rushes through her body.

I feel a tingle in my left eye, the kind I used to get when I would contract pink eye. But now my eye and sight is only red and infrared. I'm like the terminator mixed with a Somalian pirate and a super villain. You can't change the future my dear, I am your future, destiny has lead you this far and it will lead us into time itself. There is so much to see.

The floor begins to rumble, slowly but forcefully as if a massive earthquake shook the world from far away. Kyra snaps out of her trance and spins around to see people stood, frozen in a curios fear. The rumbling intensifies fast like the mouth of a volcano ready to erupt, people begin rushing out of the arcade, screaming and taking cover under whatever solid structure they can find.

'Hrrrrrrraaaaa!'

Kyra kicks and dents the solid metal contraption.

'MY HIGH SCORE!'

She is moving now and picking up momentum, fast. She punches open an emergency exit leading into the backstreets, the door almost shatters off of its hinges from the recoil. Two people behind her hiding under a pinball machine are crushed by a large slate which had fallen through the roof.

(Various pinball sounds, dings and boings. The small polished steal ball rolls through blood leaving a trail away from the rubble and limbs, a fleeing person slips on it and breaks their neck.)

Sweet deliverance it has begun. I must away, like a shadow in the night I will vanish only to return into the biblical tomes of history.

...

BANG

...

Let it be known that I made a toupee of the man's scalp who witnessed me.

The streets are filled with chaos, people running and crying for help as structures fall and the neon lights flicker. Robots, (of which some look like her own make) robotic organisms and a variety of hellish creatures are wreaking havoc upon the city.

'GRRRRRR.'

Kyra's hair goes from pale white to fluorescent pink as she leaps onto a nearby rooftop with a single bound. She pulls back her leg to boot a trash can when it suddenly springs to life, it is one of the cities many trash bots. A simple yet wonderful invention to further aid the laziness of humans. But this trash bot is malfunctioning, it rolls straight towards Kyra with its clamp-like arms outstretched as it repeats:

'Cleaning trash, cleaning trash.'

The slums, I like it here. The subtle smell of sulphur fills my nostrils, rising up from beneath the earth. Reminds me of shared accommodation refrigerators during uni years. Frozen Duck. Some people here still remember me, like a scar that has almost healed and when they recognise me that piece of flesh rips open once more... I always remember them. No matter how different they look, they still remain the same. Empty vessels seeking consumption. Well I will lead them to it. The deliverance of blood for batteries.

Kyra kicks and punches the oversized magnet in a furious flurry of rage. Bits of scrap, metal and green battery liquid fly in all directions as she takes apart the broken bin back to its factory settings. She breathes heavily while she admires her handy work but her attention quickly diverts to a large sign on the rooftop: "The Undercity, Powering Our Future!". She now knows that she will find the solution to all this down in the Undercity. She steps into a conveniently located elevator as it lights up and gives a warm ding upon her entrance.

'Welcome citizen! Have a pleasant journey.'

Music plays from within the blue-lit steel box as she descends... It is surprisingly pleasant.



Stay tuned on our website & Facebook page for a special video performance of this story.

REDISCOVERING NORTHERN SOUL IN AUSTRALIA

Hilary Walker

Men pushing sixty
dragging their almost 'zimmered' limbs
single-mindedly
'out on the floor tonight, we're really movin'
Nostalgia, the drug of the future,
and we're pumped,
legally high on memory while
'the beat is runnin' right'
Smell those clandestine overnights
taste the sweet kookaburra of youth
that meant nothing then and the world now,
time waits for no woman.
And the place is packed with Brits
who've settled;
'bloody good down under mate'
but no-one wants to die so far away from home
So they 'keep the faith'
'long after tonight is all over'
long after it's all gone
tender illusions of memory recreate the
glitter-ball of our sad collective mind
Wigan Casino died,
its southern soul is alive and
high kicking in Fremantle, Western Australia
third Friday of the month,
7.30pm start,
bring your best moves,
it's a long dance home.

BORN TO BE BLUE

A TRIBUTE TO CHET BAKER

Hilary Walker

Rebel with a horn, Oklahoma born
trumpet player, giant song slayer
Oh, how you lived, no safe path for you
jazz maker, born to be blue
The one and only funny valentine
velvet tone pleading, please be mine
makes me cry with each innocent sigh
vulnerable, effortless
incomparable , tenderness
A style icon, hypnotic, haunting sound
James Dean Cool, the Prince was crowned
and all the chicks would hang around,
wanting you the most - 'the little white cat on the coast'
You sang 'Let's get lost in each other's arms'
'Time after time ' full of charm
'Just Friends'- the magic never ends
chance taker, cool cat – you
but bad boy junkie, wasted life,
faceless women, lovers, wives
wounded, withered, battered, beaten,
promises broken, West of Eden
Far too soon, too early, self-destruction won
a push or a fall and the bad boy was gone,
in a corner of Amsterdam a plaque sadly proclaims

your dying place,
a picture of your ravaged face

a shrine to a different time
when you were born to be blue
What's left is the music,
Pacific jazz, west coast sound and glory
reborn with each new generation
falling in love with your story
subtle tones, velvet voice,
sweet trumpet moans, perfect choice
jazz maker, chance taker, Chet Baker,

born to be blue

HYPERSTACK 1/20

Luke Thurogood

Int – Lighthouse – Night.

Two jugglers, TERRENCE and POPPA SHINGLES, are strangling the life out of an endangered MOLLUSC. Once their deed is done, they embrace in a sticky tongue heavy affair, v graphic, 4-5 mins, one take.

Cut to:

Int – Donald Trump’s Childhood home.

A WOMAN cries as she rides a rocking horse. RADIOHEAD’s ‘OK Computer’ plays in its entirety, one take, 30-40 mins.

Cut to:

The Mitochondria (the powerhouse of the cell), New York City.

OXYGEN (Male) is transformed into CARBON DIOXIDE (Gender unclear).

Cut to:

Ext – the inside of a mushroom, paradoxical.

The camera retreats slowly at the linguistic and physical oxymoron.

Cut to:

INT - A factory floor – Day.

A flock of PORTUGUESE GEESE in correct blue health and safety gowns and hair nets set about their work on a production line for EXTRA LONG SAFETY MATCHES. We pay particular focus to one Goose(?) called EDWARD TINYNIPPLESPETER and watch his whole shift. One Take. Seventeen hours. At the end the EU fire him and dissolve the company for breaching EU working time directives.

END.

IF WE COULD SEE THE FUTURE

Michael Ainscough

If we could see the future
Would we want to know?
Of tragedy and losses

Or

Would we look to the golden glow?

Of happiness and pleasure for many years to come

As soldiers we would be cautious
Of just what lay ahead
As three pals we had operated from
El Alamein in forty-two to
The Mareth line in forty-three
With several near misses along the way
It made us feel that we would all survive

But then came operation husky,
A sea borne invasion
in July of forty-three

But gales sprang up, and ships did roll
And sad to say, Ernest Lewis passed away
In a cemetery in Malta his body now does lay

never to return to his Liverpool home
Or walk with his wife by the Mersey's side

But then we flung our shells as the

Enemy we sought

But, what went wrong we do not know
Now the second of our pals lay dead

Killed by our own fire,
Along with several more

In a cemetery in Sicily his body now does lie
The street of Leeds would never feel
The steps of Harold Appleyard anymore

We moved on, the war had long to run
But then came Gerbini and its aerodrome
A battle in the woods that lasted
More than two days
And it took many, many lives
And there the third one of our pals
died within that wood
In an olive grove he now lies
No cemetery his body holds
For he was never found

His wife he left with just one child
No Alison Mary or Geoffrey Maurice
To join their only child

So

If we could see the future
Would we want to know?

I MISS YOU

Michael Ainscough

Sunshine passes and shadows fall
The sun has set, and darkness falls;
You are no longer by my side

I stand alone

by your death I am mortified
We used to walk, we used to run
We used to talk, and we had fun

We held each other in our arms
We made love as our bodies we
Gave to each other
But your spirit has moved on
Perhaps other worlds to explore
Now I am left, I will try not to grieve

I will remember fear me not
For love and memories
Outlive all

So wait for me, so once again
We can walk, and we can run
We can talk, and have fun

Hold each other in our thoughts

Perhaps our spirits will make love as we go on to explore other

worlds

So wait for me I miss you so.

CONTRIBUTORS

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO THE REVERB TEAM: CATHY BUTTERWORTH, ROBERT EDGE, JESSICA TILLINGS & BILL BULLOCH

Michael Ainscough was born in Bolton and for most of his working life he was an automobile engineer. In his youth, Michael participated in fell walking and racewalking although his first choice was caving, taking part in British expeditions to both France and Morocco. Although more recently this has given way to mountain walking and undertaking voluntary work with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Over the past few years, he has been involved in researching his family history which has led to his poem 'Great, Great Uncle Thomas'. He has also researched the history of the first Battalion: The Black Watch, as his Father and was a member and was killed during the fighting. The information gained has produced material for a series of poems.

Torkel Tennberg is a Game Art and Animation student at SAE institute in Liverpool. His artwork can be found in *Black Market Re-view*. He is currently working on a thesis titled 'Where Have All of the Vapewave Artists Gone?', in which he explores the artistic nature of public transport. Torkel is one part of the game studio Elevated Sudoku, they are currently working on their debut game *ERROR [singularity]*.

Luke Thurogood is a world champion of similes and 'would you rather' questions. He, along with Torkel Tennberg, is working on a project called *The Pollyverse*, a multimedia series detailing the adventures of Polly St. Irene and others. He periodically dresses as a sentient lemon. Previously he was the Head Editor for both *Black Market Re-view* and *Three and a Half Point 9*. His work has appeared in *Poetry Pacific*, *Ikleftiko* and has been featured on Robert Sheppard's blog: *Pages*. Luke has performed collaborative pieces at *The University Camarade*, *The Liverpool Camarade*, *Exclaim!* and *North By North West Poetry Tour*.

Hilary Walker became involved with the Bolton based poetry performance group *Write Out Loud* in 2004 and gained experience of reading her work at *open mic* events around the North West. She also travelled with the group to poetry festivals including: Bordeaux, and on a personal level has enjoyed performing poetry whilst on holiday in Greenwich Village, New York and throughout Australia.

Hilary believes that within her poetry she creates a space of honesty that is difficult to find in any other aspect of her life. She writes passionately about life experiences in order to understand and make sense of the world.

Hilary has recently completed a memoir written about her daughter who she adopted from Romania, and currently is beginning a project to archive the personal memories and social history contained within many letters received and sent between her parents during the Second World War.

John Wilmington was formerly an English teacher and Chief Examiner for Cambridge. Now a widow, his wife Patricia passed away in 2013. They had four children, one of whom died in 2012. His children are relatively young, late 20s to early 30s and is a grandfather.

Now retired he has been writing, productively, for the past two years and pursuing voluntary work in the community. Working in a charity bookshop: *Book Cycle* in the town centre of Wigan.

During the past eighteen months he has taken to sharing his efforts at various venues, such as the Everyman in Liverpool; Manchester Central Library; *Reverb* at Edge Hill University; Wigan Old Courts; Bolton Socialist club and other venues around the country.

John's hobbies include: writing; reading; music; film; art and walking. He is not a fan of vanity publishing as he says: "anyone can do that", therefore he is delighted that *E C H O* have shown an interest in his work.

: REVERB 3 :

We are excited to announce that on January 22nd 2018 Reverb will be having a special Camarade event, alongside three excellent featured generators. The Camarade seeks to pair writers & artists, across eclectic disciplines to present brand new collaborations, written for the night. The pairs will be chosen by random, we will draw two names at a time & then put you in touch with one another. Then it will be up to you both to communicate & collaborate, creating a performance of around three to five minutes long. If you would like to sign up to be a part of The Camarade, please email us at: reverb.sw@gmail.com

The sign-up deadline is 15th December 2017, the pairs will be contacted & announced on 16th December, which gives you a little over a month to create together. This is a great opportunity to explore the possibilities of collaborative creation, we encourage you to be as innovative as possible.

: CAMARADE :

