

Poems

By Adam Stokell



Space Craft

We'll pack a long lunch
we'll go there

we'll don silver suits
scuba tanks
tempered glass hats

we'll dig up dark matter
put it in pipes
of articulate craft
and fuse it

we'll smuggle two banksias
two spinebills
two puggles
two ant farms

we'll want matches
to melt strange poles
wheels to walk with
flags to fall for

we'll leave
with the dishes undone
blister packs and bubble wrap
strewn across the carpet

we'll handball pets
give in-laws the slip
at the terminal

we'll go there
we'll get there and
we'll carry on there
much as we have done here

Flight

Around the world in eighty variations
I called your name.
No one would negotiate those consonants.
A few kindly seniors came forward
from an unlikely country:
the name that succeeded your name
was discontinued in the faint
yesterdays of their extreme youth.

Over ninety degrees of latitude
I held out a picture of your face;
that wintry one, smiling unawares,
with all your hair to warm you,
cheeks still soft from sleep.
The few that paused to look
said a face like yours was everywhere,
every hour a striking resemblance born.
Your face had fallen back
into all the other faces.

Surely your songs,
unique signatures all of them,
were still being played on high rotation.
I searched their titles on five streamers.
Covers of them all came up
as originals, every cover
covered several times over;
no sign anywhere of you,
your voice, your cracked guitar.

You'd fled the danger of houses
for what couldn't be called your life,
shedding family, friends,
identity and work like skins.
Trusting without trust
to the oblivion of crowds,
days aboard queues, nights less mooned,
you flew till you became flight.

Image: "[Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory. Cam](#)" (CC BY-SA 2.0) by [amandabhslater](#).