

JAMES NEWITT

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(No answer)



*I replace their desire to return to their homes and
cities with the ancient dream of the desert island.*

*Like children, each day they would ask me to
repeat for them the description of that island
where they would be happy. They began to
imagine it vividly, obsessively.*

These are the last lines that you wrote.



You cease to become an observer and in some ways you cease to exist.
Everything becomes very simple.
No joy, no pity, no terror.

In May 2016, Contemporary Art Tasmania staff met with James Newitt in lieu of a regular studio visit. His itinerant life between Hobart and Lisbon meant we had to sit around a laptop while he surfed video segments and provided insights to the interplay of choreography, physicality, anguish, observation, ideation, repetition and fatigue that made up the kaleidoscopic narrative structure of his 2015 film, *The Rehearsal*. Later, when viewing *The Rehearsal* in its entirety, I was struck by an idea that I had somehow watched it 'back-to-front,' from a sense that the disrupted narrative structure had folded back into itself and ended where it logically should have begun. And so, the lively discussion with colleagues that followed these instances lead to an invitation to develop the project that became *Delay*; the exhibition and installation environment that both expanded from and contained his film, *I Go Further Under*.

Over the past fifteen years Newitt has worked to tease out social, political and cultural relations - often using empathic remove or paradox or dissonance as methods to probe into informal collective entities or to observe individuals as they move within and between public and personal spaces. Over time his video works have evolved and shifted towards embracing more fictional approaches: controlled through editing; or as facilitated performative events, scripted and directed by the artist. Curiously, not knowing what actions and behaviours in the works are real - or are acted, subconscious or fabricated - acts to open up the response and understanding we bring to the work. Increasingly, it is this richness of unknown possibility that Newitt gainfully exploits.

Escape (or withdrawal from the social) entered James Newitt's oeuvre with his secession on a man-made island in the Derwent River in 2011 with his project *My Secession Party*, for the *Iteration:Again* exhibition curated by David Cross and presented by

Contemporary Art Tasmania. The germination of the exhibition, *Delay* and the film, *I Go Further Under* likely occurred here, and at that time, from the liberating flow and pull of the Derwent's southbound current. In his 2016/17 research project, *A Plan for Escape*, at the Glenorchy Art & Sculpture Park, Newitt uncovered the story of Jane Cooper's lone retreat to De Witt Island, along with the public and official reaction to her perceived psychological withdrawal and apparent abandonment of humanity.

At the time, in 1971, international media interest and local political shenanigans made it 'news,' yet it also had a strong imaginary pull for those who harboured their own deserted island fantasy. Letters from across the globe found newly inhabited De Witt Island, located in the Maatsuyker archipelago off Tasmania's southwest coast. The 'southwest' exists in the Tasmanian psyche as being 'more south,' more isolated, remote and uninviting than is 'actual' South - by virtue of a mythical impasse associated with southwest wildness. It is no place for the faint-hearted.

Delay was conceived as cinematic, but not in a strictly filmic way as it was made for a gallery space. The openness in the cinematic form of *I Go Further Under* and its different kind of transmission had to be negotiated against wall-mounted texts pulled from a vast range of literary and historical sources, as well as alongside heavily textured, landscape-follies installed into the gallery space. It smelled earthy and always felt uncomfortable. Coldness and separation permeated the film, from the act of the actual withdrawal across a roiling Southern Ocean, through May when the time register in the written correspondence collapsed while heading into winter (and possible madness), and on until the sudden moment where the main protagonist signalled the exhaustion of her alienation.

The making of *I Go Further Under* and presentation of *Delay* were large undertakings with the artist working across two continents and with variously located artistic and technical support clusters. Much of this activity and attention to detail would not have been possible without support provided through the partnership between Contemporary Art Tasmania and Dark Mofo; and, of course, without the relentless dedication and focus of James Newitt. This publication exists to re-examine the project through commissioned texts, by Isobel Parker Philip and Justin Jaeckle, and to further explore ideas and aspects of those ideas that circulate loosely around disconnection, escape and the refusal to participate.

Michael Edwards
Director, Contemporary Art Tasmania

January 27

I wasn't supposed to wake up.
But I did, still in the same place
So I knew I had to leave, quietly.

-

I decided to live on a remote island.
Just like that.

-

I don't think it's unusual to dream of living on an island.
The deserted island, to start anew.
The tropical island as a paradise,
or a prison.

-

But I'll go in the other direction.
Away from north.

-

I'll start from the south,
And go further south.



the two suns are unbearable

February 5

I'm not sure if you're supposed to tell people about a plan to escape.

I told mum, so she wouldn't think I was dead.

I tried to explain to her that I needed to not exist, that she needed to try and not remember me.

-

Because I think that to escape, people have to forget you.

Which means there is no promise of return,

which means I need to believe there won't be a return,

which means I also need to forget.

Which means a movement away.

Without leaving tracks.

-

And now here I am.

And I don't know if I'll have enough to eat.

Or if I'll go mad.

*I am outside time, I no longer have any past
or future, I have no more sadness, plans,
nostalgia, loss, or hope.*

(Michel Houellebecq, The Possibility of an Island)

The island is a shadow on the horizon, a black hole that gently pulls you towards it. This is perhaps the perfect distance to comprehend the scale of the island, to gauge its width, height and mass in relation to the almost imperceptible curvature of the horizon. From here the island can be known, its periphery defined. Viewed from a bird's eye perspective however, the distance between the island, the mainland, other islands, the continent, the shelf, etc. can be plotted, measured. As you drift closer to the island it begins to withdraw, its points of reference distort as you can no longer see its edges.

On the shore, the island disappears along with its promise to remain knowable. To remember that you are on an island you look for a place where you can see the ocean surrounding it, to confirm that there is nothing connecting you and the mainland. The peak you are standing on is a dozen times larger than you realize. It extends deep underneath the surface of the ocean, the extent of your unknowing and unseeing is difficult to comprehend. In fact, the island is only the tip of one of the many peaks of a huge, submerged mountain range.

The island remains indifferent to your presence. There is a cold, heavy weight to its muteness. Coming to terms with this indifference can take time and can provoke painful feelings of dejection and hopelessness.

*Continental islands serve as a reminder
that the sea is on top of the earth, taking
advantage of the slightest sagging in the
highest structures; oceanic islands, that
the earth is still there, under the sea,*

*gathering its strength to punch through
to the surface. We can assume that these
elements are in constant strife, displaying
a repulsion for one another. In this we find
nothing to reassure us. Also, that an island
is deserted must appear philosophically
normal to us. Humans cannot live, nor live in
security, unless they assume that the active
struggle between earth and water is over, or
at least contained [...] humans can live on
an island only by forgetting what an island
represents.*

(Gilles Deleuze, Desert Islands)

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Sitting at a table in the middle of a sparsely furnished room, a man who looks to be in his mid-thirties has his head pressed into the palms of his hands. His fingers wrap over his forehead and massage his scalp, pulling the skin of his forehead down then releasing, pulling down, then releasing. The pressure from his palms push his eyes back into their sockets, distorting their shape behind his closed eyelids. Apart from the twitching of his fingers he doesn't move. On the screen of his laptop is an image of an island at dusk. The sky is filled with neon colours of an artificial sunset while the island glows deep purple. The rendering of the image is crude and the island appears heavily pixelated. Dark silhouettes of trees and rocks on its surface are stretched and distorted, they have no depth and look like an image was cut out from another landscape and forcibly wrapped over the island.

Scattered around him is a collection of loose pages with printed text and rough, hand-written notes. Unwilling, or unable, to move from his position, he slowly raises his head and squints as his eyes adjust to the light that is reflected off the white sheets of paper. On one of the pages

that is partially tucked under his right foot there is a series of dot points.

They read:

- 17 to 22 years old
- freckles from sun
- speaks with a thick accent
- wears clothes that are too large for her frame
- she has straight, shoulder length, brown hair
- she pushes her hair behind her right ear often
- she walks with heavy feet, shoulders slightly hunched
- her eyes are bright, green/brown
- she glances at people when they are not looking, preferring to avoid eye contact
- she has a nervous laugh where she breathes in quickly, like a pant
- when she speaks she is emphatic, although she swallows the last words of sentences when she is nervous
- she seems to have a maturity beyond her age
- she sometimes speaks about herself in the third person [...]

He leans down and picks up the page from under his foot, he reads the notes aloud. He pauses on the point about her avoiding eye contact and lets his head fall back into his hands while he mumbles to himself, "the closer she moves towards it, the less I can understand her".

He allows himself to fall into the constellations of white shapes that move in circular patterns behind his closed eyes. He imagines her sitting in the darkness; with effort he begins to see a human form gently pulse in and out of view through the spiral of white shapes. Holding onto the clearest image he can conjure of her, he sees her shoulders, neck, hair and a fragment of the left side of her face. As he cautiously circles around to the left, she also seems to turn at the same pace. Frustratingly he can maintain an image of her but is unable to face her directly.

He is engrossed in this pointless game while a sense of anxiety tightens in his stomach. As much as he tries to circumnavigate her and to better understand her features, outline and gestures, she remains indifferent to his curiosity. She seems to be looking towards a vague suggestion of a horizon where a blurry shape can just be made out against the back of his eyelids.

-

*I will disappear,
from people,
from images,
from information.
On an island,
where I will enact my right to laziness,
and to refuse.
I will live outside of time,
with no past or future.
I will cease to become an observer.
I will cease to exist.*

He steps into the middle of the pages spread out around him and sits down. He bends forward, arching his back in order to tuck his head as deep as he can between his knees. He breathes deeply and gently. From the other side of the room his silhouette almost resembles a lumpy, round island, slowly expanding and contracting with each breath. He remains there continuing to breathe until a sudden inhale is followed by the sickening sensation of collapsing forward, down into the floor. He feels nauseous with the sense that he has just done a forward somersault. He is too distracted by this to notice that she has moved around the far northern point of the island and now sits, on the rocky shelf hanging over the ocean. She remains there as he gradually moves closer and continues to watch her. He can hardly believe that she does not feel his warm breath on her back. She keeps looking ahead, occasionally muttering to herself as the sun drops below the horizon.

February 11

I try to land on it but it's not well rendered,
so I just slide across the surface,
bumping as I hit a rock or mound.
It's got no height, but the vertigo feels real.

-

So I let myself drop into the ocean,
which has higher resolution, than the land itself.
And it's only when I float here,
that I can get a sense of where I actually am.

-

The pixels have become a thick, cold, liquid.

-

Then I start to sink.

-

Then everything is dark.

-

(Then I open my eyes).



February 15

From what I could tell when we circumnavigated the island,
was that it formed some sort of crescent shape
and that the more sheltered side, where I'm sitting,
is in the arc of the crescent.

-

Now that I can't reach the other side of the island,
I'm finding it difficult to remember,
that I am in fact, on an island.

-

I can't get rid of the thought
that I'm still on the mainland,
or maybe a peninsula.

March 5

I dream that I watch it from above.
I can see myself moving around, keeping busy.
I look tiny on the island,
and even when I try to get closer to see my expression,
I can't see any detail.

-

I just keep watching from high above.
Then I'm struck with the impression
that the island looks like some sort of theatre,
with its crescent shape.

-

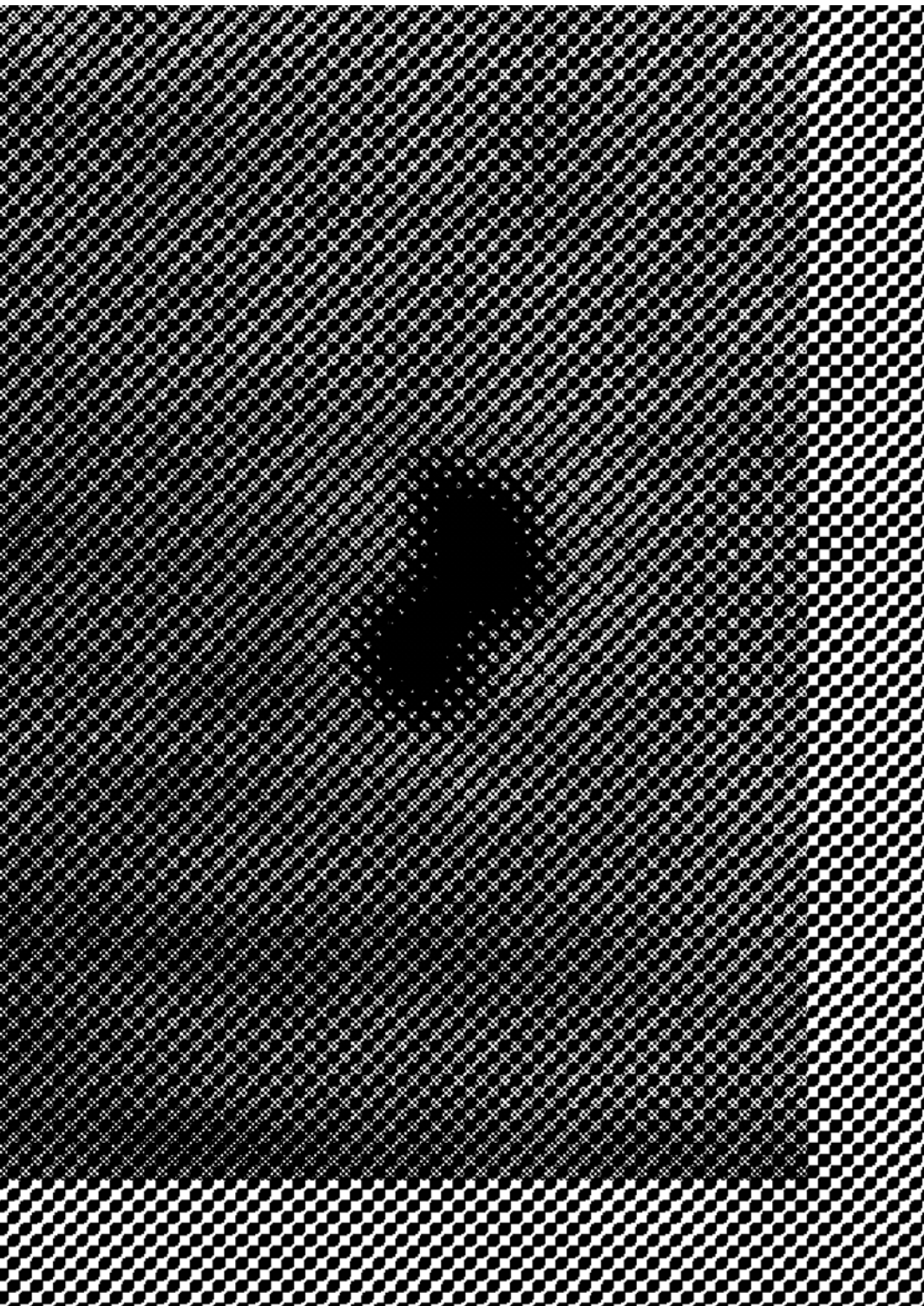
This is followed by a strong sense that I'm being watched,

-

as if I'm unknowingly on stage,

-

performing without a script.



(long pause)

May 19

This island.

I feel like I don't know it any better than when I arrived
and fell asleep on the tiny beach.

-

Sometimes I get startled,
because I think I've seen something move,
but there's nothing there.

-

There are birds,
but they mostly come in to land at night.

-

Some days I think I can feel the island shudder,
which I guess could happen from the impact of huge waves on
the more exposed side.
But I can't be sure.

-

(If I could move, I would).

May 28

He comes to visit me.

I think it's at the beginning of each fishing run,
which is approximately every three weeks during calm weather.

-

I told him I didn't mind his visits,
as long as he didn't bring anyone else,
or tell anyone else.

-

Sometimes he brings me food or old blankets,
which I've needed as everything else is wet
and the weather is getting colder.

-

(He's always bringing these letters too,
very strange letters,
people saying the weirdest things).

Everything is soaked and I feel swollen.

*The Possibility
of an Island*

Justin Jaeckle

I haven't been sleeping well the past few years. My partner and I have different attitudes towards the mornings. I need light to jolt me into the day, they need darkness for a softer crossfade. I've adopted heading to the sofa earlyish some mornings, and channel surfing as I wait to be physically and mentally capable of making coffee. I normally find myself settling on the Discovery or History Channel, or Food Network; something about their vague promise of bringing me factual information assuages my guilt – even if the only things I learn are the market price of Ronald Reagan's highschool yearbook and signature (*Pawn Stars*), or just how many pieces of 2x4 an amateur blacksmith's blade can slice through with ease (*Forged in Fire*). There's something remarkably reassuring about the repetitive way in which these shows are invariably structured – scripted reality can feel pretty generous sometimes when it simply follows its own script. The narrative progression of endless iterations of the same scenarios being performed should make the task of watching these shows Sisyphean, but instead the comfort of their formulas seems to elevate them to the level of lullaby – lullabies that are somehow able to softly envelop and entrance despite the ADHD DNA of their content. It sometimes feels a little like watching waves, from the shore of the settee.

"I wasn't supposed to wake up. But I did, still in the same place," reads the first diary entry in *I Go Further Under*, before the image twists and flips with the elemental excesses of the sea on the camera's approach to the film's island terrain – its co-character. The soundscape dislocates the boat's humming motor into a wall of sound and then back to a calm chorus of electronic harmonics, as we arrive to the shore, to disembark at the protagonist's dreamed-for place, in a dream-like state ourselves.

I wasn't ready to wake up but I did, when I covered the Berlin Film Festival for a magazine a few years ago. The press screenings began daily with ruthless efficiency at 9am. It being January in northern Europe meant that home had to be left before sunrise, and that my ascent to Potsdamer Platz up the U-Bahn escalator came accompanied by the first rays of the sun, whose gradual increasing intensity would soon fade back to black, as I joined hundreds of hungry journalists queuing to head back into darkness, to see something nobody had seen before. Ten days of this began to have pretty fascinating psychosomatic impacts. Probably not unlike the majority of the population, I don't think of myself as very good in the morning. But after more than a week of rising from bed, to be fed, half awake, someone else's dreams for a couple of hours in a hypnopompic daze, this began to feel like the ultimate way to see cinema; handing over a half-there consciousness for another to choreograph into being. Turning on, tuning in, dropping into another's audio-visual sea.

"Turning on, tuning in and dropping out". Timothy Leary's countercultural mantra may have been designed to stimulate a youth's spiritual rediscovery, but it also fits quite remarkably as a summation of the way countless TV execs (and app programmers) hope their audiences might relate to their offerings, and also that of the inherent contract entered into through the cinema-going experience, as one drops into the upholstery and displaces themselves through the narcotic of content – somewhere between wakefulness and sleep, in between here and there. Leary first began public proclamations of his statement in 1966 – a statement that supposedly was a gift to Leary from Marshall McLuhan, during a lunch the two shared in New York City.

“Turn on” meant go within to activate your neural and genetic equipment. Become sensitive to the many and various levels of consciousness and the specific triggers that engage them... “Tune in” meant interact harmoniously with the world around you – externalize, materialize, express your new internal perspectives. “Drop out” suggested an active, selective, graceful process of detachment from involuntary or unconscious commitments. “Drop out” meant self-reliance, a discovery of one’s singularity, a commitment to mobility, choice, and change.

(Timothy Leary, Flashbacks, 1983)

Jane Cooper would have been 14 when Leary told 30,000 hippies in Golden Gate Park to “Turn on, tune in, drop out”. She was 18 when she took him up on his advice, and absconded to De Witt or ‘Big Witch’ Island in order, in her own words, “to get away from it all and find myself”.

One of my early morning attempts to turn on, tune in and drop into the day led me to the Discovery Channel’s *Naked and Afraid*, in which a man and woman find themselves transported to an extremely hostile wilderness environment, which they are asked to survive in, without clothes, food or water, for 21 days. In the best episodes a certain delirium sets into the contestants, rivalling anything recounted by Werner Herzog in his Amazonian Fitzcarraldo-diary *Conquest of the Useless*, or projected by Kinski on screen in his collaborations with the director. Networks are awash with countless survival TV formats – from *Survivor* to *I’m a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* – but *Naked and Afraid*’s simplicity, eschewing the elimination rounds common to most reality TV competitions (and swapping sizeable prize money for a paltry \$5,000, which doesn’t even begin to compensate for the contestants’ hardship), gives

the show a strange kind of humility – despite its extremely pulp packaging, the plasticity of its standard-issue to-camera interviews with the contestants, and a structure that invents drama before every ad break. Verité filmmaking this assuredly isn’t, and the internet is rife with accusations of the show’s fakery, but the show’s success seems driven by its ability to act as an audience proxy for primal experiences. But then again, maybe it’s just a voyeuristic journey narrative, where the promise of possible suffering – like a crash at a Nascar race – acts as catnip for an audience feeding upon Adam and Eve archetypes (with pixilated genitalia). There are, after all, countless examples of contestants having to call in the medics, after taking a bite of a forbidden fruit.

Just as each episode of *Naked and Afraid* opens with its contestants being driven to the wilderness by the show’s production team, *I Go Further Under* opens with images of its protagonist being shipped to her barren island wilderness by a weathered sailor. But *Further Under*’s character, an authored and abstracted avatar of Jane Cooper, is alone, partnerless. Eve without Adam. Jane without Tarzan. Her emancipation is complete, autonomous and finite. The romance here is not that of a couple in primal isolation, but between Jane, herself and nature, “getting away from it all to find [herself]”.

Timothy Leary would later update his earlier slogan for the computer age, re-phrasing it in version 2.0 as “turn on, boot up, jack in”, in celebration of the communal possibilities that the nascent digital revolution was perceived as fostering, nurturing McLuhan’s ‘Global Village’ into more concrete (or at least silicon) being. But as is now increasingly apparent, digital technologies do not necessarily, a priori, inherently bring people together. Despite the clarity of their interfaces, they are (like us, their creators) messy, contradictory. Despite

their ability to set the foundation for a more global commons, we worry about their role in propagating social atomization, about their potential to push us towards tribalism and conflict. We worry the data collection they rely upon for personalizing their services to the individual, might instead be a means of rendering individuality obsolete, of a move from a qualitative to a quantitative world. Many feel 'Naked and Afraid'. Many seem to presently feel the need to make like Jane and escape to a more primal space (whether 'mindfully' decamping as hipster homesteaders to the country or loading up on ammunition and tinned food in a survivalist compound). But withdrawal is not only achieved through means of geographical displacement. Perhaps all of this has already automated us into a more dystopian version of Jane, isolated on our individual digital islands.

'Back to the land' narratives of withdrawal have long and considerable precedents, particularly at times of change. The industrial revolution brought rise to beatific Romanticism and the Transcendentalists, searching for Arcadian ideals in the face of an increasingly mechanized world. It also brought with it Frankenstein, Poe and the Gothic; mirroring, or capitalizing, upon the fears of many, nervous at the potential dark side of technological advances. Each and every techno-informational avalanche appears to be mirrored by renewed adulation and/or fear of the ecological systems over which it flows. In the digital present it currently feels like it's not just the climate but socio-economic weather systems that are changing. Upon these winds, some hear the call of the wild; others hear its howl.

Generally speaking, a howling wilderness does not howl: it is the imagination of the traveler that does the howling.
(Henry David Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 1864)

Jane arrived on Big Witch Island – and exposure to the force of the 'roaring 40's' – in 1971, the same year Ray Tomlinson sent the world's first email. Her plight for isolation and a life alone quickly turned into a global media story, inspiring numerous letters to her, of diverse quality and content, whose post marks show her narrative's international reach. The letters Jane received so often took the form of auditions to be her counterpart, to be Tarzan to her Jane, to be, counter intuitively, part of her dream to be alone. Some of these letters are contained within the fabric of *I Go Further Under*. Formatted for the 21st century, the film scrolls across their lines and content, their words appearing via digital fonts in (island like) floating windows. The letters appear not just to be sent to Jane, but as missives sent from the '70s to the present. It's a little overwhelming to never be able to read or view these letters in their totality, as their content paddles back and forth it begins to seem more easy to drown in them than the sea that surrounds the island. They read a little like spam. Late in the film, we watch Jane burn their handwritten counterparts. Emptying the trash.

Maybe the film is another, more eloquent, letter, written in a weave of image, sound and text. Maybe all films are messages in bottles, flung into a sea of noise, waiting expectantly for their potential to be read.

That Jane remains such a fertile character for the equally adolescent 21st century (18, Jane's age of island escape, at the time of writing) points towards the pan-historicity of her primal desires with a physical rather than numerical digit – her retreat, after all, mirrors that of many an ascetic hermit past (did they have to deal with fan mail?). But her abstraction in *I Go Further Under* into (and via) a high definition rendition of a search for

resolution, results in a dream-like fugue. Audio-visual matter does battle with the matter of the ground – the rich humus on which Jane sleeps, digs, walks and buries her head is portrayed with great sensorial tactility. The film is interested in the existential stuff-ness of Jane's island retreat, the ground on which the film and its protagonist paint themselves. The god-voice of the film's occasional, chorus-like ego is computer generated however, an uncanny speech that reminds us we are taking in a "Dream from above. Connected". Visual renderings of digital cartography and geo-location position the land of the film as a hybrid site of the organic and the synthetic; of the real and its representation; of an experience of the 1970s – itself informed by the past – talking to the now in the language of the present, as a digital and psychological projection.

The first Earth Day took place in 1970. The Free State of Christiana was founded in 1971. Greenpeace was formalized in 1972. Ecological and alternative living movements were consolidating and gaining legislated form as Jane took to her boat. Concerned earthlings looked to protect and embrace the planet, whilst other beings were beginning to think about supplanting it altogether – whether by extra-terrestrial or computational means. Jane decamped to De Witt the same year the USSR put the first space station into orbit and Intel released its first microprocessor; presently those with the cash, most often made through the provision of digital services, are booking their places on Elon Musk's spaceships to Mars. That Jane became a modest media sensation was in no small part due to her role as a protagonist of the zeitgeist, a possible generational archetype or harbinger: a person-as-a-dream, a dream-as-a-person, a person with a dream – the dream of an island. The danger of her situation also carried with it the seduction of a possible horror story, a dream that might turn into a nightmare. Sounds like good TV.

Or maybe the narrative's the kindlier one of a family friendly movie. Walt Disney World opened that same year, 1971, in Orlando. In a photograph of Jane accompanying an Australian Woman's Weekly story on 'Miss Crusoe', she can be seen facing away from the camera, a yellow sweatshirt draped over her shoulders. On it, is printed Mickey Mouse. Perhaps De Witt Island offered a parallel Magic Kingdom. Jane's cast of co-habitants on the island would appear to support the thesis – a different article in another newspaper describes how she also 'befriended a persistent penguin, and named it Mickey Mouse'. Alongside the Magic Kingdom, Disney World's other opening set pieces consisted of a Polynesian Resort and Fort Wilderness Resort & Campground. A fantasy island, a fantasy wilderness, and Cinderella's castle. Jane's retreat appears to combine the three.

But the romantic notion of escape doesn't end upon arrival to whatever Magic Kingdom has been imagineered, the tedium of living can't help but get in the way. Whether it's queuing for The Haunted Mansion, trying to get a foot on the property ladder, or building a shelter from palm fronds in the jungle, the prickly problem of existence lingers – all with greater existential resonance upon arriving to a destination that has been deliberately sought or planned for. If, as John Donne wrote, "no man is an island", can going to, or making oneself, an island ever provide the true withdrawal desired? Does – as with Tasmania itself in its previous incarnation as a brutal penal colony – island living all too easily amount not to escape but to effective imprisonment?

As I write this text, Britain remains in the throws of confusion of Brexit – in essence, trying to work out exactly how island-y the island nation state wants to be. There are more strange confluences to 1971 here, as it was then that the UK voted

in favour of joining the European Economic Community. One analysis of Brexit voting patterns breaks the population down into two distinct groups, the 'anywheres' and the 'somewheres'; two binary groups based upon their relationship to the importance of place and rootedness to their outlook – whether they could see themselves as living anywhere, or whether the somewhere they were born or have chosen to live is paramount to self-identity. 'Citizens of the World' vs Citizens of the UK, could be the shorthand. The argument goes that Brexit saw the revenge of the Somewheres upon a ruling class of Anywheres – a re-assertion that geography means something vital to socio-cultural identity, in the face of technology and economy doing their best to flatten the world. In light of the fact that geography increasingly could be viewed as disappearing in significance – and along with it the concept, or at least functionality, of the nation state – there is a growing conflict to make both visible again. Technologically aided globalism and its expansion of common ground has begun to, somewhat paradoxically, make us more parochial. The more we live in the cloud, the more it seems some desire the land. The land we wish for is frequently an island, or at least some kind of attempt to turn ourselves into one.

Is Jane an Anywhere or a Somewhere? Her particular 'return to the land' seems somewhere in between. Can you be a 'Citizen of the World' if the world you seek is completely autonomous? The withdrawal method isn't known for having a great success rate, but that's never stopped many from placing their faith in it.

Jimmy Kimmel: "I can't even imagine him watching television to be honest with you."

Paul Thomas Anderson: "Honestly, for the world's greatest actor he has the worst taste in television."

JK: "What does he watch?"

PTA: "He was particularly obsessed a few years ago with *Naked and Afraid*... I know... He'd say, 'You've got to see *Naked and Afraid*'. And, each week, he'd tune in." (*Jimmy Kimmell Live!*, 11 January 2018)

It was somewhat comforting to learn that I was not alone in my love for *Naked and Afraid*, when Daniel Day-Lewis – the mythical method actor, famous for once having sought refuge from his star status to work as an apprentice to a master shoe-maker in Florence, and for taking a five-year sabbatical at peak-career to practice his skills as a stone-mason on his Irish farm – was outed as one of the show's biggest fans. Less than two weeks after the opening of James Newitt's exhibition at Contemporary Art Tasmania, prior to the release of Paul Thomas Anderson's Day-Lewis starring *The Phantom Thread*, Day-Lewis' spokesperson publicly announced the actor's retirement from acting once and for all, in a statement (another letter). After a career of dropping out and turning back on, tuning himself into his characters with utter fastidiousness, Day-Lewis, with *Bartleby*-like conviction, basically told the world 'he would prefer not to'.

The final words the protagonist utters in *I Go Further Under* contain a similar iteration of *Bartleby*ian refusal...

"It's too late to be reasonable. It's too late to be..."

... echoing the dialogue Herman Melville penned for his scrivener, "At present I would prefer not to be a little reasonable". A synthetic voice adds the addendum, "This is the last thing you said", before a digital render of the island's topography dissolves and melts into a black hole in the centre of the screen. Jane's act of withdrawal was motivated by the attempt to disappear,

maybe Day-Lewis' too. In *I Go Further Under*, the film itself seems to eventually disappear, to escape, on their behalf.

I find myself wondering whether Melville might have laid eyes on De Witt Island, during his own maritime adventures chasing whales around the Pacific. Was he not also seeking an escape of some form, through pursuit of factual and fictional Moby Dicks?

The screen this render of the island dissolves into, as I watch the film on a computer, is born of LCD technology first patented in 1971, whilst Jane was on her island. The patent's first application was in the screen of a digital watch – making, somewhat poetically, an indexical image of time itself the foundation for the technologies we predominately watch moving images on today – themselves parcels of captured time, agents of spatial and temporal displacement. When my alarm goes off on my iPhone in the morning, it's an LCD touch screen I press to snooze, liquid crystals I interact with to moderate sleep and wake. I'd like to think these crystals dream when I'm asleep, but I'm a little too pragmatic for that. I wouldn't put it past Siri though, who's told me she dreams of electric sheep.

Thai filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul is always going on about cinema and dreams. Dream logic infuses his films' construction and is projected back upon them. Some notes quoting Weerasethakul from a past Q&A I found in an old notebook:

We dream in four cycles, and each lasts 90 minutes, and that is cinema... Cinema follows dreams, at least in terms of time, but dreams are much better as they have no frame... Cinema is trying to catch up with dreams, trying to evolve to become closer to a dream.

Cinema can seem to operate as an island, framing a territory located between waking and sleep that we willfully imprison ourselves within to share in the complexity of another's dream. In this light, the 'Further Under' that the title of Newitt's film invokes could be seen as merging the psychoanalyst's couch, the hypnotist's art, the cinema seat and Jane's rock overlooking the ocean – fused in their potential as sites or devices that might enable access to a hidden place – a place beyond ourselves and others, or at least otherwise hidden from view. Such a site is by no means only physical.

Jane's final words announcing her withdrawal from 'reason' touch not just on *Bartleby*, but *Bataille* too:

It is time to abandon the world of the civilized and its light. It is too late to be reasonable and educated – which has led to a life without appeal. Secretly or not, it is necessary to become completely different, or to cease being.

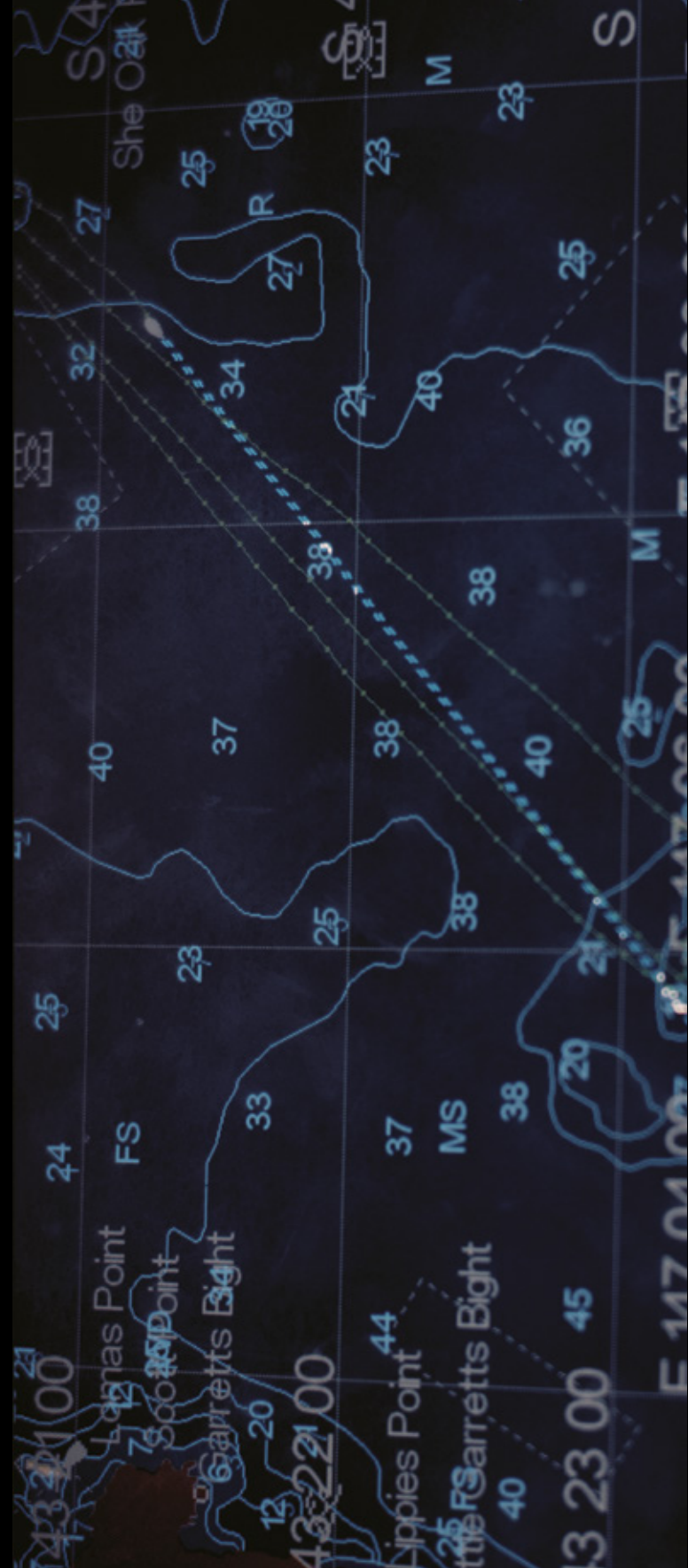
Six years before *Bataille* would publish these thoughts in *The Sacred Conspiracy* (1936), Freud posed the question, "How has it happened that so many people have come to take up this strange attitude of hostility to civilization?" The question lingers, hostility continues to accrete, as civilization continues to breed new discontents in an alliance of frustration with those who have come before.

A Pathé news report from 1971 placed a reporter on De Witt Island, who asked Jane the on-camera question, "Can you really get away from people though?" She replies, with appropriate irony, "At the moment it doesn't seem like it. But I can. I suppose one gets away from one's own conscience, more than anything".

Getting away from one's own conscience, what a dream.
The ultimate escape.

How to get away from it all? How, maybe even, to find ourselves – not so much naked and afraid, but clothed and content, turned on and tuned in? How to drop out, how to seek a way to temporarily get away from, or beyond, our own craggy consciousness?

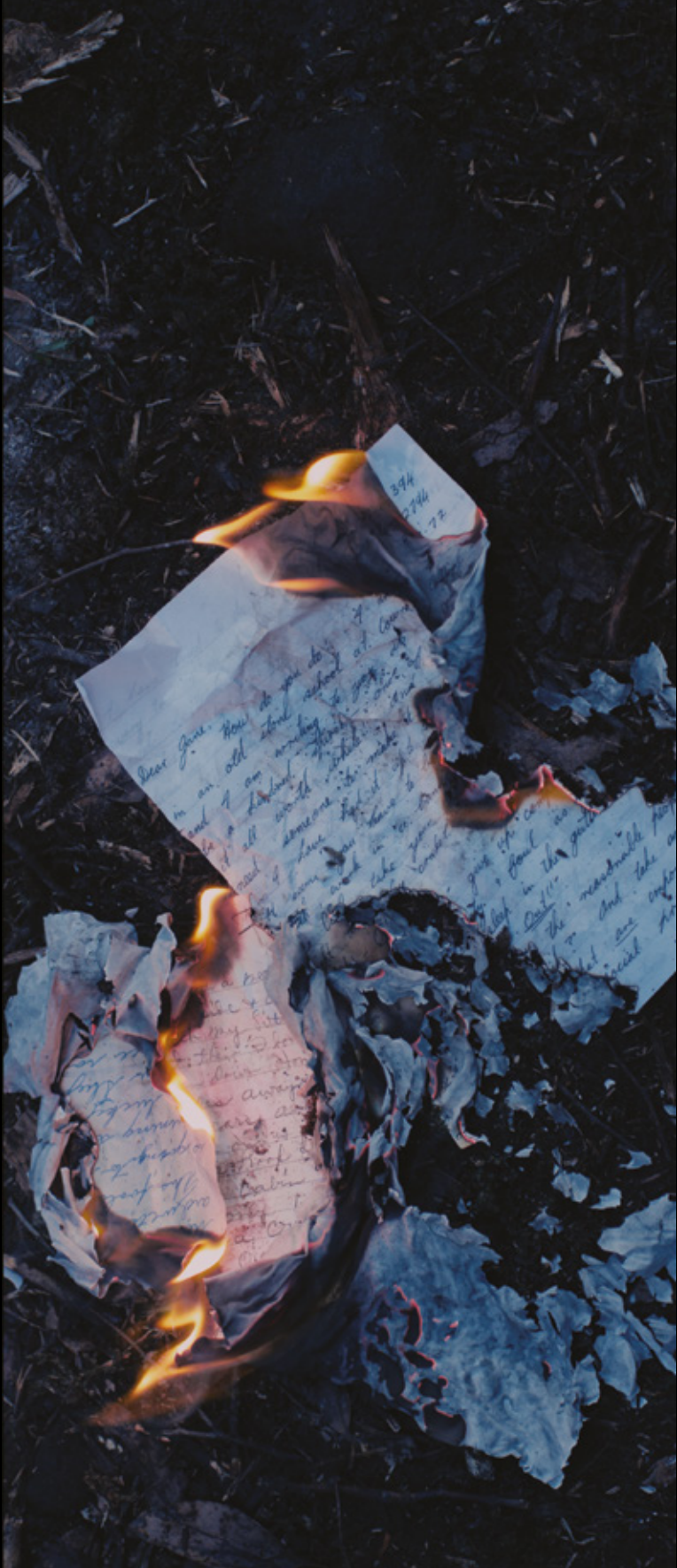
Jane decided Big Witch might provide her with her antidote to civilization; an escape from the world through a return to the earth. But there are so many other balms we employ to bewitch ourselves with the aim of 'getting away from it all' – an 'all' that may be others or ourselves but is so frequently some combination of both. Yet arrival to any place, however hidden, is still likely to inspire a search for a means of exit, just in case. An island might offer the most romantic means of escape, but it is also the most difficult thing to escape from.



















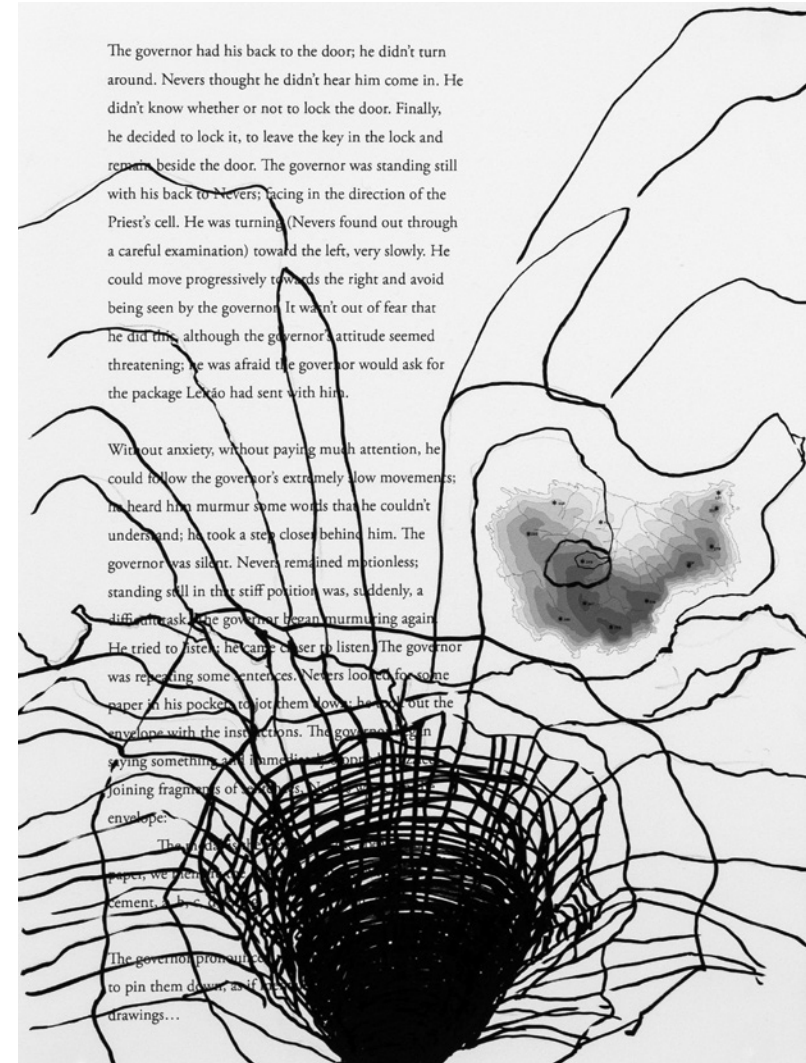
*My first afternoon
on these islands
has not yet ended,
and I've already
seen something
so alarming
that I must ask
for your help,
directly,
bluntly.*

43°35'24"S 146°21'00"E



The island would be only the dream of
humans,

and humans, the pure consciousness of the
island.



The governor had his back to the door; he didn't turn around. Nevers thought he didn't hear him come in. He didn't know whether or not to lock the door. Finally, he decided to lock it, to leave the key in the lock and remain beside the door. The governor was standing still with his back to Nevers, facing in the direction of the Priest's cell. He was turning (Nevers found out through a careful examination) toward the left, very slowly. He could move progressively towards the right and avoid being seen by the governor. It wasn't out of fear that he did this, although the governor's attitude seemed threatening; he was afraid the governor would ask for the package Leláo had sent with him.

Without anxiety, without paying much attention, he could follow the governor's extremely slow movements; he heard him murmur some words that he couldn't understand; he took a step closer behind him. The governor was silent. Nevers remained motionless; standing still in that stiff position was, suddenly, a difficult task. The governor began murmuring again. He tried to listen; he came closer to listen. The governor was repeating some sentences. Nevers looked for some paper in his pocket; to jot them down, he pulled out the envelope with the instructions. The governor began saying something and immediately began scribbles, joining fragments of words, scribbles, scribbles, scribbles, envelopes.

The governor pronounced the words, the words, the words, paper, water, cement, the words.

The governor pronounced the words, the words, the words, to pin them down, as if the words were drawings...

All fantasy
is real
for the
one
who
believes
in it



(cut to black)



Others emerge from underwater eruptions, bringing to the light of day a movement from the lowest depths. Some rise slowly; some disappear and then return, leaving us no time to annex them [...]

Dead letters



Isthmus

Isobel Parker Philip

I went to Tasmania to be pummelled by the wind.

It was winter and I was wearing stockings underneath my pants. In regular weather conditions I'm usually overdressed. I wear layers and wool and turtlenecks in summer, but here I felt ill equipped. Despite the stockings, the wind licked my shins.

To a certain degree that was what I wanted. I wanted the wind to cut through my clothes and flush me out. I wanted to be buffeted and battered, thrashed about.

—

The wind is divisive. I know people who loathe and curse it – who see it as a violation and an intrusion, as a brute with no consideration for deliberate placement and positioning. A hat, a hairdo, a newly raked pile of leaves. The wind will rearrange things as it so chooses. That winter, in Hobart, I wanted to be rearranged.

I stayed outside longer than was necessary (or comfortable). When walking, I purposefully slackened my pace along the harbour foreshore to maximise the assault. I wanted the howling of the Antarctic southerly to override the other tempest I was weathering.

I wanted to be swaddled and embraced by something outside of my body and outside of my control. Or maybe it was more violent than that. I don't know whether I wanted deliverance or disruption. Whatever it was, I wanted it hard.

—

I haven't always liked the wind. A few years ago, before that trip South, I had a tiny piece of metal lodged in my cornea. A light breeze picked it up off the sidewalk and blew it into my eye. I thought it was a persistent yet invisible eyelash for days. When I held my eyelid open with my face pinned against the mirror I couldn't focus my attention. It's difficult to look at your own eyeball. I couldn't hold onto the image of my iris long enough to notice the tiny piece of gun-grey metal amongst the mottled flecks of blue. This imperceptible speck – this thing that I couldn't see – would become a kind of poetic parable (or at least that's how I've self-mythologised it).

When he eventually found it, the doctor at the eye hospital had to dig the piece of metal out with a very fine needle. The area was anaesthetised but pain wasn't the issue. It was the fact that I could see the needle while it was excavating my eyeball at close range. The fact that I couldn't avert my gaze. A blindspot made brutal.

They had to bring in extra nurses to pin me down.

—

There is a brutality bound up in other blind spots, an implicit and loaded violence to erasure and to invisibility of all sorts. Blind spots also remind me of car crashes but before we veer off road let's play with the politics of sight.

In *The Sea-Hare*, one of the fairy tales collected by the Brothers Grimm, a Princess lives in a tower with twelve all-seeing windows that look out over her kingdom. Here, nothing is hidden from view.

This tower serves as a folkloric Panopticon – a fictional prototype of the penitentiary scheme conceived by social theorist and philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th Century. A circular building with an internal watchtower that can see into each cell positioned along its outer perimeter, a Panopticon enables total surveillance. It allows a single guard to survey hundreds of prisoners. In this structure, power is predicated on perspective and powerlessness is conditioned by visibility. It is an architecture of control mediated by the gaze.

The Princess in her tower is a warden and a watchdog. But what is she guarding?

One translation of the story I've read describes the Princess as 'haughty'. This adjective also appears in the Wikipedia entry for the fairy tale. In both instances, the term is used to explain the Princess's aversion to marriage. Has no one considered that she might enjoy her own company? That she might not want to relinquish her independence? That she might not like men? Is that cause for claims of lofty arrogance?

Gendered character assassinations aside, her disposition is framed as an infringement of social order and expectation. Not afforded the luxury of being left alone, she must justify her independence. Rather than capitulate, she conspires.

To maintain her sovereignty, the Princess challenges all prospective suitors to a game of hide-and-seek. The man who can elude her gaze will win her hand while any unsuccessful candidates are beheaded. The severed heads of past suitors flank the tower, driven into the ground on stakes. Undeterred by his predecessors, the 100th contender asks for three shots at this competitive courtship. He hides in a raven's egg and

the belly of a fish but neither disguise outsmarts the Princess. On his third attempt, with the help of a fox, he transforms himself into a little sea-hare – a mollusc with protrusions that resemble the ears of a rabbit.

The Princess is transfixed by the strange creature and has it brought to her in the tower. When she isn't looking, the sea-hare hides in her hair. She looks out the window and can't see the suitor. He has taken shelter in her only blind spot – her own body.

When the Princess realises she's been defeated she breaks all the windows in the tower. The architectural apparatus of control is demolished to make way for a new institutional structure. She marries the suitor, surrendering supreme solo reign. Happily ever after indeed.

—

Sometimes things are so close you can't see them anymore. Like the limits of your own body or a piece of metal lodged in your eye.

Or a sentence you've read over so many times it stops making sense.

—

There are some phrases I'm so familiar with I don't actually have to read them at all. I recognise them by the relative heft and balance of their constituent pictorial parts. Deciphering these texts is less an exercise in literacy than pattern recognition. While reading always – on a foundational level – relies on pattern recognition, what I'm referring to specifically are those phrases that become background noise. A street

sign, the bus timetable, the back of a box of cereal. These are things we read through memory rather than interpret anew. But memory can mislead. Careful slippery when wet.

—

OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR

A rote-learned phrase. A phrase read through peripheral vision – never needing to be looked at directly. You trust its familiarity.

I was talking about this cautionary phrase – and about wing mirrors – a while back. Charmed by its low-key lyricism. But the phrase tripped me up. As the conversation progressed, it became apparent that I'd committed a different syntactical structure to memory. I'd internalized an aberrant arrangement of the same (or same enough) words.

OBJECTS IN MIRROR MAY APPEAR CLOSER THAN THEY ARE

In my head, the statement had been scrambled. I'd also introduced a note of hesitation.

may appear

Tentative, timid. Not quite fixed. Precarious perhaps.

But isn't a wing mirror inherently precarious? Isn't it already ambivalent? When you look in a wing mirror aren't you looking behind while moving forward? Isn't this a furtive glance? A sightline that stutters?

And even then it's inconclusive. What about the blind spot?

—

In my misremembering I'd unlocked an evocation that lay latent in the phrase itself. This made me smile until I realized that my version amounted to a complete factual reversal. What I'd taken as an indication of closeness – of intimacy – as illusion was in reality the opposite. Appear closer than they are / are closer than they appear.

It's a good thing I don't drive.

—

When I was in Tasmania my mother drove us to Port Arthur, the penal settlement in the south of the state and the site of the 1996 massacre. It was damp and we didn't have much time.

On the way there I counted 18 animal carcasses on the side of the road. Apparently, that's a sign of a healthy ecosystem but even so it was heartbreaking. Each one punched me in the gut. Body after body, like an auger of all the ghosts that haunt a site as loaded as Port Arthur, drenched as it is in historically stratified suffering.

On the way back, I counted 24. Looking behind while moving forward.

Reserved for serious offenders, the Separate Prison in Port Arthur adheres to the basic architectural principles of the Panopticon. Four wings extend off a central surveillance point in a cross formation. Yet unlike Bentham's original design, the interiors of each cell in the Separate Prison are not visible from the guard post. While the corridors of the penitentiary could be monitored simultaneously by a single warden, the cells themselves were kept out of view. This aligned with, and augmented, the 'silent system' of correctional punishment imposed upon the criminals incarcerated there. Confined to small dark cells, the prisoners were forced to wear hoods while in the presence of other people. They were not allowed to be seen – to be identified as individuals – and they were not allowed to see. This denial of both vision and visibility was enlisted as a mode of psychological torture. It induced a kind of erasure, turning human beings into blind spots.

A body as a blind spot – like a woman wedded against her will.

—

The road from Hobart to Port Arthur follows a fairly straight line. You travel out as if you were headed to the airport and then just keep going. The prison sits on a peninsula and is surrounded by water. A thin strip of land connects it to the rest of Tasmania like a muscle tendon. It was this geographic particularity that made the area ideal for a penal colony. When Port Arthur was in use, the 30m wide land bridge was heavily guarded. All other escape routes were obstructed by sea and sharks.

Crossing the land bridge you feel the tone of the air shift. As if you're passing a threshold into haunted territory. A territory scarred by capital punishment in the nineteenth century, by the massacre

that left 35 people dead in 1996, by the systematic murder of the state's Indigenous peoples following European invasion, by the institutionalised denial of that very history. Brutal blind spot after brutal blind spot.

Perhaps that's what pulled me to Tasmania. I had ghosts to exorcise too. And in crossing that land bridge I registered that fact with a dull thud.

—

The Isthmus of Eaglehawk Neck. That's what the land bridge is called. Fuck – I thought. The phrase hit me in the chest as we drove past the road sign. Like a leaden, dank piece of poetry. Not the 'Eaglehawk' part – that was incidental. But isthmus.

—

An isthmus – a geological connective tissue. A narrow passage of earth that connects a peninsula to the mainland.

—

Isthmus – deriving from the Ancient Greek word for neck.

I never did pay much attention in geography, but my god. Necks are such tender, vulnerable things.

I wince whenever anyone – or anything – touches my throat. It's unbearable. Like the preface to a strangling.

If something is pushing up against my throat my stomach becomes restless, my breathing becomes shallow. I'm reminded of Caravaggio's *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas* – the painting where three men shrouded in darkness stare intently at the deep cut on Jesus' abdomen. One man sticks his finger in the wound. He holds it there, lifting the skin upwards, prying the wound open.

That's what it feels like when you touch my neck.

—

In most of the photographs of me as a child I'm carrying a doll around by its neck. The doll is naked; dirt all over its face, its hair a tangled mess, plastic limbs jutting out from its padded fabric torso all akimbo. My grip is rough, more suffocation than swaddle.

I lie. There are actually two dolls, identical and near indistinguishable, that alternate across the photographs. Each one as ruined as the other.

I was a relatively gentle child but far from delicate with these dolls. Always under the neck, always with a tender ferocity.

You should never call a little girl bossy, it overlooks what's at stake.

The word 'doll' has the same Latin root as the word 'cocoon' (speaking of names).

—

I thought about those dolls the last time I read Anne Carson's *The Glass Essay* – a text I revisit every few months so it can overwhelm me again.

The essay (really it's more of a poem) recounts the emotional fallout from a failed relationship. As I write, I'm acutely aware that this description is insufficient and insubstantial. The poem is a processing – a working through; emotion in action.

At 4 A.M. I wake. Thinking

*of the man who
left in September.ⁱ*

The narrator pushes against her loss. She pushes but she also retreats. She goes to visit her mother who lives on a moor in the north, we're told. There's a lot of wind.

Well, outside there is wind. Inside the air is stagnant and still.

Mother and I are chewing lettuce carefully.ⁱⁱ

And then a few paces further;

It is as if we have all been lowered into an atmosphere of glass.ⁱⁱⁱ

But there is someone else in the room too. Emily Brontë and her spare but razor-wire writing stalk Carson's text from beginning to end. The narrator reads Brontë's collected works while she navigates the uncomfortable terrain of the maternal space.

*She knows how to hang puppies,
that Emily.^{iv}*

Is Emily the subject of slow-burn literary analysis or an emotional surrogate?

*Whenever I visit my mother
I feel I am turning into Emily Brontë,^v*

Maybe it has something to do with the moor; the open tract of land with low lying vegetation. Emily – and her characters – were often out walking across the moor. Carson's narrator spends a lot of her time doing the same.

The soil on a moor is usually very acidic.

—

There is little to shelter you from the wind in such geographies. Hence, wuthering.

*Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr. Heathcliff's dwelling.
'Wuthering' being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of
the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy
weather. Pure, bracing ventilation.^{vi}*

Pure, bracing ventilation. That's what I was looking for in Tasmania. I wanted to be wuthered.

A similar impulse drives Carson's narrator. Though perhaps it's more complicated than that (perhaps it always is). Is she seeking the wind or has she already been buffeted? Is the wind the assault or the tonic? Is it both?

Carson's meandering monologue is punctuated by a suite of images – or visions, rather – that in part illustrate and mirror the fluctuations in her emotional landscape. They are catalogued as they are recounted; she calls them her *nudes*.

*Nude #1. Woman alone on a hill.
She stands into the wind.*

*It is a hard wind slanting from the north.
Long flaps and shreds of flesh rip off the woman's body and lift
and blow away on the wind, leaving*

*an exposed column of nerve and blood and muscle
calling mutely through lipless mouth.
It pains me to record this,*

I am not a melodramatic person.^{vii}

The nudes are ciphers for the narrator and also for Emily.

The nudes remind me of my dolls, unprotected and exposed – victims of forces beyond their control. They also remind me of myself (past tense, past tense).

Emily Brontë's biography is barren. We know very little about the nuances and trajectory of her emotional life. Her characters on the other hand – they're turbulent and tempestuous, wuthering and windswept.

In Brontë's work, as in Carson's, it's sometimes hard to tell whether the wuthering is desired or damaging. Is it cathartic or is it violent? An invited onslaught?

Is the wind about release? Carson identifies an ongoing preoccupation with prisons in Brontë's poetry:

*vaults, cages, bars, curbs, bits, bolts, fetters,
locked windows, narrow frames, aching walls.*^{viii}

But isn't the moor an open field? A plateau across which a figure can run, unfettered by fences?

*Well there are many ways of being held a prisoner.
I am thinking as I stride over the moor.*^{ix}

This phrase is repeated throughout; *there are many ways of being held a prisoner*. Like a princess in a tower (like a princess tethered to a prince she doesn't love).

—

A doll and a cocoon; a princess and a Panopticon. But what kind of cocoon is this? A self-imposed safe haven or a prison?

—

The word 'moor' is both a noun and a verb. When you moor a boat, you tie it up and anchor it firmly. Of course – the open field must have a circumference. You can be tethered even when you think you're free.

—

Sometimes you don't know you're being kept until the shackles have been cast off. Until you are no longer handcuffed and you can dislodge the sense of imprisonment for long enough to recognise that it was only ever temporary and contextual.

When I look at photographs of myself from that time I can see the numbness in my eyes. It's in my language too.

—

The last time I updated my phone I went through all the entries in my notes app. Talk about an inventory of an inner state. Since 2011 I'd been accumulating a scattered snapshot of my thoughts. With no structure beyond coincidental chronology, the 280 odd notes are a fragmented aggregate of everyday life. Taken together, they read like missives from a manic mind.

Half-drafted text messages; exhibition ideas; shopping lists; *Hand soap / Body soap / Dishwasher / Detol wipes / Eucalyptus spray* (19/3/17); codes for forgotten doors; attempts to write my name in emoji pictograms; *Sometimes film scares me. It moves too fast. I can't hold onto the images* (28/1/13); passing comments from Uber drivers; lists of songs with references to food in their titles; transcripts of covert conversations

carried out under the table at dinner; page numbers from books; *the invention of morel...* 73 (26/12/11); remarks I can no longer decode; *Word founded gin belligerent* (17/12/17); confessions that are now inconsequential; *I kind of wish I took a photo so I could better remember your face* (18/7/17).

Encountering each memo afresh and stripped of circumstance I was surprised to find how close to the surface so many of those former feelings were.

OBJECTS IN MIRROR MAY APPEAR CLOSER THAN THEY ARE

—

There was one note, from 15 December 2011, that threw me:

Write about a woman in a coat and the wind fondling her

I was acutely aware of the unanticipated prescience of that scene but it wasn't the wind or the woman that caught me off guard. It was my use of the word fondled; a word I don't recall having used before or since with a straight face. In this context it struck me as both sinister and sexual, though I doubt that was what I was intending at the time.

I don't remember writing the note – maybe I was drunk. (In any case I was 22 and just learning how to feel).

—

A week after I stumbled on the off-kilter sincerity of that sentence I found an echo of my misguided 'fondle' in one of Emily Dickinson's envelope poems.

That / fondled / them / when / they / were / Fire^x

Fondle the fire. Yes. The word makes sense there. It's not overwrought and earnest, it's fierce.

—

This Emily's poems also pierce. They pierce like a scrap of metal lodged in an eye, unassuming and inconspicuous but embedded deep and dangerous. The poem in which I found her 'fondle' is from the suite she wrote on the back of used envelopes. These were letters once received and then recycled. But to whom were the new letters addressed? These fragmentary poems? These compositions that warp around corners? Who is their pen pal? Or were they never destined for a postman? Were they meant to stay inside? Like a princess in a tower. Like a note in a phone.

—

She was a keen observer, that Dickinson. She knew the power of a fleeting glance. She also knew how to shield herself.

How well that / we are Blind - / we could not / look upon the / Earth - World / So Utterly / Unmoved^{xi}

To be blind to the world that remains unchanged, stagnant. Stuck in the shitstorm of the present tense; a cocoon against the chaos.

No, bring on the change, bring on the wind. Looking back while moving forward.

Carson's poem ends with a final vision vignette.

*Nude #13 arrived when I was not watching for it.
It came at night.*

*Very much like Nude #1.
And yet utterly different.
I saw a high hill and on it a form shaped against hard air.*

*It could have been just a pole with some old cloth attached,
but as I came closer
I saw it was a human body*

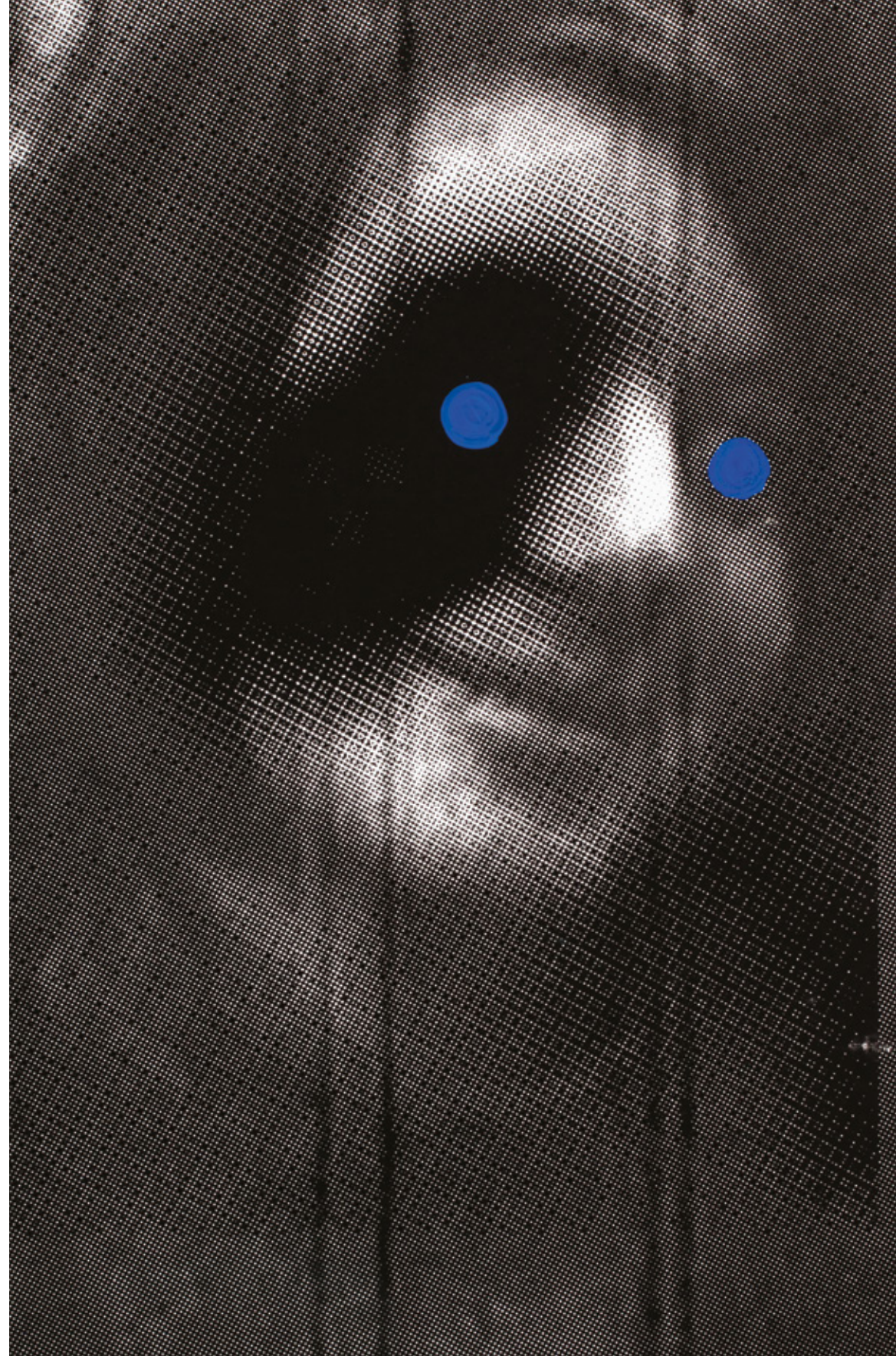
*trying to stand against winds so terrible that the flesh was blowing
off the bones.
And there was no pain.
The wind*

was cleansing the bones.^{xiii}

I know that nude.

i Carson, Anne 'The Glass Essay'. In *Glass, Irony & God*. New Directions: New York 1995 p. 1
ii Ibid p. 2
iii Ibid
iv Ibid p. 4
v Ibid p. 1
vi Emily Brontë. *Wuthering Heights*. Smith, Elder & Co: London 1870 p. 2
vii Carson, A. Op.Cit p. 9
viii Ibid p. 6
ix Ibid p. 7
x Dickinson, Emily. *Envelope Poems*. Christine Burgin / New Directions: New York 2016 p. 35
xi Ibid p. 25
xii Carson, A. Op.Cit p. 38

(cut to black)

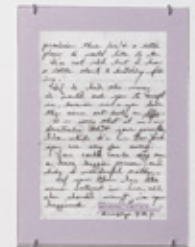
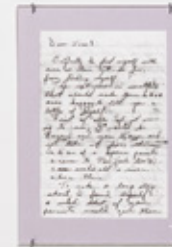


Nothing so aggravates an earnest person as a passive resistance.

The two suns are unbearable



These lines are the last that you wrote



ernoon
nds
ended,
1



She looked serenely in the distance,
as if the walls didn't exist.
She seemed tired;
the colour of her face was lead

No answer.

Dead letters

The two suns are unbearable

My first afternoon
in these islands
has not yet ended,
and I've already
seen something
so alarming
that I must ask
for your help,
directly,
blatantly

The island holds almost at the same breadth over a great part of its
but it grows narrower near both ends,
Its figure is not unlike a crescent
between its horns,
the sea comes in and spreads itself into a great bay

Nothing so aggravates an earnest person as a passive resistance

circumpolar weather systems

To get around the wall (rooms) they had to make the effort of going around an island

Why do you refuse?
I would prefer not to
(Chang chen)

When, every, from confusion emerges,
Springing on the light of day, a new world
is born. There is death, some change,
and then return, bearing, as the world is made

My first afternoon
in these islands
has not yet ended,
and I've already
seen something
so alarming
that I must ask
for your help,
directly,
blatantly





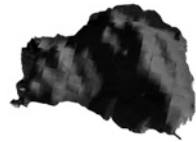






[...] humans can live on an island only by forgetting
what an island represents.

(pause)



*She looked serenely in the distance,
as if the walls didn't exist.
She seemed tired;
the colour of her face was lead.*

(No answer)

I
Coming in Each month for our
Groceries & things & a Boat to
go in to Victoria to get our
Supplies when we need them. I
would have to sell the House
Furniture, maybe it would sell
furnished, my car, [redacted] and
my tractor & things. [redacted] I will
await your Reply. [redacted] I am 47
years old Blue Eyes Blonde
Curly Hair [redacted] 10" tall 165
lbs.

May God Bless
you Both day
& night

Love
[redacted]

Dear Jane

Originally I find myself with
ever so close yet so far
from finding myself.

The art-rose is something
that should make your LOVE
ones happy, to tell you a
little of myself.

First of all if it were
up to me, I would be with
Hazel and you Jane and
you take it from there

1. I am of a Spanish parents
2. came to New York two (2)
3. ~~was~~ weeks all a never.
4. been there.

To make a long story
short, I found myself
a wish that if your
parents would give there

permission there isn't a better
place I would like to be.

I'm not rich but I know
a little about building, fish
ing.

If I had the money
I would ask you to accept
me, because me + you have
the same out-look on life.

I'm sorry that it is in
Australia that your parents
live, while I'm in New York
you are very far away.

You could make any man
a very happier person, and
kids a wonderful mother.

If your Mom has the
same interest in live, all
she should want is your
happiest.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Letter received from [redacted] Germany re Miss J. Cooper,
De Witt Island.

Your Honourable Sir Mr. Baker,

I have, in a Daily Austrian Newspaper, read with great concern your power and authority regarding Miss Jane Cooper living on De Witt Island. You are making it difficult for her in your attitude and I beg of you to reconsider so that this girl can have her freedom and all that she wishes in life.

I would like to go to De Witt Island and be with her alone. I would like to have an interview with you sir, to arrange for your authority to be given to me so as to enable me to live with Miss Cooper on De Witt Island alone.

I wait with great hopes your answer Mr. Barker sir. Please note my request and I would be pleased if you would discuss this matter with Miss Cooper. I would be pleased if the enclosed letter could be forwarded to Miss Cooper on my behalf.

Hearty thanks and best wishes.

Signed [redacted]

and I feel that any involvement likely to upset would be most undesirable and unkind. Equally, my mother, Mrs. M. Leighton of Old Beach, (who would have been Jane's original inspiration in natural living and conservation) is in a very poor state of health. I am sure you will understand my unwillingness to mislead any of my Leighton family in the kind of press presentation which we have had over the last few days?

Miss Repe contacted me only after she had written to you, but I feel her offer of Pelican Isl. is a very generous and sympathetic one, and hope that Jane will at least give it fair consideration.

To her mother, I must apologise to you for the trouble caused and express again my gratitude for the humanistic and benevolent way in which you have approached it. I do not think on Monday afternoon should you wish to contact me, our phone is 2666. [redacted]

Yours Sincerely,

[redacted] Cooper



Lone Jane weeps on 'Big Witch'



Jane Cooper sitting on a rock on Big Witch Island. Below: The island from the sea.



'I feel hunted' says Jane

From Page 1.

he given every support in her bid to stay.

Local fishermen, led by Mr John Chesterman, who calls in at the island every few weeks to deliver mail and food to Jane, have also joined the argument.

"She's not hurting anyone. We will not take anyone out to her who wants to take her away," he said.

This weekend, I visited Jane.

The night before, she had been given sketchy details of the Govern-

I Go Further Under (2018)

60 mins

5K video and surround sound

Emily Milledge and Chas Blundell

Cinematographer: Joe Shemesh

Soundtrack: Brendan Walls

Editing: James Newitt

Production: Brendan Walls and James Newitt

Production and camera assistant: Tess Campbell

Sound recording: Brendan Walls

Second camera: James Newitt

Sound mix: Jon Smeathers

Colour grading: Jennifer Mendes, C.S.I., Loudness Films

3D animation: Miguel Bandeira and Micael Figueiredo

Post Producer: Anže Peršin, Stenar Projects

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I Go Further Under was filmed in 2017 on the land of the Needwonnee and the Lyluequonny peoples

The artist acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which this film was made

This book includes a selection of quotes from: Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands*; Adolfo Bioy Casares, *A Plan for Escape* and *The Invention of Morel*; Thomas Moore, *Utopia*; Michel Houellebecq, *The Possibility of an Island*; Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*; and Jane Cooper.

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This book features new commissioned essays by Isobel Parker Philip and Justin Jaeckle and an introduction by Michael Edwards.

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Images courtesy Dark Mofo, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

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