

*Extract from Twenty Something:
Generations of Walking // Over Bodies and Land*
Nell Attwood

Note (to you): This is not the sort of poetry I want to write.

Note (to self): I try something new.

Note: There is nothing new.

Authenticity lives in the falseness of the good old days when he solemnly remembers that truth is the first casualty before each body is even aware that autumn is a myth like the promised protection of the flimsy seat belt in his car which means nothing as the wheels slur and belch along the curtained ground eventually it will reach them or it will release them the land too narrow, he never saw belonging as a bad thing until until he learned that eight percent of the English earth is available and to share and to belong became polarised by the green pastures that invite tourists or trespassers

look but do not touch

he greets the fellside with his lunchbox unwraps his breaded envelope of cheese and pickle, a crustless resistance, sliced with the support of his wife

*This World Is Surely Wide Enough To Hold Both Thee And Me*¹

the forest feels itself, awakened by the footsteps, its longing for le semblable finally, finally subdued

by the power of human touch

his wife is mimicked in armed voices

(Sylvan sign language)

highly attuned to its intruders who walk the thin bracken lining between care and destruction making contact with the hidden landscapes that live behind the concrete estates which watch over empty fields whose closed gates are proudly adorned with disguises of conservation a garden sign put there by the coloniser's employee who faces up to nature and its feeble celebrations, another man who does not listen

- and yet

only the ears can witness
the stripped-down sounds of the ecological fairground
a Kogi-like language of fertile empathy
adopted by the rambling movements of Yorkshire
finding peace in the ordinary and anger in the outdoors

because, he tells me, who would have thought that incarceration can come from interaction with ninety seven percent of waterways in OurlandEngland we are told we are told that nothing will change the mountains will mobilise and build from the sky downwards so be sure to sit down when you eat your sandwiches.

¹ Laurence Sterne, 'Book II, Chapter 12', in *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759).

Poetry

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Note (to you): I spoke to him but I am stuck.

Note (to no one): I don't believe in my body
the glass the shutters the corners the concrete
I look down, and I know that she is there -yet
she seems so irrelevant
against the edges the panes the steel the slabs

(even in the silence I cannot hear footsteps)

I look at the figurations formed underneath not the sky
but the towers and flags

(I can hear the pipes below me but still no footsteps)

on the familiar immovable flat grey
laid with mechanical jitters of traffic I realise
that I am not dissimilar
to the rain

that sits and reflects
sits and reflects

in a city where signposts and direction accumulate fake bodiless news
where the future may never arrive
where a grand unveiling of tomorrow comes three days before,
drained through the colander before it is even fully cooked. An al dente fate that resists more than my
skin
next week feels firm but not fresh
passes its sell by date before it even leaves the shelf

and the time ahead of us

and yet despite this everlasting temporality,
I still do not believe in my body

except

except

as a site to demand or deny
from one body to another-
the tarmac possibilities to trespass the streets.

Note: (to) trespass: a transgression;
a breach of law or duty; an offence, sin, wrong; a fault.²

2 OED, 'Trespass, n.' Oxford English Dictionary < [trespass, n.](https://www.oed.com): Oxford English Dictionary (oed.com) > [accessed 14 October 2022].

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