

# fedpress

Magazine







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## THANK YOU

We would like to thank all contributors, editors, artists, and readers who have made this issue possible. Given the global pandemic, it is amazing for us to have worked so hard and pulled this piece together. It would not have been possible without the hard work and perseverance of the art and editing teams. We hope you all enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed creating it. Happy reading,

The FedPress team



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# The Smartphone:

## A Creative Experiment

# Part Three:

“Status Update”



i luv flying. i like lookin down on the 1000s of lifes that r hapning all at once.

phones arnt aloud on this flight.

only 30mins to go. ive escaped most of the bordom.

i almost loose my bags in the chaos at the airprt.

the 1st day is a waist of time. we cant b botherd goin anywear so we hang round hotel. i no it wont take long to explor it. my cousins want to follow me. im told i cant let my eyes wonder for 1sec.

they thought it would b good idea to run up n down the hall. i reach round to my bag. ive resisted long enough.

evry new place is a novlty that quickly wheres out. the 2nd day of the trip is always the best to c evrything b4 it bcomes boring. we r the turists we look out of place. we do the obligatry walk round city. the buildings bgin to mirror each other. the rents point there cameras at evrything. im disapointed at what the city offrs. the real thing doesnt compare to the pics.

Study finds we're becoming slaves to our phones

You're not the you everyone else is

Is it time to take back your LIFE?

how have you been recently nathan asks.

how have you been he says again louder.

yep fine i say. he continus his life stry.

I'm somewear else.

at lunch i sit with mum n nathan her frend from england. the whether the country the royals. im quiet good at faking a intrest.

You and 1k others

A tiny space

houses some of the most

sophisticated

technology

we've never developed

S  
C  
R  
O  
L  
L  
I  
N  
G

mum drifts over to nother table leaving me with nathan. he trys to talk to me again.

you only live once you know he says.

i think he means yolo. What he doesnt no is that i can relive this trip where out the memories in my other life.

**Dear reader/smartphone user**

It's important that I interrupt your reading/mindless surfing now in order to conduct a short survey.

no.

It's important that I interrupt your reading/mindless surfing now in order to conduct a short survey.

later.

**How often do you check your phone? Every:**

1 minute

5 minutes

10 minutes

Other



What do you use your phone for?

Do you spend five or more hours on your phone each day whilst thinking about this and other annoying questions?

Your results have indicated that you are addicted to your smartphone (probably. I'm not a scientist. You can do your own research using your phone – you know, the thing that you're looking at while reading this).

\*\*\*\*\*

I pack my bag for the flight back. im remindd to trple check ive got evrything or whatevs i leave bhind will b gone forevr.

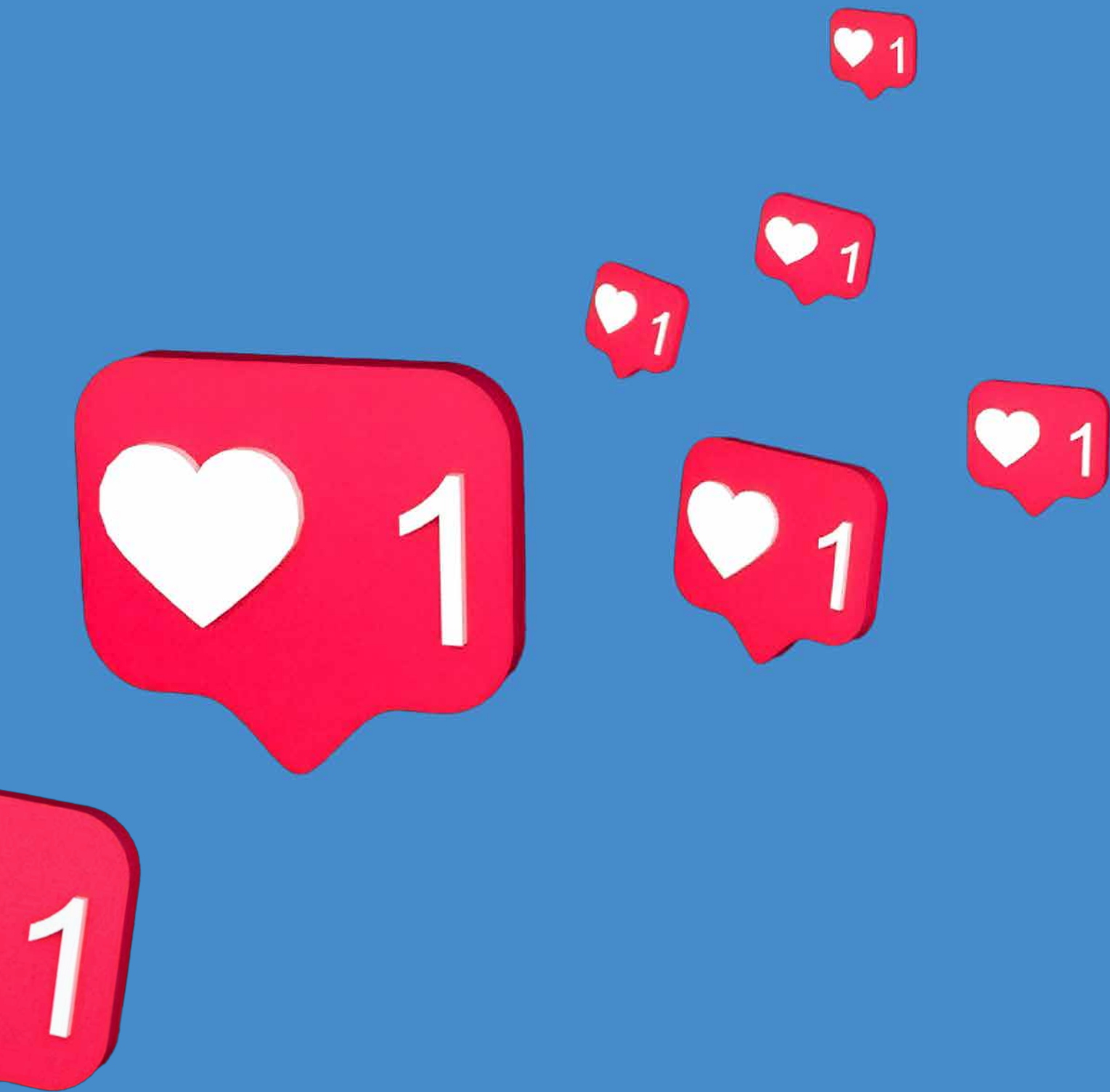
evryone will ask me how it was. ill tell them evrything was overated.

with nothin to do at the airprt i check for the likes that have rolld in.

**0 LIKES 0 COMMENTS**

By Sarah McLean







**WARNING**

**DO NOT FEED**



**PENGUINS**

**ARE**

**SASSY**

**PENGUINS BITE**

**Do Not Feed**

**ARE**

**WAVE**



"Penguins" Zoe Duke



# Golden Oak

By Jordyn Presley



The golden oak swung to the rhythm of her voice. It was a melody of emotions like nothing you have ever heard. A chorus of high-pitched affirmations, a baritone of praises and an echo of promises.

She sat in the corner, knitting with ardour. She was the type of person to make you feel warm with a look and on fire with a smile. She had a way of silencing your fears, erasing your doubts and making your spirits soar. Everything she tackled, she conquered.

He worked long hours. He came home covered in soot and dirt. His breathing was laboured and eyes glazed over from exhaustion. She forced him into a shower

and cooked his dinner while he dried off and almost collapsed in his chair. He asked about her day and she always told him the same thing. 'It was just a day Jack. How was yours?'

He would always launch into a soliloquy of torture, a lament on where his life went wrong. She let him ramble as he ate, attentively nodded and expressed her own indignation in time with his, and cleaned up after him while he read the paper.

He never lifted a finger when he arrived home and was gone before she woke in the morning. Theirs was a marriage of desperation. A marriage born out of desire to live independently. She craved love while he craved convenience. Where she was all white, he was blackened and bitter to the world. His was the countenance of a man who had seen a world crumble and was waiting for it to happen again. She was optimistic and hopeful that the current economic crisis could be fixed with a little hard work and love.

When he arrived home to an empty house the next week, he didn't notice she was gone. He didn't notice the note she'd left stating that she had a few errands to run. He looked around the house, headed to the shower and continued his life as if she had never left.

She crept into the house, careful not to disturb him. She stocked the cupboards high and checked to see if he had done any housework. With a dismayed look she noticed he hadn't even changed his uniform.

Something long overdue snapped inside her. The sparkle of love dimmed just a little and the weight of the world stooped her shoulders. Her hair shrivelled at the ends and turned white and she became wobbly on her feet.

As the oak chair rocked to her humming, she briefly looked up and saw her husband staring in astonishment. She was fading before his eyes. However, she looked like a radiant angel in the dimming firelight.

'I guess it's true what they say. Stress will kill you.' He reached out to her but it was too late.

A pile of ashes and lemon fabric nestled where she had once stood so tall and beautiful.

## KARMA IS REAL AND SHES TIRED OF BEING CALLED A BITCH.

Hi, I'm Karma!

I am sixteen and I have blue eyes, messy blonde hair and dimples which wink out when I smile. My parents sold me to a gang leader and-

Okay, enough.

The above description is totally untrue.

I mean, I'm Karma!

I'm not like other girls. Cliched.

Honestly though, I am the most hated individual - if I can even classify myself as one- on the planet, and I'm not even exaggerating. Or maybe I am. I am known for my slight tendencies to over-dramatize. But oh well, I'm entitled to since I have no friends, and that isn't an exaggeration.

I am very popular, or notorious, however you want to call it. I seem to be the one that people call upon when they've been wronged. I would prefer to be remembered in happier circumstances, but oh well, you can't get everything that you want in life, and that people, is one of the few rules of life that are beyond my control.

Now, enough of this intro, I have an insane amount of work to do. But maybe I could watch one episode of Games of Thrones first. See, even Karma procrastinates sometimes. All right, since I have an audience today, I'll be a good girl and get straight to work. After all, I wouldn't want to be shouted upon for being a bad role model, would I?

I settle down with my laptop - yes, I've adopted the modern way of working! - and lots of chocolate. I do require a lot of patience in my work and chocolate keeps me sane, at least most of the time.

I log in onto my laptop and I'm flooded with messages. With a deep breath, I dive in.

My work basically consists of me reading reports about people's behaviour, and thus planning out their lives. I also get to listen to their complaints about others, or their feedback on what I plan for them. Two-way communication. Great.

I press play and the messages begin to play. Sometimes the stories coerce a chuckle or two out of me and those are my favourite moments. Loneliness doesn't often give me many reasons to smile. Oh well, no time to brood now, I have work to do.

The recordings play on, and one word stands out. Bitch. My hand finds a pen and I begin to tally.

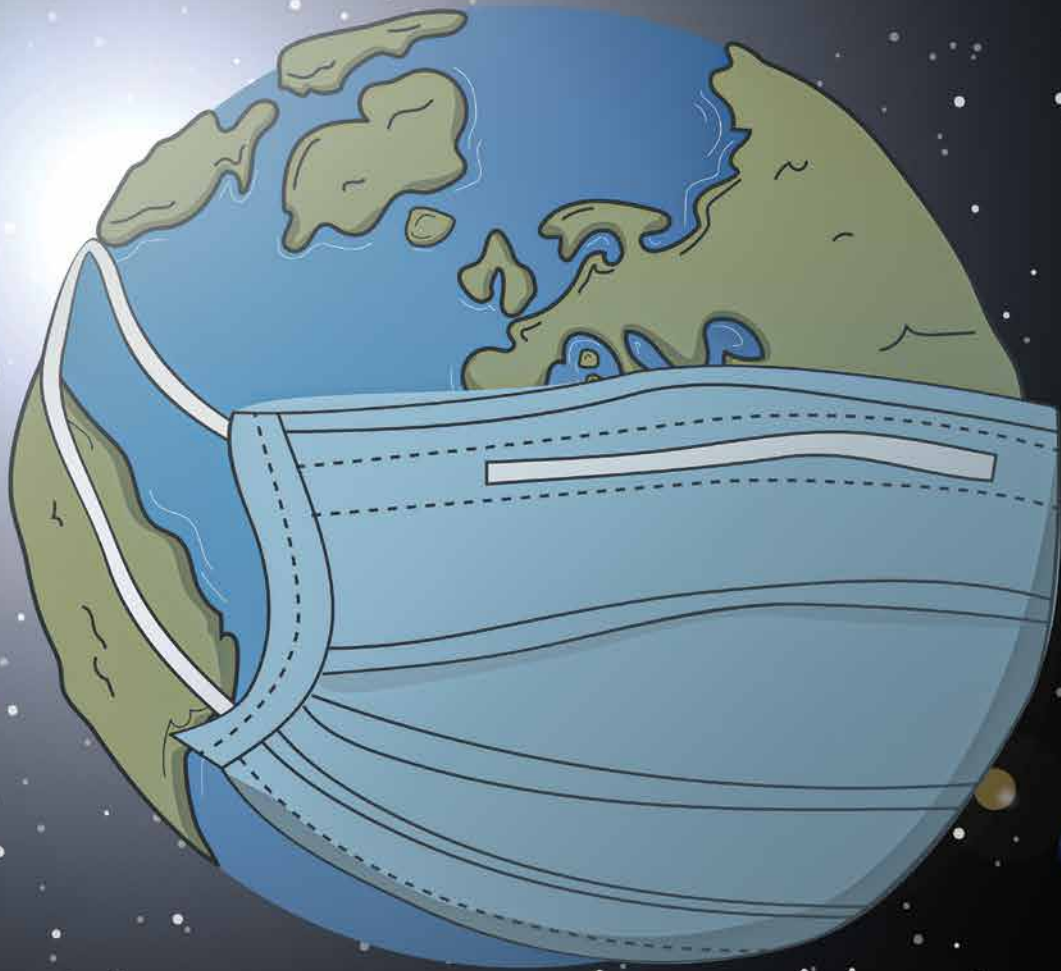
Several recordings later, I press stop. The page reads a grand total of one thousand and thirteen tallies.

I put my laptop aside and get up. Maybe it is time to brood now.

**KARMA  
IS NOT A  
BITCH!**

By Dhogaluxmi Chemen







# SPILT MILK

## Spilt Milk – Reviewing Ballarat’s First Time Hosting the Anticipated Festival

By Chloe Waddell

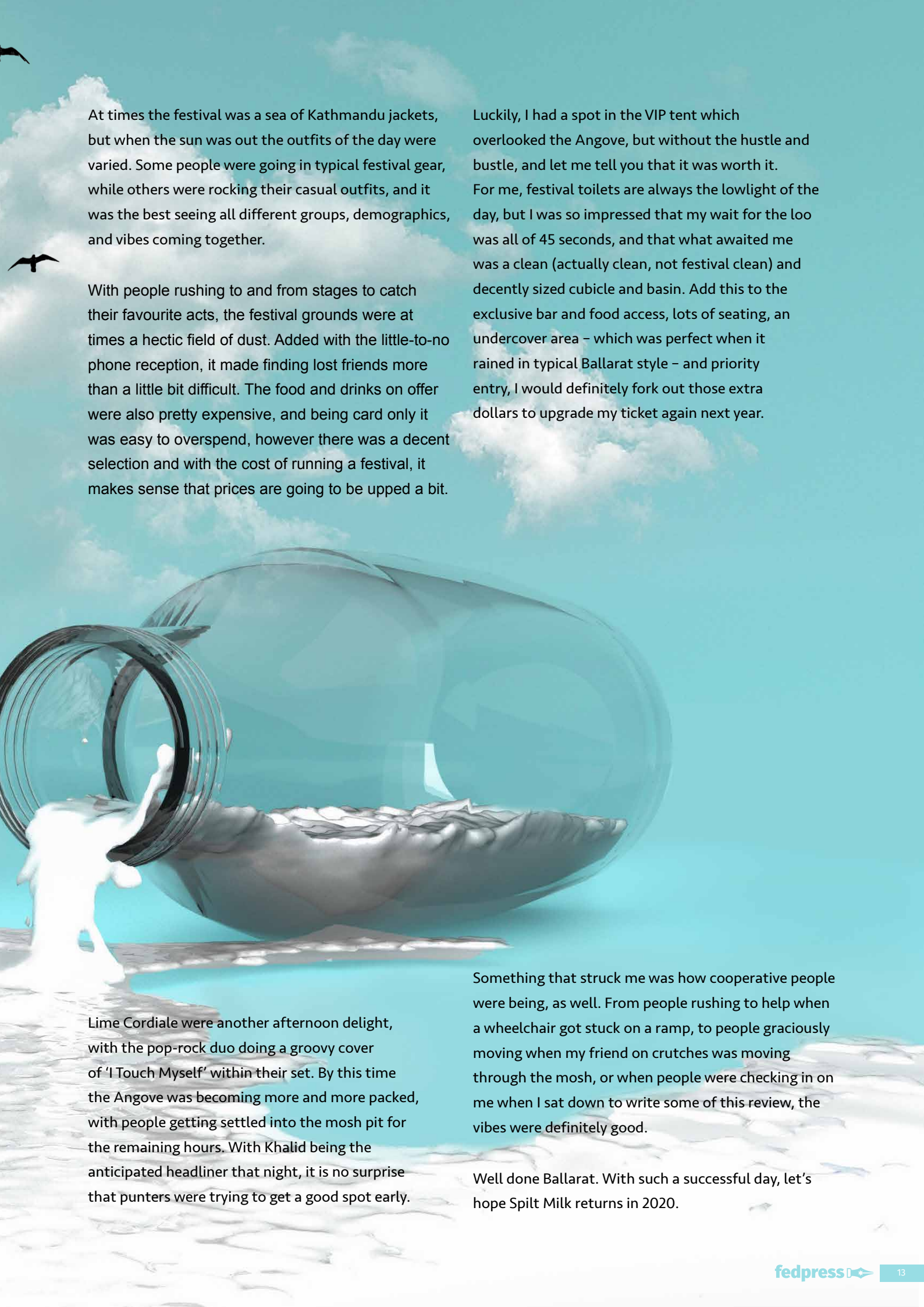
On November 30th, Ballarat’s Victoria Park was transformed into a festival-goers haven, hosting the much-anticipated music festival, Spilt Milk. Traditionally this festival is annually and exclusively held in Canberra, however in 2019 it branched out to regional Victoria, giving more music lovers a chance to experience all it had to offer. There is no denying that there was a demand for a music festival in Ballarat, with the tickets quickly selling out, and thousands of people braving the not-so-summer weather on the day.

The novel event had five stages, meaning that there was plenty on offer throughout the day and night. It was inevitable that there would be clashes in sets, however the general consensus was that the organisers did a pretty good job organising the set times.

My personal highlight was seeing Tones and I play live. The Byron Bay busker was clearly locked in to play Spilt Milk before ‘Dance Monkey’ became the number one song in the world, as reflected in her 1:50pm set time, away from the main stage. However, this early set didn’t deter her fans, with people flooding the big top tent and climbing on bins, scaffolding, and one another to catch a glimpse of the four-time ARIA award winner. Luckily, a large screen beside the stage helped those up the back (or stuck behind tall people) see Tones and I up close. Donning her usual cap and baggy ensemble, Toni Watson seemed genuinely taken aback by the monstrous support from little-old-Ballarat. Starting with ‘Never Seen the Rain’, Tones had everyone singing in chorus from the very beginning. ‘Johnny Run Away’ was another crowd favourite, which is essentially about Tones and I’s best friend’s sexuality being judged at a young age by their father. If you haven’t heard it, it is worth listening to not only

because of the underlying message around coming out and judgement, but also because it is incredibly catchy and digestible. The support for this song, teamed with her One Love image projection at the beginning and end of her set, really drives home that the movement toward acceptance in society is so far reaching and so normalised now, and it was a subtle but heart-warming reminder. Of course having her friends throwing shirts into the audience, and performing her hits ‘Dance Monkey’ and ‘The Kids Are Coming’, were the best ways for Tones and I to finish up, and it left everyone buzzing for the next acts.

Melbourne muso G Flip was another stand out of the day. Killing it not only on vocals but also on the drums, G Flip had the crowd eating out of the palm of her hand during her set on the main stage (the Angove). Festival-goers were screaming her lyrics loudly as they moshed to ‘Killing My Time’, and ‘About You’ among many other favourites. She showed off her playful side, getting some crowd participation with to and fro chants like “When I say water, you say melon!”, and “When I say mi, you say goreng!”. It was only mid-afternoon, but if G Flip was anything to go by, you knew it was going to be a fun day.



At times the festival was a sea of Kathmandu jackets, but when the sun was out the outfits of the day were varied. Some people were going in typical festival gear, while others were rocking their casual outfits, and it was the best seeing all different groups, demographics, and vibes coming together.

With people rushing to and from stages to catch their favourite acts, the festival grounds were at times a hectic field of dust. Added with the little-to-no phone reception, it made finding lost friends more than a little bit difficult. The food and drinks on offer were also pretty expensive, and being card only it was easy to overspend, however there was a decent selection and with the cost of running a festival, it makes sense that prices are going to be upped a bit.

Lime Cordiale were another afternoon delight, with the pop-rock duo doing a groovy cover of 'I Touch Myself' within their set. By this time the Angove was becoming more and more packed, with people getting settled into the mosh pit for the remaining hours. With Khalid being the anticipated headliner that night, it is no surprise that punters were trying to get a good spot early.

Luckily, I had a spot in the VIP tent which overlooked the Angove, but without the hustle and bustle, and let me tell you that it was worth it. For me, festival toilets are always the lowlight of the day, but I was so impressed that my wait for the loo was all of 45 seconds, and that what awaited me was a clean (actually clean, not festival clean) and decently sized cubicle and basin. Add this to the exclusive bar and food access, lots of seating, an undercover area – which was perfect when it rained in typical Ballarat style – and priority entry, I would definitely fork out those extra dollars to upgrade my ticket again next year.

Something that struck me was how cooperative people were being, as well. From people rushing to help when a wheelchair got stuck on a ramp, to people graciously moving when my friend on crutches was moving through the mosh, or when people were checking in on me when I sat down to write some of this review, the vibes were definitely good.

Well done Ballarat. With such a successful day, let's hope Spilt Milk returns in 2020.



# THEY'RE WONDERFUL LIVES

## PART 1

By DJ Rout

**TRIGGER WARNING:**

This article contains information about suicidal thoughts which may be upsetting to some people.

Suicide prevention helpline: Lifeline Australia, Call 13 11 14

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au) - 24/7 Support



I was standing on the bridge looking down at the turgid brown gurgle named 'River' by the founding fathers lo these 170 years ago, when he came up beside me - again.

"You're throwing away God's most precious gift," he said.

"What, air? Time? Solitude?"

"No, your life!"

"Standing on a bridge isn't throwing away anything, Clarence," I said. I thought about surrendering to possibilities, then did it. "It is Clarence, right?"

"Yes! How did you know?"

I turned to face him, reluctantly ignoring the river. Well, it was more of a drain.

It was Clarence alright. Even with the sun right behind him, the silhouette had the same shape, his hair was sparse and golden, and he had that American accent that had sounded nice the first ten times, but now grated like someone from the Philippines impersonating a South African.

"It's always you," I said. "Okay, let's get on with it. I'm throwing away my life just standing here."

"Well, you were about to."

"No, I wasn't. I was just looking. At. The water." That should be emphatic enough.

Of course, nothing ever had been.

"Yes, you were. Do you know what the world would be like if you had never been born?"

"Yes," I said. "I've seen it. Many times."

"Come with me," he said.

"Oh, God," I said, rolling my eyes with such vigour I cracked a vertebra.

Then there was that little discontinuity that seemed like a dissolve from the movie characters' points of view and here we were, standing on the bridge again, sun unmoved, trees unchanged, clouds in different shapes.

"Don't take His name in vain," said Clarence.

"Got your wings yet?" I asked.

"No, not yet," he said sadly.

"Well, maybe - damn -"

"Watch it!"

"I've forgotten how many times we've done this. Let's say fifty. You'd think after fifty tries you'd've got your wings. After all, every time a bell rings, an angel gets its wings."

"That's true."

"If carillons cause it," I tried for the fiftieth time, "then the church down my street could fit out an air force every Wednesday. Bells are the effect, not the cause."

"What does it matter? An angel is still getting its wings."

"Except you, apparently." I sighed: "Alright, let's go."

"Oh, hell - yeah, what am I going to say? Same bridge, same river, same park, same trees. Wait! Was that Honda Civic over there green or red?"

"See?"

"See what? Could I have affected the colour of that car in that parking spot? What does it matter anyway? It's trivial! Clarence," I said, "don't you remember that we've done this before?"

It was a stupid ploy. I knew it as I said it. If it hadn't worked the first time, why would it work the...whatever time we were up to?

Clarence ignored it, as always.

"See? If you hadn't been born, that driver over there would have a Hispano Suiza."

"What? Maybe Hispano, or whoever he was, survived the Fascists and the Nazis, I wasn't born until 1962, so how could I have affected that?"

"You weren't born at all."

"Then who are you talking to?"

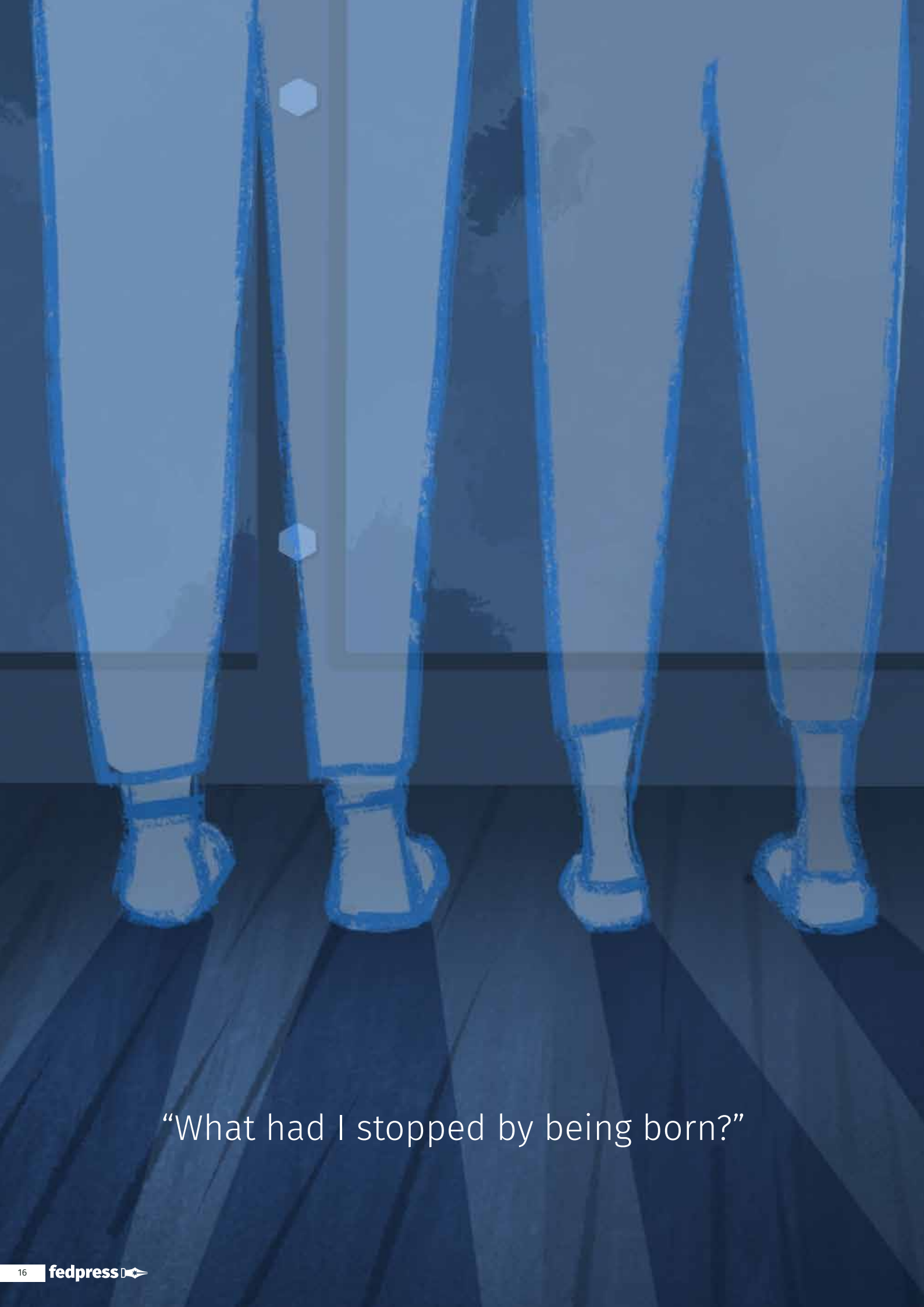
"Well, obviously you were born in some timeline. Just not this one."

"I notice my eyesight hasn't improved."

"No, the damage occurred in utero. Before you were born, so you not being born wouldn't affect it."

"Okay," I said. "It's fairy-tale logic, but I'll humour you for now. Let's go for a walk."

I slumped off ahead of him, knowing where's he'd take me, because it's nearly always the same route. There had been that one time when they'd blocked the car park and the guards wore Southern Cross armbands. I'd been curious about that one. What had I stopped by being born?



“What had I stopped by being born?”

I walked briskly to get this over and done with, and Clarence lagged because he had detailed things to show me. This time, for example, there were horse pats in the street outside the supermarket. The supermarket was still a Safeway, so that was something, although how the hell I'd affected that I had no idea. Except for that, most of the shops were the same, except the computer place was now something else.

"Ah, a wellness centre," I said.

"Yes," said Clarence. "See, without you, this - "

"I'm using 'wellness centre' as a euphemism for brothel," I said.

"Oh. Even so - "

"Is that better or worse than a computer shop?" I said.

"Well, I - er..."

"What next?"

"Check your phone," he said.

I picked it out of my pocket. Still the same iPhone, and the same fingerprints unlocked it. Not even my games had changed, and it seemed that Facebook and Twitter owed nothing to my existence. You can't help but be humbled by that.

"Look up your family," he said.

I went through the motions like a piano exercise. I read them off: my sister was now a chartered accountant, my brother had an Oscar nomination, my younger sister was a Detective Superintendent this time.

"So, I really did hold them back," I said.

"Yes. Because you were born, they waited for the eldest to achieve something before they saw they could do it, too."

"It looks like they're better off without me," I said. "So, I'll just nip off to the ol' plummeting bridge, then."

"No, no!" He tugged at my sleeve. "You don't understand."

"You don't understand, Clarence!" I said. "It's not real! All these alternate histories, timelines where I wasn't born. I was born. So that's the world where I'm real. And I quite like it. That's why I wasn't going to kill myself. I just like bridges!"

"Let's go for a walk, anyway. You could use the exercise," he said.

"Not really. I'm not born. But anything for a quiet non-life."

We walked up the little hill to the shops, and I did notice that I wasn't puffing, so there were some advantages to never having been around to slurp up fifteen cans a day. We turned left and then paused outside my favourite restaurant.

"Ta da!" said Clarence.

"What?" I sighed. "The restaurant is still here."

"If we go in, they won't recognise you, because you've never been born!"

"Holy crap!"

"Don't say that."

"Millions of people go into cafes daily, restaurants, buffets, cafeterias and crack houses without being recognised. They can cope. I can cope. Why can't you?" But I did make a mental note that the people serving were different. Well, jobs are important.

We came around the corner into Sturt St after Clarence tried to convince me that Her Majesty's Theatre was only putting on Pygmalion because I wasn't there to stop them. I pointed out the Town Hall clock. The scaffolding was still up.

"Because you weren't there to make them take it down!"

"I had nothing to do with whether they took it down! I don't control the Council. I can barely get up the energy to do a valid vote! Let's call a cab and see who's occupying my house this time."

"It's not your house. You were never born to occupy - "

"You know what I mean!"

My phone wasn't working.

"You don't have a phone number," Clarence explained, "because you were never - "

"I know! Habit. Here's a cab, anyway. Miraculous and providential, isn't it?"

We got in the back seat and I told the guy to take a right on Lydiard St North. "Stop here for a second, mate," I said outside the Regent Cinemas. "Hello, movie house. There. Feel better, Clarence?"

"A little bit."

To Be Continued In Part 2



# The bumpy and not so glorious road to self-acceptance

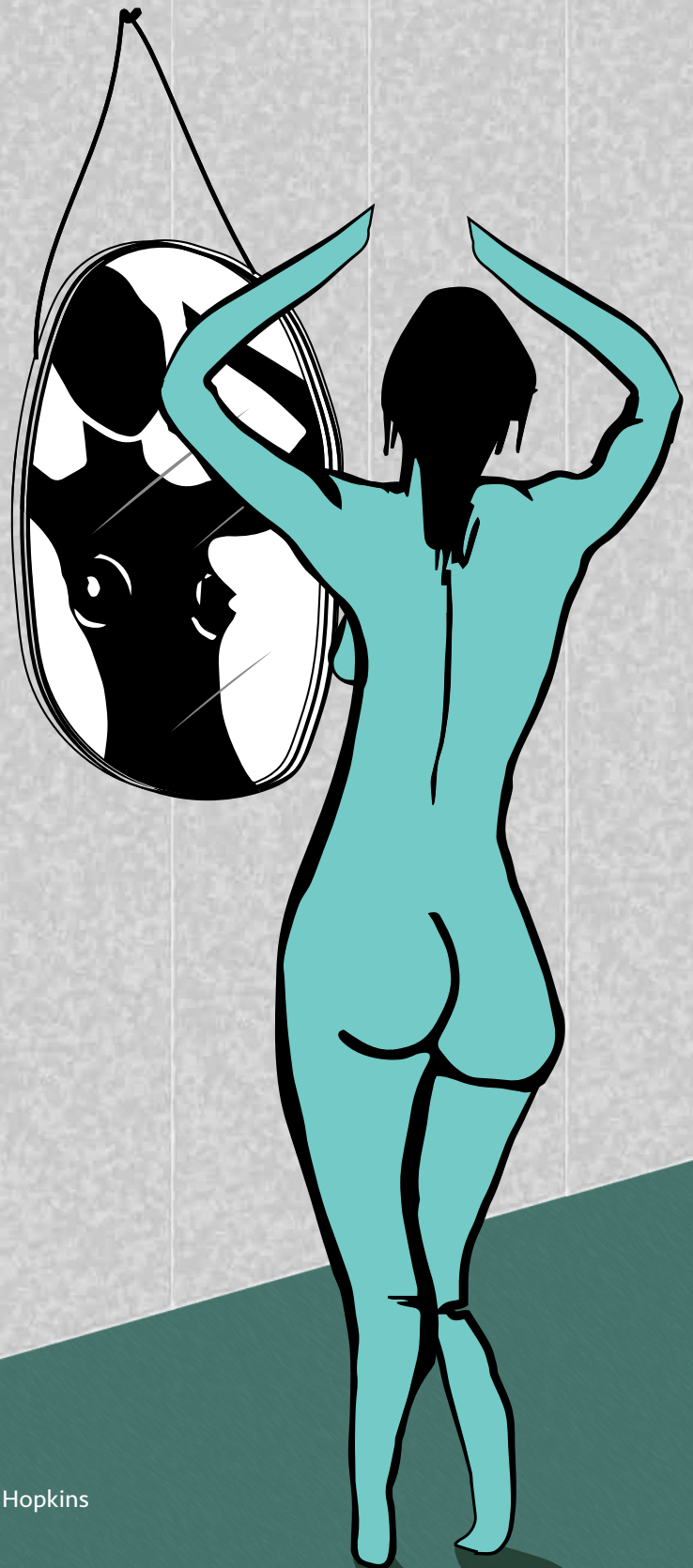
She studied herself in the mirror, searching for the powerful being she hoped to portray. The femininity and power she dreamed to radiate. The confident, courageous, beautiful women she hoped to become. Hands stopped at curves, that were meant to be flat, hair not falling perfectly, the scars on her sides, circulating thoughts she couldn't hold back. Why don't I look like her? She's so pretty. She hadn't considered herself to be vain, nor did she want too. This was more than vanity. This was vulnerability to criticise oneself.

She gazed upon herself, feeling broken. Defeated. So much so that tears began to well. She wiped them away in horror. You cannot show them this. This vulnerability. She attempted a faint smile, but was met with only a shadow of hate as she looked upon her body. Insecurities are the weapon of choice for yourself. She told herself over and over. You cannot let your own doubts hinder you.

It was a difficult venture, the acceptance of herself. A venture she had been on for longer than she cared to admit, constantly comparing herself to the women that surrounded her. Her journey of acceptance had taken her many places. From fragility, to an understanding that perhaps she wasn't like every other girl, to gradual acceptance. She had a subconscious vulnerability that she couldn't ignore despite her best efforts. However, her acceptance of herself had grown exponentially as she got older, as she slowly became comfortable in her own skin. She began to recognise that her being was not going anywhere.

She began to realise that change was exhausting, and acceptance was more... rewarding. She smiled to herself as she reflected on where she had been, the journey she had dared take with herself, her individuality, understanding, and self-belonging. Providing an insight into who she was, and who she hoped to be, the imperfect human that she dared continue to explore. She nodded to herself in the mirror.

**This was just the beginning.**



By Chloe Hopkins

# fedpress

**We want to share your writing with the world!**

Whether it be feature articles, poetry or reviews, there's always a place for FedUni student's work in FedPress.

**Submission dates for 2020:  
Issue #25 - Wednesday 16th September 2020,  
Wednesday 20th of January 2021,  
Thursday 15th of April 2021**

All submissions should be sent to  
**[fedpresseditor@gmail.com](mailto:fedpresseditor@gmail.com)**  
before the submission deadline

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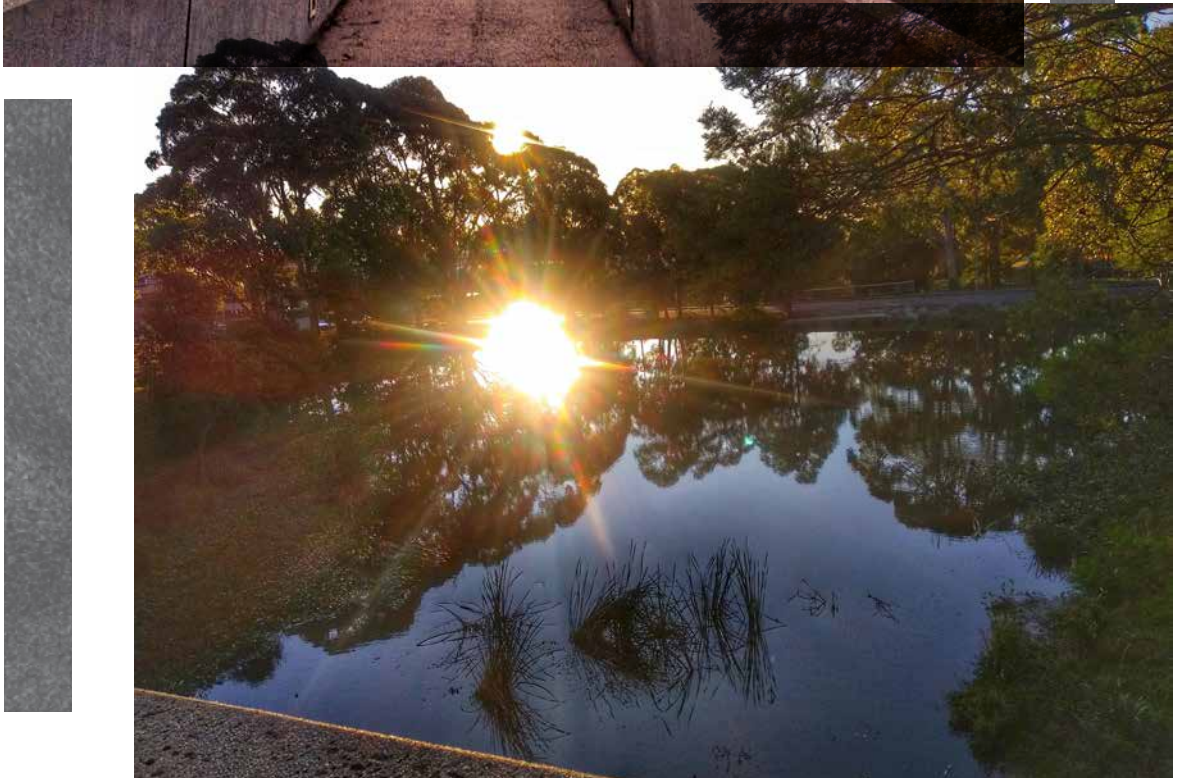
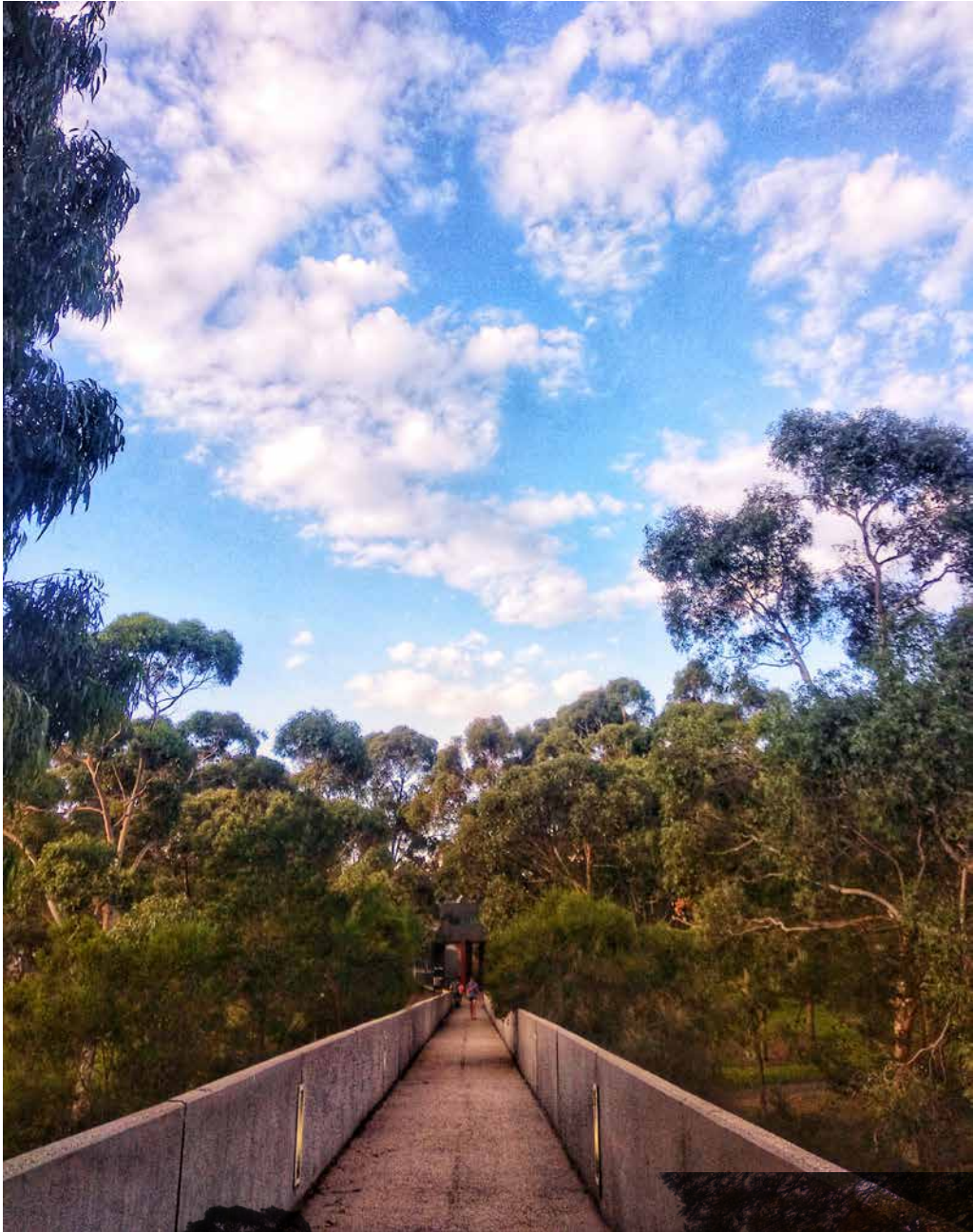
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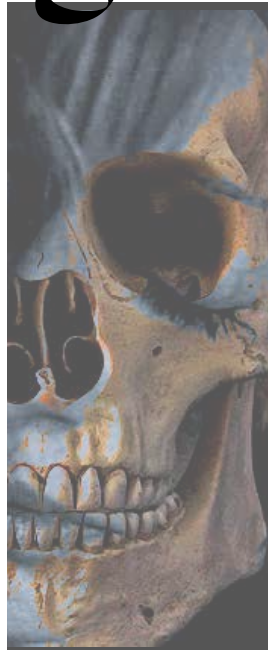
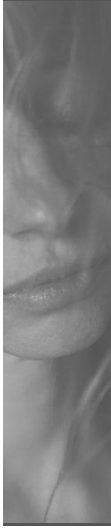
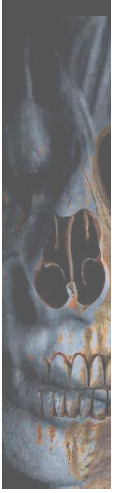
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# Skeletal Boughs



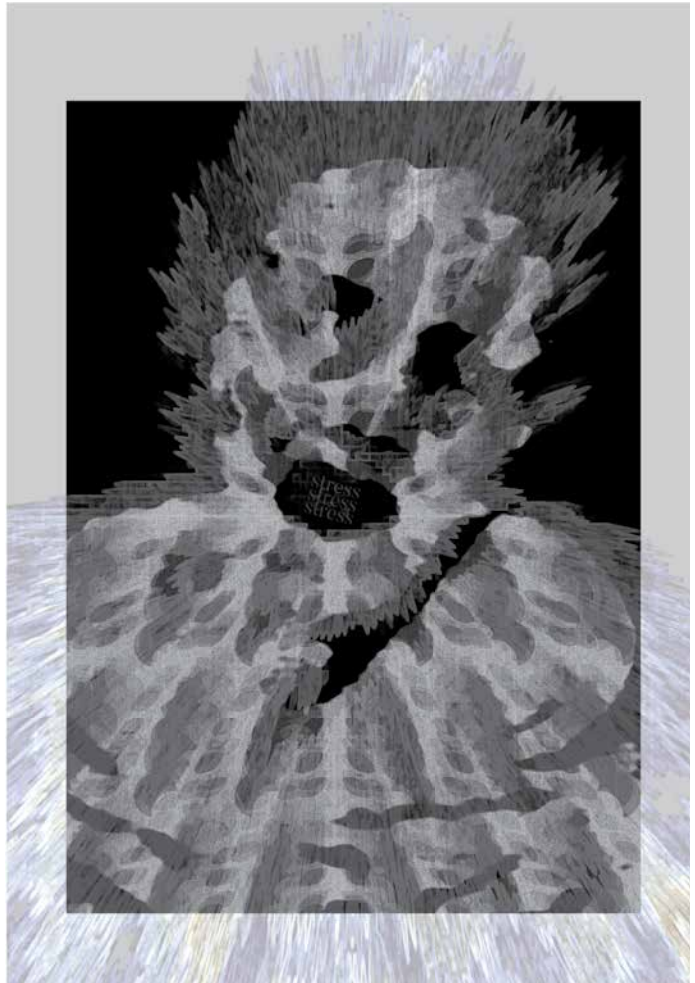
Skeletal boughs  
stretched

to caress the  
frigid sky.

On the ground, she sobbed.

empty.

*Echoing pantry  
stripped from wall  
to wall,  
as naked  
as her cold heart.*



Poems by Laura Benney

# fedpress

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(COVID-19)

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