

Focus

John O'Reilly

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Dedicated to,
with love for:

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Erin, Chris and Vanessa

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BUGS

verandah paddocks
endless
breeding
another sunstruck bug
spaced out on the fluoro
seeking
by artificial light
breeding,

smiling
is the wayward spider

ONCE

days drifting in
and out
side
peering up
blue turns grey
patched with pink
fading out
side
swaying with the melody
of the years
faces that have
leaves that have
grown
of
you
taken from
out
on a limb
once you were ...

BURROWS

settling in
on horizons
melting in our dreams
and love
calling from afar

a line out
can't stop the creeping
the needing
for it alone
cuts at it

hacks an arm

chews grinds

and

burrows down so

very d
 e
 e
 p

hanging out
peering out
on horizons
melting in our dreams
rudely awakened

by my
regurgitated
heart

GOR-TEX

it came
a little life seeping in, soaking in;
with open gor-tex i felt uncomfortable,
but life went on

with open gor-tex
i watched her strike a nerve

/ a line
a thought
/

i felt
i learnt

then life went on...

VAPOURS

floating time
life, the universe and
laptop 386's

another coin
another slot
and open spaces
are
 closing
 in

your ghost moseys in and
i reach out
for
vapours and
mind games
running
at
33 MHz

MEMORIES

you visit me, whisper, murmur,
a face in the crowd
 you sometimes;
most often you pass me by,
but lately...

you have a face
with emotion, with expression

i let you in.

you visit me

SACRIFICE

it is time
to offer up /

(sacrifice

/ a sabbath blessing -

on sale
but
never bought,

has now left me /

(forsaked

a face without a heart
a struggle without a saviour
a life without a god

save your own wretched
order

i'll revive mine
(or me)

when i'm bloody good and ready

FLOWER

flower so stubborn,
 spring's
 come and gone

this plant

 /
 spreads
 r o o t s
wide
 afield,

 /

 has nothing left

 no flower

no glory

CAR

paint work glistens
smooth sleek lines
make you shine

fashioned metallic finished washed new
sleek but
worth
nothing

your tuned up potential

has gone

has gone long /
unattended

TEMPERAMENT

fed by the trips
the excellent adventures of
life borne of DNA mum
DNA dad
those washed out first 9 months
and the explosion of birth

soul transcending
out of your past lives
visitations,
spirits passing through,

some god
only knows !?

NOVEL

have you struggled so?

have you the words
to speak

come to me
draw the curtain and
close this act
on your intuition

have you,

three years

have you struggled?

so...

HIGHWAY

dreams and thoughts
stretch out for 500km
one way

focus those white lines

(neurones
rushing by at 120 clicks

i know you now
my friend,
your asphalt face
is polished smooth
your shoulder green
my image green

our lives
as one,

intertwine

ORGANIC

10th generation computers
will not have
 mechanical clockwork parts

 not have
 metallic casing,
 valves, transistors,
or VLSI chips

10th generation computers
will be grown
 organic robots alone
 will lift AI above
 and beyond
the three year old child...

GORGE

BARK

strips
dripping
naked white
beneath

LEAVES

drooping limbs
an umbrella
clothed in
green

BIRDS

stripping
you down
food is
a dawn
chorus chirped
in natural
keys

CLOUDS

pick the
body
language
sliding
across the
sky

CLIFF

solid
as a
roll
along
tourist paths
your face
has a human
touch much
older

VISITATIONS

flittering in, flittering out,
tugging at, dragging out;
a melody of faces,
in places of doubt.

calling you up,
my demon of fears;
a collage of spaces,
all stained in tears.

visitations,
coded within dream;
moments of loss,
in places i've been.

shadows and shrouds,
snapshots in time;
realities in rhythm,
captured in rhyme.

CALL

dropped again
in the muzak
maelstrom

"I'm sorry, sir,
your call is
going through
now!"

another line,
another uncertain
expert,
another blank
face on the
phone,
another company,
another spot
of muzak maelstrom.

CROSSROADS

scribbling pros and cons
in the dust
squatting for a long moment

this
is
your
world calling...

HOLE

1.

flickering candle
country cabin

the wind outside
hums its lullaby

darkness tonight
is kind

2.

branches stroking
the window pane
reach out
i wonder
the leaves
might be
might

fill this hole

3.
this sceptic
is a child
with a
chem set
this child
this chem set
this sceptic
is an
explosive
mix

4.
pouring syrup
in a sieve
is a sceptic's
trips

content
slowly
seeps
a
w
a
y

5.
geiger counter
decaying
there in a
corner
with a half life

you
do

6.
you flutter
in and
pass out

a moment then
a moment then
 then
a moment then

you make
me feel...

hole/whole

7.
the DJ breaks in
with a tune
out of the past

faces on a camp
moments in a trip

the DJ breaks in

faces on
moments in this trip

8.
sitting back
drinking
kahlua and milk

and laughing
laughing

TV was never so
we play IT out

9.
feeling old
before
memories

a scent of
panic about
hollowness

10.
what was our
generation

a bird
tugs at a leaf
which tumbles

d

o

it starts w
on another... n

it too,

t u b l s
 m e

11.

amber fluid
amber screen

thrash out
another tune

america anthem
 sandman
amber fluid
amber screen

12.

gum tree parade
pink on
blue overhead

have mercy,
little cloud
don't cry
 for me

take shelter
take home
this sunset...

PUNK

What are those dark green eyes hiding?
What thoughts are you not confiding?
Is it possible that there may well be
overlapping views that we can't see?

Your culture, your world view,
No doubt governs most things you do,
Your focus and raw intensity
resonates so much the same in me.

Leather jacket, stern face,
Banished beauty, black mascara, black lace,
Doc Martins laced complete,
There will be just victory, no defeat.

You speak your piece without pretence,
Your face screams sincere indifference,
Alone you stand in that heavy gown,
Quite undaunted, you catch my eye and
stare me down.

PRODUCER

web of thought
habitat of stone
white ware bought
a card on the phone

calling the action
a need in me
consumer conviction
this dream is for free.

a thought in form
an item to sell
those chips feel warm
and that screen sits well

MEMORIES_2

Sometimes you
 fill right up
a little music
another cue

arms outstretched
i fall out
of myself
 reaching
 clutching for you
then you
 then you...

a little piece
breaks away

then you,
you fill right up
 again
with another thousand moments
of another time

now too,
break away

i sit and watch
pieces of my soul
break away,
vaporise in the
cool night air

i only wish,

then i tear out pieces of my
soul...

YET...

and yet,

it is hard
to feel empowered,
 with you
 so strong
 you,
 around us
 you grow,

your face,
 so very ugly,
your mouth,
 so very hungry,
your eyes,
 look empty look
you don't
your ears,
 hear nothing here
you don't
 your mind,

/
pre-set
your destiny
and mine are;

and yet...

SHE

She takes it as she gets it,
Her pain is void of warning;
Her head is always hoping
That perfect love is somewhere dawning.
She cannot really face it,
To lose him would be much worse;
So she takes it as he gives it
It's her self-defeating curse.

He knows exactly where he's standing,
In a place he can't deny;
He takes her or he leaves her,
The worst she'll do is cry.
He wonders why she gives him
So much space to go and play;
He knows he's become an asshole,
But she lets him anyway.

WE

(dedicated
to you and i

WE are the
arrogant, inconsiderate
and selfish
scum bags
who have consumed,

blindly and thoughtlessly

(we are,

you and i

CLOUD

Pachabel plays our tune
you call down to me
i hear you whisper
you talk about shelter
you talk about cover
you talk about
you talk
you
but i only exist
in your shadow

soon we /
 we
 melt away...

STREAM

last obligation
trying to
face
cold concrete transit
re-run white line video
and memory management

CREATED...

echoes across the
canyons of Mount
Saint Helen...

media-ted messages
coming to you live
coming to you

i listen to the vision
i sense the logic
i am
taken by the ride,
i watch you
coming

/ they will think
us idiots
in 50 years
/

and yet,

sadly

so many

don't

seem

to

give

a

rats

fossil...

you were created too.

MOMENTARILY,

stranded in this desert
with a broken down car,
rip off one of the doors
doors to reality hoping
to wind down a window
when the heat comes down

stumble a few

/

momentarily

then toss
away the
encumbrance

another salient
another vision
another door
with another
window to...

/

momentarily,

then,

and then
another salient
another...

BREAK

(down

waiting in the dark
 for a continent to shift
wandering through the heart
 we all feel a little smiffed

a dream in a bottle
 a vision in space
you look past the wattle
 and spit in their face

poke at the stranger
 knit up a whole
take on his wager
 and empty your bowl

you reach out to grasp
 you renew your vows
you reach out to clasp
 what hope what allows

you look now to leave us
and you smile a farewell
there's a silence between us
only fate can foretell

GIFT

Gandhi speaks softly to
to me in the night

about marriage about
friendship and respect

your words, your wisdom
reach out like a limb

i take from you
you take and return

to hear me, is to know
for me, to know you too

a small gift each
each a thought

a moment;
(if you will...)

Gandhi speaks softly too
you too, to me in the night

SOMETHING

something drains
something wears
 stripped and exposed
 nobody cares

something done
something said
 eating at you
 gumption bled

something dreamt
something seen
 fully internalised
 emotive guillotine

something sought
something vague
 testing waters
 contact made

something passed
something fed
 initial thoughts
 roll round our head

something given
something more
 i give you trust
 you look in awe

something moves
something fears
 the pain comes in
 you bathe in tears

something gives
something flows
 it all pours out of you
 out it goes

something breaks
something clears
 only now...
 we face your fears

something discussed
something exposed
 clarity finds a footing
 some errors disposed

something shared
something touched
 we give of each other
 we give of our trust

something done
something said
something dreamt
something seen
something sought
something passed

something

STILL

by now i'd hoped you would have shown
but the mystery still sits fully grown
somewhere, somehow i've missed the plot
i wander aimlessly, wading thru the rot

the meaning of it still eludes me
and i still let it really bother me
i wonder where i'm gonna be
years hence,

will some vision finally
dawn on me?

MELTING

i cannot place the thing
 in you
i reach for,
 almost topple
your ghost,
 your presence,

whispers to me

THAT'S

dew droplet
glistens,

had to be
 / there momentarily
then
slowly
 it
 fades away,
glory is
short lived
 / often the moment
 is missed

/

 the eye of
 the beholder
 was otherwise
 engaged...

/

not looking
or looking
not seeing

RAIN

clouding over,
struth,

you hammer down,
our roof,

welcome relief,
drought reproof,

soil moistened,
vegetative youth,

oh wet friend,
so fire proof,

come

d

o

w

n

on

us...

CONTENTMENT

he
has found
his contentment
his place
his comfort zone

their placement
of,
is not his
problem

he has his...

while
i still
wander
blindly

NOTE

you have
plucked /
so special /
some
inner note

and
should i finally
identify this note,

i will
find you
here,

within me...

THESE

These 4 walls
resonate my cries
of terror
of joy
of thought

These 4 walls
encapsulate
my closure
my boundary
my futility

These 4 walls
confine my
inner desire
inner relief
inner space

These 4 walls
define
a room in an old pub
an escape from myself
a place to run and hide

or maybe,

a place
to focus

PAPER

it's been a while so
so white
 so empty
 so soft
so,

calling
staring back at me
i long to hold you
reach for you
recently you,
motion to me
 plead a little
crave a little

 i feel so
so

out of touch...

POINT

what's the

/

point

i start to take you on

on a wave -

i ride, falter and

fall into disrepair /

despair

what's the

/

point to loving well

reflective listening

is what i give to(o)

you speak of loving-kindness

i start to stagger and

war within goes ballistic

what's the
/
point to my one seat
where i've sat
already edgy, missed
the point
/ the seat

what's the
/
let me
train this puppy
chase this heal (ing
lose this point...

then get back to you...

BOUNDARIES

picture paint
a new line of thought
draws us carves
us
 / up to us

we
picture paint
our own lines of self
 / fate

(persona ego organism
 transpersonal unity

and then look out -->
 on you,

we picture paint
lines on you too, you
don't care,
you are one

we see need to
sculpt you, too
in two,

who's problem
too
/ two?

we
picture paint
you me
reality
may well have,
no boundary
/ boundaries...

TRUTH

truth may well be a name or label
truth may well be a description
truth may well be a definition
truth may well be an axiom
truth may well be a theorem
truth may well be a law
truth may well be a process of logic
truth may well be little more than this
truth may well be an illusion of human
 inspired /
 defined /
 imposed /
 mapped

boundaries
on an otherwise reality...

truth may well only be...

'that which a majority of
 well-informed people agree on.'

PRESENCE

you demand a pedestal
 constantly remind me
 of your presence...

out there,
they come and go
i watch them and then
 you

you watch me watch you
watch them watch you

you
this
my chaos...

then you
inside, come
out
i cover for
you,
again

WALK

stated words
 coded,
 or
 a moment for
thought

with truth
on shifting ground,
 i consider politics
 i consider philosophy
 i consider coding
 i consider talk-show tv
 i consider a walk
 i consider a poem / song

i opt for the walk
round
 / this block,
 has my number
 my step to(o)
 my moment
for thought

DIALOGUE

having read you through
twice now,
i come to accept that you will not be
offering me a quick fix...

i ought to mention that,
this is the baby that has
led me to you...

even as i write
i am unsure of my internal dialogue
wanting to finalise
the form that this poetic dialogue
will take...

does it need to be?
sure it does!
sure it doesn't!
sure!?

POINT_2

what's the...
what's
the

point of my existence
 of my being

i see NO point
so
i see NO path
and so,
i sit and mark time...

/

what's the point?

i wonder,
the point of this conflict?

MELANCHOLY

The paper sits so white so empty staring up,
the road, this moonlit moment is black -
asphalt stretching out. Faces filter in, filter
out; your face, filters in, filters out. They all,
you all take much more than they, and you,
give - Melancholy beds down for the night.

Church bell chimes, distant and daunting,
an auditory illusion, a reflex to, then lonely
and desolate. Maybe you would have said:
“Yes”, maybe you would have reflected white
- this moonlit page reflects back this
thought.

“Yes” rolls around the floor, hops up and
dances for a moment. Like a spirit, a ghost,
it is empty, transparent, without body and
love. It taunts me, laughs a little, pulls a
face and then smugly rolls back and slowly
melts into the carpet.

You begin to crawl out from within - starting as a huge abdominal knot, scratching and clawing up into my chest cavity - empty of heart - well up in my wind tunnel, rush up through my taut vocals, (though i fail to hear you cry me out) and pour out onto my cheeks. Like you, you're gone; again you have purged yourself.

This paper sits so white, so empty, so wet, so clear, now. I look down at my reflection and ask it why. I look up at me and shrug with heavy shoulders. One of me flings the folder across the room. This moonlit moment, so black, so ash-felt, so faceless, so filtered, beds down with Melancholy for the night.

METAPHOR

this song has no words
no expression
emotively explosive
but
without word

this program has no syntax
no code
full top-down design
but
without syntax

her toy truck
has no wheels
no direction
a load to deliver
but
without wheels

these metaphors provide no contact
no life, no being
just are
but
without contact,

no metaphor
no poem

FOR

FOR Each_Of_Those_Moments_When
 Just hold that thought, parse that code;
 Equate each emotive with a stanza;
 Find a format, Set the mode;
FOR Every_Stanza
 Lay down the score;
 Write out the lines, and then
END FOR
IF a thought shows clarity
 Then let it flow and take a whiff;
 Hold that line, document, and then
END IF
Debug the code, compile and run;
Take This_Moment_When and –
 set restore;
We have this code, we have this poem;
All's needed now is a last
END FOR.

DISK

FOR THE_DRIVE_NOW_READY

Insert the disk, hard cased and stiff;
Slide in past the flap, click in;
Read in the image, format in TIFF;
While the drive whirrs so slightly
And the head is in a spin;
The magnetism's rising;
The drive is genuine
For Play brings up the floppy
Its format was surely done;
Once 5¼ inch high density;
Execution was swiftly run;
Tension builds within the drive;
As the software reads and writes;
The data load moves in and out;
Its interface unites;

```
IF the disk is nearly full
    The best is to unload;
    The bits, they can be copied;
    The secret's in the code;
    The drive light slowly dims;
    The disk slips out the door;
    Its data has been transferred;
    It's time to end, it's time to call
END IF
END WHILE
END FOR.
```

FACADE

FOR the dreams that come and go
another block is mortared into place;
the facia is painted over;
while the hole fills up with space;
IF the ride leaves out the thrill
the block comes out a little grey;
IF the ride gives up a spill
the hunter ends up the prey;
WHILE focus lifts its line
some end seems worth the cost;
the optimist takes to the street;
not seeing what's been lost;
the greys they come and go;
the blocks build up their walls;
the vision gets a little stilted;
as life's dusk slowly falls.
END FOR.

PSEUDO_POET

FOR ALL the subjects present at the door
the pen delivers them in ink;
another thought, another line
another argument ready to link;
the pseudo poet dabbles
in a little pseudo code;
lines of little consequence
logically laid out in this mode;
WHILE the ink is busy drying
the code is on the street;
calling its next pro compiler
let's c++ the pseudo poetry suite;
the lines can have their moments
a reflection may be the score;
but at the end of every sequence
there waits a sweet everlasting
END FOR.

SOMEWHERE

somewhere
sometime

poetry changed from
this
to code

more structured
more demanding

more frustrating

have i
allowed myself
to become
distracted?

with one?
or the other?

THANK-YOU...

for
time for coffee
a touch of heart
feathered pillows
this space
 / this place
temperament filtered scratchings
purple flowers
choice
creative insight
well-tuned guitars

for the ability to say...

Thank You...

(let me leave you
 your space
 / your place
for you
 your ability to
 add to...
)

PASSION

words and music
passing through
my heart

tugging at
/
my obligation now
was once my passion

II

words and music
suffer this voice
suffer this mediocrity

watching you pour out
line after line
hit after hit
fuels my envy
unchallenged
passion for

III

words and music
oh pity me...

purging me
sweet charity

build up the walls
paint them however /
whatever you
think /
boarded up
painted black
along with
passion

IV

words and music
and the colour
of glamour

worker bees
promoting
a queen

is not
if not...

worker bees

with
passion,
without glamour

V

words and music
are not about bees

may not need
words,

or
music.

just
passion

OPENING

...ceremony

Olympic torch

watching the world
watching

the world coming together

in a
moment of
global peace

a nation
welcoming the world

/ in grandeur

the world
coming
together
in

peace...

Thank you China.

SAND

...castles

glistening in the sun,
from loving hands,
great form,
great promise,
great presence,

but then,

a great big wave...

OR

with each sand castle built,
with each big wave,
with presence
and determination,

is this the end?
[is it] of the sand castle
or
[is it]
of what
we have
taken
from
it?

MUSIC

Pavlov's Dog...

music
to
write
poetry
to

/

i could hide in
this room for
weeks

books full of knowledge
blank pages calling
and
Pavlov's Dog...

music
to
write
poetry
to...

PERSEVERANCE

P utting in the time
E xperiencing the emotional reactions
R eviewing the events
S ifting through the evidence
E nunciating the facts
V aluing the input of others
E liciting the underlying issues
R atifying the assumptions and logical
conclusions
A ccepting the realities and finding a
peace
N egotiating better options and approaches
C larifying new pathways
E volving into a more enlightened person

SUBSIDE

the ritual of being on-call
grinds grooves

/ it's then

it's hard

/ to take a moment
out;

listening to the rain on
the tin roof

letting the endless hammering
subside, (head space jamming)
if only for a moment

some guilt

some expectation

some latent drive

/ un-met

is given permission

to slow

/ subside

to wash out with the rain...

REFLECTION

/ or not

i	i
can	can
see	see
you	me

maybe	maybe
i	i
don't	only
really	really
see	see
you	me

i
think
therefore
only
i
am

i
am;
selfish

YET

are we
sitting
waiting to die
waiting /
 fearing
 the eternal answer

curious

do we
look back
 with contentment /
 acceptance /

do we
look forward
 with purpose /
 focus

in the face
of waiting

do we...

can we...

are we...

must we

ask

‘are we there yet?’

LIST

too many kangaroos
in the top paddock
over-whelmed
underwhelmed
hopping in
hopping out
not
hopping
at

all that is needed
is
a quiet spot
a coffee
and
a
list

ATTRACTION

Contravening balance
/ law of

the law of attraction
is only one end
of a continuum

not everyone,
war torn
bush fired
flooded

attracted
their
collective
fate

sometimes things
just happen...

/

attraction
or not

EXPERIENCE

a photo
a poem
an image

is a filtered
experience...

in the quietness
of mind
is the
real thing

full
complete
experience
of

if only...

FRAMEWORK

F reedom within structure
R ights within boundaries
A lgorithms within modules
M elody within genre
E nterprise within community
W hat
O ur
R eality
K nows and allows

/
sets
our

F antasy within reason
R ecollection within memory
A ppetite within availability
M ission within vision
E ndings within capacity
W ith
O ur
R each
K nowing its frame
of work required

LETTING

sometimes
the get-up-and-go
is
gone.

sleeping in,
listening to the rain,
(or wind,

finding peace
from guilt over commitment

;
surrendering the
moment

just
letting go