

Deakin University

A764 Master of Arts Writing and Literature

ALL727 - Sex, the Body and American Poetry

Tutor/Lecturer – Dr. Eva Birch

Summative Assessment 2 – 1500 Words

Due: 8pm AEST Friday 16th September 2022

Creative Portfolio 750 Words (813) - “Last Journey” (the body)

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CREATIVE PORTFOLIO: LAST JOURNEY

On that morning of our reckoning
potential dawned and with it, a silent harbinger
we, of the complicit unknowing
gathered up the vestiges of our conjoined lives
and headed into the unpredictable

the journey before us, an unknown entity
a long meandering into the distant north
a diagnosis undetermined
anywhere but home in the tendrils of your Pain
anywhere but there in the dissonance of our being

that cerulean sky morning we parked
under the airport flight path
the propulsion of massive phalli roaring above us
certain of their earthbound destination
whilst we teetered on the precipice of Uncertainty

insignificant dots on a huge spinning orb We were
accompanied by the wingspan of existence
you the pill swallower, stoic in denial
me the pill giver, in empathic servitude to your Pain
the oppressive shadow of Sati travelled with us

released from the city's outskirts

a fleeting bright freedom materialised Though

the corporeal Monster remained inward bound

that apoptotic insidious invasive schemer!

it lingered angry, ravenous, and burgeoning

the Fools' journey: innocent and uninitiated

as the predator prodded at our darkest fears

angst so easily masked by external focus

the mundane giving weak structure to chaos

hope was always an appealing alternative

that day, months before at Walkerville

the sun brilliant, the sky a blue eternity

the Prom across the glistening sea like a mystical Narnia

we stood on the shore as the dolphins played

I knew then That moment was the pinnacle

winding up the Hume past blink of an eye towns

the stroboscopic effect of tree shadows

blinding us. Running blind and scared We were

with truth lurking below awareness

like a big sleepy cod just under the Murray's surface

we sat on the river's broad grassy bank Transfixed
ate boiled eggs and drank warm black tea
summoned talk of concepts and possibilities
the waterway, muddied, deep and still
your mesmerising Bachelard just out of reach

The Poetics of Reverie, a favourite book
of yours Longing for saccharine release, you clung
to intellectual rumination and magical interpretation
Shamans, cloud mountains, sun bears and fruit doves
equanimity slowly slipping from your grasp

when you first appeared at my meditation doorstep
in deep wintertime Plain, unassuming, and polite
nothing was worth writing home about
when did our transcendent shift occur? the unleashing?
you envisaged Durga as incarnate and I became the invincible She

Durga your warrior woman, slaying the buffalo demon
She, the courageous protector, eliminating suffering
Goddess Sati of marital felicity and longevity
She who self-immolates atop the beloved's funeral pyre
your Goddess-head was no match for the Monster

we rejoiced in our Theravadin fantasy
we exalted in the exotic and revelled in the ecstatic
of which you promised much but failed to give
the dreamer, the visionary, the procrastinator
Peter, were you my broken Buddha?

over the border, a rapid change of country and mood
the rusty landscape, flatter, drier and expansive
we were contemplative, wistful, restless Disturbed
Kali the ferocious She wanted to celebrate life
She wanted your hand jammed in her crotch

lured by our temporary destination
the bosom of Byron, my lush heartland, my muse
Bundjalung Nation Wollumbin Majestic great initiator
spiritual learning, soul harmonisation, sacred resolution
you had followed willingly but you were beyond healing

every day of our journey spent mashing up the bitter potions
a cornucopia of tablets and capsules
to mitigate your phagophobia and cure your reluctance
at seeing reality as it was
the Monster said thank you

through Elysian fields of verdant green lucerne
we rode a bitumen graveyard on which carnivores
fought over fresh roadkill. The valley of the dead
where soon your parched bones would lie scattered
your spirit merging with the vast cosmic nothingness

the unhealable and the disciple heading home to the inescapable
terrain, occasional rise of conversation Torment
farmers, eagles, and harvests punctuated our thoughts
Tocumwal, the last bastion A luscious yellow vanilla slice
a sweet pill swallowed amid the bitterness of dwindling pleasures

two days before you took your leave
you asked, eyes pleading, '*what more can be done?*'
what does one say, when all hope has faded?
only the Truth Nothing more could be done
faithful Durga could not slay your demon

the existential battle slipped from grasp
resignation, delirium, and anguish served on a
platter of tramadol, fentanyl, and morphine
the Monster as victor, master of fate
a cutless severing sentient bondage

the journey, a monumental adventure
your death bed, a vibrant remote Malayan jungle
where chanting Temoq Shamans whisked away disease spirits
and drummed throughout the night to cure illness
your familiars were hovering, but you were unreachable

Buddhist monks whispered you through the bardos
your shrouded body lying white in rigor mortis
that morning the clouds were streaked deep verdant orange
perched in lemon scented gums, a cacophony of grass parrots rejoiced
all pervasive Samsara, a poignant reminder of impermanence