

# Free State II



**Fiction, Essays, Reportage.**

**Issue Two**

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## Contents

- |            |  |                 |
|------------|--|-----------------|
| <b>4.</b>  | <b>The Dark</b>  | Martha Dahl     |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>The Infinitesimal Archive</b>   | Tim Parker      |
| <b>17.</b> | <b>Review - 'How to be a Woman'</b>  | Hannah Renowden |
| <b>20.</b> | <b>Sport</b>   | Mira Knoche     |
| <b>23.</b> | <b>Lead Skin</b>   | Steph Shiels    |
| <b>31.</b> | <b>One Man's Welkin Is Another Man's Empyrean:<br/>Noctilucent Clouds and the Great Beyond</b> | Tim Parker      |

## The Dark

by Martha Dahl

He lands. Folds his wings. The leaf yields, sways slightly under his weight. The one watching has resigned at her attempts at describing the landscape of which the bumblebee is only a buzzing dot. There's only failed sketches. She must lack the required zest, or zeal, or possibly the talent, of the successful lot. There's soft-brome and tufted hair grass. There's meadow buttercups, a toad here and there, traces of dogs having leapt through the weeds. Gnats, wasps, bumblebees and flies whizzing about. That's about all there is on her little page. She that dreamed of doing justice to every little beast and bastard on the plain, with her very own reserve of words, including even the barely visible ones, not only with scrupulous precision, but with some sort of appreciation of their struggle and, if she would find any, its grace. Muscles at work. Will. It all escapes her, fades when inked to paper, whizzes on. On its own. Indifferent to her pen.

But what if, what if she tried to describe the dark? Only a few inches down rules the moist and most necessary dark. If one were to describe this, with all its roots, worms and logic, then readers must surely be able to imagine all that springs from this – all that pours out and becomes the plain. She comes to think of Ponge who stressed the existence of the tree kingdoms in one handful of dirt. The past, former weed, flowers, leaves, toads, and birds broken down and transformed into the premise for the second, the future, which is constantly ensnaring the same handful of dirt. Yet it's the third she wants to pin down, the one that makes her sigh – in piety – but also despondency. The present, where she is supposed to live. Every second escaping her, its path so narrow, so demanding, that most

of the time she's lying in one of the ditches, past or future, only dreaming about walking that narrow road.

She turns and heads home. Counts days till she's leaving. Nudges a stone at the roadside, gives it a kick. Picks one up, round as a football, but smaller than a tennis ball. She juggles it, realises with pride that she's improved, and when she gets ready to kick it's without fear of the pain, which makes her unable to hold back her smile as she gives the stone enough force to make an elegant leap through the air, rays of pain streaming from her foot, yet her chest joyfully expanding.

The stone strikes the neighbour's car. Sets off an awful alarm. She counts three seconds before the owner appears between the curtains. At first his expression is one of exaggerated dismay. Then he opens the door to his veranda, steps out, and his expression seems to solidify in the most self-righteous indignation. His prompt reaction impresses her though; with only a few steps and a leap worthy of a ballet dancer he has reached the lawn. So much for the stairs he's been working on all of May. She turns and heads home, tries to pretend what happened is none of her business. But before she knows it he has already grabbed her arm and made her speed up. He knows her family well enough to do as he pleases, he wouldn't have dared doing this to anyone. She listens in silence to his somewhat incoherent harangue. Wonders whether it could be compared to Thomas Bernhard's style, but hey, who am I kidding, she says to herself, realising how vastly inferior her neighbour is to the Austrian (then apologising to Bernhard for thinking of him as Austrian, he wouldn't have liked that, but then, that's where he happened to be born). Her neighbour rings the bell to her family's door, as if she weren't licensed to open it. Unfortunately, they're all home, all appearing to be quite surprised at their daughter and sister's behaviour towards their neighbour's property. She finds it perverse,

really, the amount of love for the impeccability of a vehicle. Despite... she stops herself – as there is really no need to develop that line of thought right now. Instead she looks up, faces her family, and finds some comfort in a hint of a smile in her mother's face, who has never been able to take this particular neighbour very seriously. "We can't live with blablabla... We have to find..." WE, WE, WE. The man loves to say "WE" which is just a poorly disguised "I". As always, his words fail, being too thin a varnish to make his will beautiful, acceptable – to her at least.

And serious talk is brewing, anyhow. Talk that will most certainly wound and annoy. She can hear most awful words coming from her father. "Worried. She *must* learn to acknowledge *values*." As he goes to the toilet while her mother prepares tea in the kitchen she sneaks down the stairs and escapes through a cellar door facing the plain where her thoughts can run freely again, if only for a little while.

## II

It has occurred to her, that the prayer of the Pentecostals, when they babble, they call it the gift of tongue, must be the strangest thing occurring in her country. Any reasonable person would regard them as nutters. Yet, so would she, if she were to allow the eyes of the world to read what's on her mind. She allows for reason to abandon her all the time, letting word, sounds, and ink flow freely. Anxiety and will spreading out into expressions she would rather not be held responsible for. She has even been keeping a particular notebook for that purpose; there are no elegant sentences, perhaps apart from the old prayers learned and scribbled down, there's no attempt at being smarter than those around her. But is it interesting? Would she ever want to read someone else's private therapeutic rants?

Well, yes she would, if there's some sort of music there, which there often is in rants. Still, she decides to get rid of that book.

It's past twelve, but June, and the night is cool, the dark just a thin veil. Not a night to be taken seriously, she thinks, raising her chin. Yet the wet grass contradicts her, clutching her calves, reminding her body that it belongs down here, among the wingless, and that it is, after all, night. She keeps away from the road, as they must be out looking for her. She can't imagine them giving up on her too easily. She should have been a bumblebee, or a worm. There can't possibly be a creature on this plain so haunted, so chased by its origins as her. Having spotted her parents she speeds up, starts running and doesn't stop before she reaches the wood. When she looks back they have disappeared again. The night's noises distract her attention away from them right away, as there's not a second's silence, but chirring, chirping, whirring. Most of it hidden most of the time. For a moment it sounds a bit like a mumbling, a whisper, a prayer. Or perhaps more a happy buzzing, a mere celebration of nothing in particular.

She jumps as the pale face of her mother appears between the foliage, shouting her name. Her mother's look flickers, she blinks away a few tears, and for a brief second her lashes look like helpless little wings. She should perhaps come out, stand up, make herself visible – yet that would mean betraying herself – she remains silent – observes the woman who has laid an arm around a birch trunk, who rests her head against a branch, lips moving, perhaps she's praying. A bat descends from the crown of the tree, scares the grown woman away. She can hear her father's voice too, calling for her. She lets them continue their search – turns her attention to the ground. Next to her feet is a nymph, a light green creature on its way to becoming a full-grown insect. It would've awoken aversion at home. She lies down to give it a good, long look. Stares

until it starts growing, until its legs grow  
sturdy and its eyes enormous. Then it jumps.

# **The Infinitesimal Archive**

by Tim Parker



‘A new world’

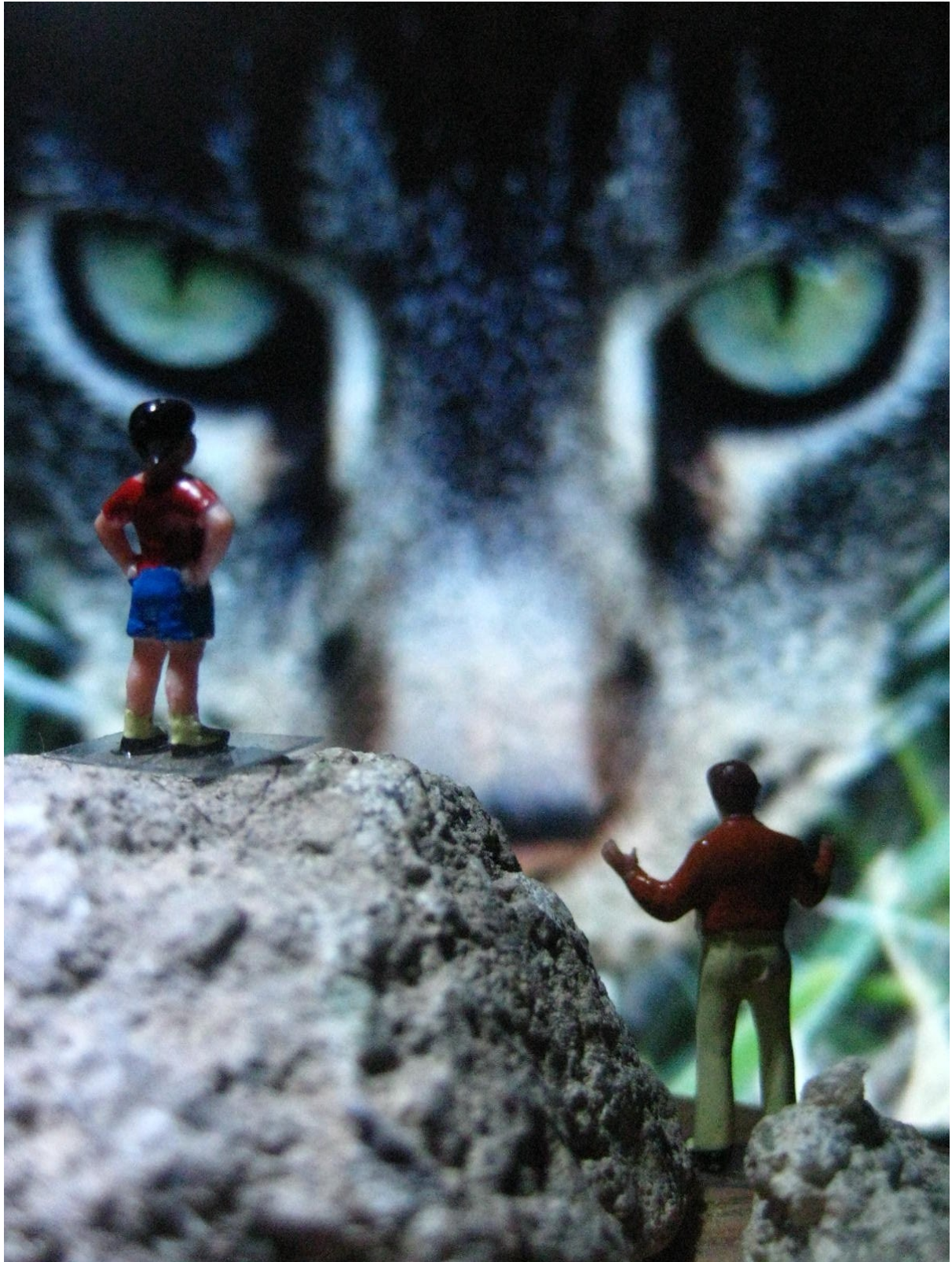


‘Aurora in a Teacup’



‘Empire of the ants’





‘Big Cat’



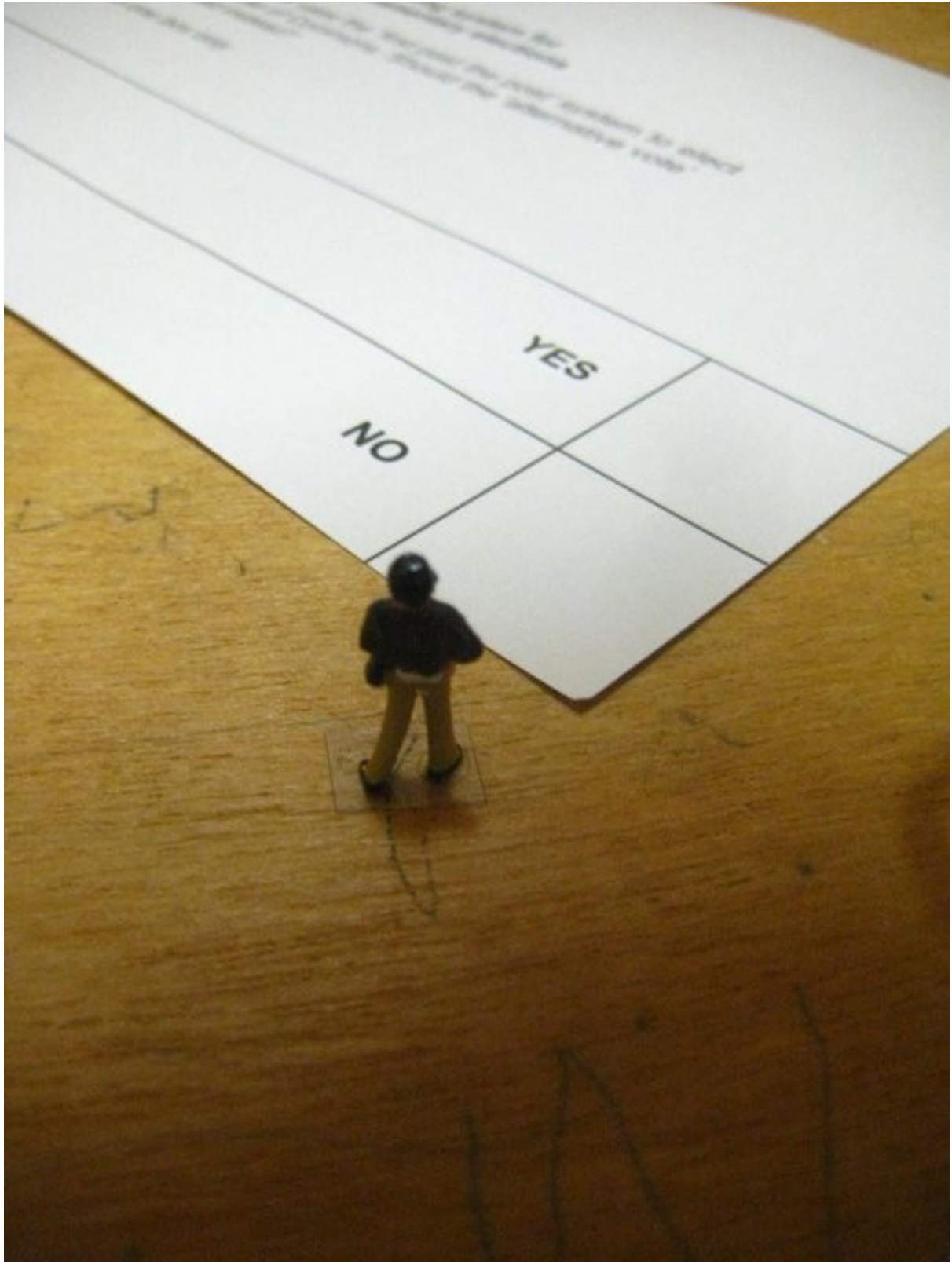
‘Debris Field’



‘Deer in a sun-dappled field’



‘Gagarin and the modern supermarket’



‘Referendum’



‘Shyness can stop you’



‘The ultimate fairground ride’



‘To your good health’



**How to be a Woman by Caitlin Moran (Ebury Press, 320pp)**

Review by Hannah Renowden

Last year I was invited to attend a feminist meeting for a new group being set up at my local university. Among the other invitees were fellow colleagues of the woman who had arranged it. We were all genuinely excited about it and immensely proud of our friend, who had set up an organisation at a very distinguished university that should, in all honesty, already have had one. Our workplace was abuzz with chat about it and we all felt like finally we had somewhere to go to get a lot of things off our very restricted chests.

My personal little feminist bubble was popped though by a great, patriarchal, needle-wielding male colleague. Upon overhearing some chatter about the night, he sidled up to me and asked, through the most sarcastic and mocking face his muscles could muster: “You’re not going to *that* thing are you?!”

I’m not sure what part of female empowerment he thought I may have been against, but clearly he thought I wasn’t the sort of person who would lower herself to such a thing as “feminism.” I shouldn’t have let his attitude bother me; this was after all the same man who said “I wish I was Don Draper”, and so his opinion of women isn’t exactly the most up to date. But it did bother me. It made me supremely angry.

For him, and for many men (and sadly some women too), the job of feminism has been done. It has achieved its aim and can therefore shuffle off to the mid-1960s where it belongs. To carry on participating in it is seen as pointless and laughable and comes with a whole truck-load of clichés

and stereotypes. This particularly narrow tick list of women’s lib goes:

Job? Check.

Ability to wear what you want? More or less... Check.

The right to not be beaten up or murdered? Check.

Everything else, like equal pay, like not being sexually demeaned or being represented fairly, are all things that aren’t deemed that important. Or, in fact, are things that would make life as a man not quite as brilliant. Because it’s true that with all those things in place men lose the title of bread winner, stop being able to view choke porn, or make jokes about everything women do. It seems that for some people feminism is still a term to be ridiculed, still a movement that induces severe eye rolling, and the tendency to inflict a form of Tourette’s which leaves the sufferer unable to say anything other than: “LEZZER” “DUNGAREES” “BALL BREAKER” or “MAN HATER”. Women, according to some, have reached the glass ceiling and can now happily float back down content with the knowledge that they made it. But we aren’t happy; that ceiling is becoming ever more greasy and smeared with our desperate fingerprints, as we pad away at all the other things we justifiably want. We reach out to the idea of our teenage boys growing up knowing that women have pubic hair and don’t routinely press their breasts into each other of an afternoon. We grab at our daughters aspiring to being more than a glamorous sex kitten, always on the purr, ready for her man to come home. We, for ourselves, would like to feel, hold and never let go of the ability to be anything we can dream up, be as bush-tastic as we like and still remain a valid member of society who can stand up for our gender without being mocked.

The timing then of Caitlin Moran's book "How to Be a Woman" couldn't be more perfect. She has come bounding onto the scene with a copy in each hand, ready to defibrillate the life into Feminism. As a whole generation of women clutch their teenage daughters to their chests in a bid to save their budding sexuality from the vulturous hands of today's society, Moran has come to the rescue like a two tone-headed superhero.

Moran's main weapon is humour and she wields it well. There are enough serious, chin scratching tomes available on the subject, most of which are to blame for the negative image feminism has gained over the years. Tweedy, academic women have peered over their glasses at us, prattling on about how bad men are and how the world would be a supremely peaceful entity if it was totally run by women, flourishing, successful and lusted over by aliens; all the kinds of codswallop that men have been spouting about women since they dragged us about by our hair. By being funny Moran is executing a two pronged attack; she gets her points across extremely well by demonstrating that, contrary to many opinions, women can actually be funny. They can laugh, scoff and swear about everything too, even really serious stuff. This makes her book the perfect entry point to any woman who feels the same confusion I did about such things as pole dancing – it's totally gross, but everyone seems suddenly okay with it, so am I a total prude who's completely out of touch?

Moran may not be seen as a revolutionary, like Kate Millet or Germain Greer. She hasn't come up with any Nobel Prize-winning ideas, nor is she really saying anything new. But what she does say applies firmly and resolutely to the 21st century and was in desperate need of being reiterated. It comes from a place that spawned the likes of Jenny Éclair and Jo Brand, a place where humour and not suffocating discourse is used

to subtly change peoples' minds about the status of women in the world. Her book is as unacademic as you can get; in fact her publisher will have you rooting around in the 'humour' section of your local bookshop for it. "How to Be A Woman" is not a dry read like the countless titles that preceded it, and although Moran may not be raising any feminist stakes, her book is replete with reasons why past arguments are still painfully valid and need a little life forced into them.

As Moran herself points out, feminism has become the kind of dusty "intellectual" issue that only "feminist academics" would find of any interest "at 11pm on BBC4". It has become so rooted in theory, stereotypes and, more importantly, the past, that it has been left to fester away on bookshop shelves amongst titles on the menopause. Moran goes on to say that "feminism is too important to only be discussed by academics". Her book therefore takes more from the listings for Sky Living than BBC4. This may seem a bit trite and flippant, but it works brilliantly. This is the audience that needs a nudge.

In order to get feminism listened to in an age where every other young woman is vajazzling the life out of herself, taking pole dancing lessons or aspiring to win Big Brother, one more judgemental, condescending academic book wasn't going to break any boundaries. Moran has to speak directly to those women who have lost themselves to nearly a decade of Katie Price. It has to leap out of the shelves in the disguise of a self-help book promising skin care routines. There is a reason it is called "How to Be a Woman", and not "How to Be a Feminist."

Her book is filled with tired allusions to ill-fitting pants and bras, but by making those kind of obvious, Bridget Jones-type jokes Moran is going "see, you know this one! Feminism isn't that hard really" and

eases her readers into the rest of her argument by using the same “I think the same as you” approach. Moran is the girl down the pub, the poster girl of feminism. This is a TV and magazine dominated world, and if you don’t play up to the “sleb” bracket no one new will listen to your argument. In a world conducted through the pages of Heat magazine, where schools have Jaime Oliver and the Gurkhas have Joanna Lumley, Moran – young and naturally attractive – is the absolute perfect fit for the essential “face of” feminism.

The only issue I would take with her book, and some would say it was a pretty big issue, is that Moran bobs along in the second wave feminism rut of white, western, middle class womanhood. In order to make her book the chatty, light hearted, pop culture-referencing entry point to feminism that she wants it to be, she has focused her argument mainly on the trials of her own life. Her book has been criticised for being too self-centred and could almost have been called “How I Became Caitlin Moran.” There is no general worldview here, and although her experiences of sexism, marriage, motherhood and abortion are extremely relevant and at times painfully moving, some would argue that the work of feminism lies far away from the more prevalent monologues about periods, shaving and Lady Gaga.

That said her book is a brilliant and hysterical read and is the kind of title you will see clutched in many commuters' hands, something that cannot be said for other recent feminist publications. In a media- and image-obsessed world, reading the writings of a 35-year-old, western, Twitter generation humour columnist seems like the only conceivable way feminism was ever going to be listened to again. Moran pitches her book perfectly, and if her reign at the head of the book charts is anything to go by, feminism is, for the moment at least, in safe hands.

## **Sport**

**by Mira Knoche**

After a frustrating match of badminton in the windowless hall of a soulless 1980s cement block, or community sports centre, I decide to further dodge this moody Scottish bitch of a sun that always decides to come out when I'm in.

After the match, trainers squeak along the corridor's linoleum floor to the dressing rooms. There, my badminton partner and I part. I chirp a friendly goodbye and suppress a growl. He *always* wins. But while he goes off, feeling pleased with himself, I stick around to try out 'Powerpump', a fitness class that happens to be on every Wednesday. I'm a bit late and when I enter, the class is just starting. Fitness coach Irene is standing in full montage on her little stage. Her fake-tanned belly out, underneath a skimpy sports top, big weights in her hands and muscly arms, Irene reigns over her thirty odd, not half as eager-looking subjects who stand below her and her black lycra leggings.

'A'right hen,' she shouts into my direction, through a microphone attached to an angular face that expels rather bassy sounds. I wince. 'In ye com. Grab some weights and off ye go. Huh.'

She lifts her weights and her manly face twitches for a second into a scary grimace. Have I got a choice? I scurry into the room in my XXL Tintin t-shirt, grab the lightest weights around and take a 'lifting pole' – which is probably not what professional steroid-eaters would call it. I

feel magically transported to a place that would make Arnold Schwarzenegger hysterical with glee: Techno music starts blasting out of numerous speakers all over the room, everyone lifts their weights in sync and Irene starts singing along with her hoarse voice.

'Baby, gimme gimme all, the night...'

It is hilarious. But also extremely exhausting and after fifteen minutes, I have turned into a frantic sweaty meatball that hops along, lifting my heavy pole into every direction, doing various weight lifting choreographies. Whatever Irene shouts at us – it has to be done. After all, who'd want to mess with Irene? She could kill you with a single head-butt. Hence, I continue and somehow manage to keep to the group's movements in this odd ritual. The techno beat guides us all and reminds me of something. Another scene. A certain rhythm. Tuk tuk tukedy tuk...

The sun scorches if you hold out your hand. Unrevealing clothes are good for more than dignity. Holding the head scarf wrapped around my nose and mouth, I figure there aren't enough hands to also keep my ears shut. It's a noisy morning. Dry, hot, dusty as ever, and too many cars, cows, auto-rickshaws squeezing past each other, crawling along the motorway. Engines cackle an urban beat onto the tarmac, a noisy rebellion of what should be a demure background 'tap tap'. But this is hubbub, din, turmoil. Clinking, clonking, hooting, tooting. Things are going sluggishly. Being slightly late for my first yoga class will be

ok. There's an excitement to it, sitting in Delhi's traffic belly jam. A new and very privileged excitement and considering how little the driver's fare is... Maybe I should pay him double or at least some more? How pretentious either way. It'd still not be much for driving me all the way from Nizamuddin to the other end of the city. But maybe much for him? It's confusing. I feel immoral again and again being here. Not giving money, giving words to children. Grammar. The red numbers on the bashed metre box tick away while we're waiting, the driver and I.

After getting off the shack-fringed motorway, we cruise around various housing blocks. But ten minutes later, we're still lost, neither of us being familiar with this area of Delhi. White houses with walled-in gardens are swishing past and the potholes make us plump every now and then, but not as often as in Nizamuddin. Not as many piles of rubbish wave their clouds of decomposition at us from the roadside; and instead of women in burkas, we pass a girl in jeans and a designer t-shirt, with stylish sunglasses covering her eyes.

We buzz towards another tuk tuk driver who stands next to his vehicle, chatting to a mango wallah at a street corner. My driver tells him the street name and the other driver replies in three words, half lifting his hand into the direction from which we've just come. They part. No thank you, no shukriya, no good-bye, no you're welcome. Just information exchange. One hand washes the other. Karma sorts it out. How astonished these men would be about the British abundance of thank yous and sorrys. The sound of crickets is drowned out again by the whiz of the engine and then we

stop in front of a one-storey building, white, with a garden protected by a man-high wall.

'Achaa', says the driver and points at the red numbers. I hesitate, then give him ten rupees extra and still feel stingy. Of course he doesn't say thank you. He shakes his head from side to side in acknowledgement and drives off.

People are already lying on the floor with their eyes closed. A young wiry woman with glasses sits cross-legged on a mat at the other end of the room. A window front opens a view on the garden. I whisper 'Sorry', but the woman, the teacher, says nothing and beckons me to come in. She points at a free mat. I lie down and close my eyes, like the others. Back sinks into the floor. Two birds are chirping loudly in the garden and many others further away. I hear the woman next to me breathing and a warm breeze spirals down from the whooshing fans on the ceiling and touches my feet. Then the teacher gets up quietly and lights a match, perhaps to burn more incense? To light a candle? An unknown, spicy-sweet fragrance fills the room. I feel the yellow room walls while my eyes are closed. Images of the project school with giggling pupils in their orange khurtis pass by, my brother, the Northern Sea, the Taj Mahal, and Connaught Place. The driver with his ten extra rupees buzzes past, and a red rusty letter box, barely hanging on to the wall in one of the small lanes in Basti Nizamuddin, hangs in my mind. It holds a postcard and I wonder if it'll ever reach my mum.

Gong.

The teacher begins the class and everyone opens their eyes and sits up. There's thirteen of us, from the age of twenty to maybe sixty. We introduce ourselves, one after the other, and start our first exercise. Eye-ball training. After five minutes of looking left, right, up, and down, in circles clockwise and in circles anti-clockwise, I feel funny in the head. We stop. I try not to squint.

'So', says Aruni, our teacher. 'What do you feel now? What did we learn from this exercise?'

'My eyes hurt', says Chandika.

'That's ok', says Aruni.

Everyone starts laughing. Except Chandika. She's rubbing her eyes.

'So, Chandika. Pain will go away. But tell me, what did we learn from this exercise of moving our eyeballs?'

'That eyeballs can get sore?'

'Yes - that we can *feel* them. That they *are*. We focused our minds and we moved our eyes and became aware of our eyes. That we are bodies with eyes. Mind and body meet. With awareness comes care. Now we will learn a sequence of twelve postures, called sun salutation. We will learn each posture one by one.'

Towards the end of the class we go through the whole sequence. The whole class performs the twelve postures together, one by one, in a slow rhythm. Then I notice my arms are a bit sore. The beat has stopped.

The music's switched off and Irene starts clapping so full of enthusiasm, her eyes are almost bulging out of their sockets. 'Well done - the lot of ye', she shouts into her mic, 'keep fit and come back next week to yer Powerpump class, folks'. She athletically jumps off the stage, pulls off her microphone, which expels a loud crunch as she drops it onto the hifi, and leaves the room with a pink towel flicked over her muscly shoulders, waving a goodbye fist at us. Everyone disappears into the changing rooms.

I'm off, too. The Tintin t-shirt is soaked through and I've had enough sport for the day. Leaving the cement block behind after my shower, it starts raining. Ever so slightly, the drops beat a rhythm onto the tarmac.

Tuk tuk tukedy tuk...

Lead Skin

by Steph Shiels



















## One Man's Welkin Is Another Man's Empyrean: Noctilucent Clouds and the Great Beyond.

A short thought by Tim Parker.

It was already the next morning when we set foot in the back garden. The world was in the midst of twilight; few bright stars were out, competing with the velvet blue - Capella, Vega, Arcturus - but in the sultry Summer air, it wasn't the distant suns I wanted to point out, but the pearlescent filigree that graced the northern horizon: noctilucent clouds.



The bright silvery mass looked alien, but not utterly out of place in timeless serenity of the early morning sky, and my friends looked across the skyline with squint-eyed curiosity. So I explained what I knew about what they were seeing.

From the Latin for *night shining*, these clouds are the highest clouds visible - reflecting sunlight from the edge of space,

fifty miles up in the mesosphere. From what is known, they are a recent phenomenon, apparently unnoticed before 1885. How anyone could have not noted a description is puzzling, but after the titanic eruption of Krakatoa two years before, scientists were watching the skies much more closely.



Looking out at the eerie spectacle you get the feeling that what you're looking at is not just some wispy filaments of crazy cirrus over Scandinavia; you are looking at a reflection of something more *ethereal*. Ever seen the Northern lights? Same feeling. I remember back to early November 2004: three straight nights of them over Edinburgh at their most spectacular. There I was, hanging out of the window of my old flat, getting vertigo just by looking *up* at the great green sheets of light converging at infinity - like standing at the base of an eighty-mile high cathedral.



There's an old Norse legend that explains the *Aurora Borealis* as the Fires of Valhalla reflecting off the armour of the Valkyries as they carry the souls of the heroic dead to Odin's Great Hall. You get the sense that you can, if you are fortunate, just about catch a glance of the afterlife over the horizon, a rare glimpse of a bright eternity. Looking at these clouds close to the horizon is to me, more like that legend than the aurora; over that dark horizon lie not the countries of Scandinavia, but are the great North Lands of ancient myth; like Herodotus' Hyperborea placed there by Strabo and Ptolemy, or the luminous *Empyrean* of Dante so vividly brought to life by the illustrations of Gustave Doré - the dwelling place of the First Mover, of God. It's an idea of the numinous that interweaves with that geography of dreams that brings together so many places at once, real and imagined, an idea that finds from in so many beautiful words that are archaic and arcane: like *hyperuranion* - 'beyond heaven', or *welkin* - 'the upper air.'

Time seems to stand still when you watch them, these clouds on the edge of forever. There's not much water vapour, out there in

the mesosphere, a millionth as dry as the air above the Sahara. Most of it is torn into hydroxyl ions by the fierce radiation of solar ultraviolet, and what's left eventually forms ice on meteoroid dust so tiny that an electron microscope would be needed. So literally these clouds have their origin beyond heaven and the upper air, on the very relics of the creation of the world that would, were they more massive, streak through the air in the blink of an eye so that children could wish on them. We see them as we stand in the great shadow of the Earth, sunlight glancing off these evanescent wisps whilst the rest of the sky is dark save for the stars; the silver blue hue comes from the absorption of the reflected light by ozone. You can only see them from temperate latitudes and polar regions because of the tricky geometry of axial tilt and the long shadow of the world - even here, happenstance conspires to help or hinder your view.



My friends are getting restless, keen for a seat, to get back inside as whilst the air is balmy, it isn't that warm. Last looks are



given to the aerial phenomenon, and I am left alone, eyes still full of the angel's hair that hangs from the stars. A last glimpse to the otherworldly before I return to the hearth of human affairs.

## **Contributors**

**Martha Dahl** is a pseudonym.

**Coll Hamilton** is an artist and illustrator, based in Glasgow. His work can be seen on his website: [www.seefarenough.com](http://www.seefarenough.com)

**Mira Knoche** was brought up in Germany and has spent four brown years in Scotland. She loves the Glasgow accent, is still shy about saying 'aye,' and spends her time making coffees, selling books and pondering over Shiller.

**Tim Parker** is a visual artist working around Edinburgh. More of his work can be seen at <http://www.blipfoto.com/chancemedley> and <http://mirrenaudax.wordpress.com/>

**Hannah Renowden** graduated from Greenwich University in 2004 with a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and Media Writing. She writes about popular culture, fashion and other meaningful things at her blog, <http://hannahwritesstuff.wordpress.com> as well as for Lovesceneonline. She has also blogged for Glasgow-based [wowdewow.com](http://wowdewow.com), which she also helped edit. When not writing she works as a Children's Bookseller. Having spent most of her life pottering about in the south of England she now lives in Glasgow and is a bit cold.

**Steph Shiels** is an artist who lives in Glasgow. She graduated from the University of Dundee and has shown work in Poland and Germany as part of the 'Body Memory' exhibition.