

Tricia Dearborn

The Changes & Other Poems

✧THE CHANGES✧

Kissing Louise was a bell. Unlike
the chimes of the genteel drawing-room clock
it gave no warning before it struck.

It was more like the shock of the extra-early
morning alarm
on the day of the journey.

Or the sudden shrilling of a schoolroom bell,
calling me in
to a strange new lesson.

It rang sweet as a tardy dinner gong
summoning me to a meal
of scent and heat.

Resonated like a great church bell
calling the villagers over fields
to christenings, to benedictions.

My throat sang my body
swung my skin shone
and my old life shivered and fell from me

and lay like the sweat of the ringers in the tower.

☞EAT MY SECRETS☞¹

Once we have carried out
our parts of the bargain

my secrets will be
safe, in the dark

vault of your body.
You alone understand

how I've ached
for the slow caress

of digestion, craved
to be held within

another's cells.
You will pack me away

in plastic bags, against
the coming months,

against your own
peculiar hunger.

You will relish me.
What could be sweeter?

I want to be known.
This way

you can taste me
all the way to the bone.

↳MEMO↳

lunch break. pigeons scatter
before me, one swooping up

to pose regally
on top of the war memorial

I lie face down, forehead resting
on the backs of my hands

inhale the smell of buffalo grass
and earth, turn my head

sideways and consider
this version of a bird's eye view

back at my desk I see patterns,
hieroglyphics, a strange language

impressed on the skin
of my inner arms.

I'm sure I can read it

I'm sure it says: give up your day job

↳THE WAITING EARTH↳

I don't know the physics of how an aeroplane
stays up. Something to do with air pressure
above and below the wing.

It seems unlikely.

More than one psychic's predicted my happy old age
on the strength of a groove
that links heart-line to ring finger. Perhaps we owe
our continued altitude

to that mark on my palm. Fellow-travellers
riffle through magazines, watch the movie.
I'm glued to the window, freed from fear
by awe. Impossible

not to love the world seen from here.
As the plane turns to land, I hang in space
over a tilted wing, absorbing forested curves,
a river's sinuous silver.

If we held this course, spiralling down
to the waiting earth, this beauty would be here
till the moment we ploughed into it
and after.

Author Bio

Tricia Dearborn's two collections of poetry are *The Ringing World* (Puncher & Wattmann, 2012) and *Frankenstein's Bathtub* (Interactive Press, 2001). Her poetry has appeared in anthologies including *Australian Poetry Since 1788* (UNSW Press, 2011), *Out of the Box: Contemporary Australian Gay and Lesbian Poets* (Puncher & Wattmann, 2009), *The Best Australian Poems 2012 and 2010* (Black Inc.) and *The Best Australian Poetry 2008* (UQP), as well as in numerous literary journals. A featured reader at many events, including the Sydney Writers' Festival in 2012, Tricia has received several grants from the Australia Council's Literature Board, and was joint winner of the 2008 Poets Union Poetry Prize. She has degrees in biochemistry and arts, worked briefly in a research laboratory and now earns her living as a freelance editor. For more information, see:

<http://puncherandwattmann.com/books/book/the-ringing-world>.

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¹ In 2001, Armin Meiwes placed an ad on the Internet for a person willing 'to be slaughtered and then consumed'. Bernd Jürgen Brandes responded, and Meiwes killed and ate him as agreed. What he did not eat immediately, he stored in his freezer.