

A Wake

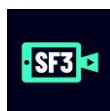
by Angela Smith

I'm overdressed in Melbourne black among a suntanned crowd of flirty dresses and short shorts.

'Spread a little love,' says the MC. 'Give the person next to you a hug.'

My cousin: hard drinker, failed property developer, his legacy a teenage bride and a half-built subdivision of salmon-pink mansions skirting a man-made lake.

We used to pedal Brisbane streets, chucking newspapers onto lawns at dawn, sneaking coins from Uncle John's till for our trouble. At dusk, Dad and Uncle John argued politics on the veranda, Auntie Joan refilling their glasses. Dad giving her a look he never gave Mum.



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