

All That Shudder

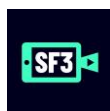
by Jill Jones

That year, I went back to the city alone, me and all my noisy solitude. I remember the way we'd gossip stories into night, along those roads, Glebe Point Road, Darlinghurst Road. Or walk to the harbour, listen to the wharves, what's left of them. Or get wasted in a loud pub to the south, towards Botany, where the planes almost drown.

Or I'm back at that corner where she said I should accept things as they are, rather than holding out something to be filled. But the glass has passed. I hear it smash to the gutter.

I remember helping another girl throw up, just here, in another century after a night nearby with booming walls, of all that survival in tune with a kiss, names and numbers on drink coasters, promises as opposed to meanings, too many women not watching you. So there I was, being gentle with this kid retching, as hellhounds scoured her insides. Night allows this tact and touch. Then she walked off. They always do.

I'm here again, listening as night's sirens shift away. Like a reprieve, like an unprepared morning. There's nothing butch in the sound of dawn, lost harmonies, or sleep.



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