



*Divers to Dive:*

*A Pandemic*

*Dream*

*Journal*

*#2*

*David Keenan*

*Eleni Avraam*

**Monday 6/4/20**

Today would have been Andrew Weatherall's 57<sup>th</sup> birthday. Here's what I read as a tribute at his funeral.

*Paradise syndrome, Andrew is telling me and Lee Brackstone, in the garden of the Hotel de la Cité, in Carcassonne, in September of 2019, on what was to be Andrew's last visit to his beloved Convenanza; Paradise syndrome is something Dave Stewart from The Eurythmics had, he says, and he laughs that laugh, and those eyes. It means that when things are going so amazing, you feel guilty that you don't deserve them at all. He gestures around the garden in the sweet sunshine, the blue sky, the walled city of Carcassonne below us, and beyond that, the village, and the mountains. I can honestly say, I've never suffered from that for a moment in my life, he says. The timing is perfect, and we all crack up.*

*Andrew saw Paradise on that day, and on many others, too. And many of us experienced it in his company, or in the crowd during one of his sets, or at home, in a trance, listening to one of his records. The physical fact of Andrew came through; his beautiful spirit, his artistry, his immaculate style, his rogue humour, his evangelical love of life, his grace, those eyes. And that's what we'll miss the most. His presence, the singular presence of Andrew Weatherall, and everything that those magic words bring to life, so much a part of London that he is still out there on Google Street View, and as much a part of all of the towns and scenes and circles he moved in, across the world, and blessed with his presence. In his generosity, he'll stay with all of us. Even as we struggle to let him go.*

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*Back in Paradise, I'm telling Andrew about what Allen Ginsberg said, at his friend Jack Kerouac's graveside, with everyone in tears. We're not crying for death, Allen said. These are not tears for death's victory. We're crying for life, for how beautiful and fleeting and yes, magical, life is.*

*I tell this to Andrew, in Paradise, long ago, now, and he turns to me and he says, yeah. That's all he says, yeah. Then he takes a massive hit from the pipe we're passing round and cracks up laughing all over again; and it's those eyes, that laughter.*

*I wish us all, the bravery to follow his example.*

### **Tuesday 7/4/20**

Listening to Rahsaan Roland Kirk, what an exuberant sound, so much joy, and suffering, transmuted in the cry of those horns, and the way he just stops and jabbbers or screams, the way he knots all those time signatures together, that mad sleight of hand he has, what was that term the rock critic Richard Meltzer came up with, "osmotic tongue pressure"? This, exactly that.

I am thinking of the metaphor of Petrocelli's wall. *Petrocelli*, a US TV series about a lawyer that ran in the mid-70s, had legendary title credits in our household. Everyone was obsessed by how Petrocelli was forever building this wall, in the titles, and that this wall never surmounted to anything, this wall that never progressed beyond its beginnings, forever, in the closed loop of the titles, and my dad would say, is he still at that wall, as soon as the credits rolled, and he would

kill himself laughing, and I was encouraged to like Petrocelli, because in my dad's best dreams I would grow up to be a lawyer, and so when I was young, with the example of my father, I would always answer that I wanted to be a lawyer, when asked what I wanted to be when I grew up. But my favourite thing was that wall. And it was my father's favourite thing too, despite all this talk of lawyers and careers. Building a wall. One brick after the other. Endlessly. Petrocelli's wall. I have never re-watched *Petrocelli*, so don't @ me if it doesn't exist.

### Wednesday 8/4/20

“all language/is untranslatable” Antonin Artaud writes.

“There is a mystery in my life,” Artaud writes to Marthe Robert, on his release from an insane asylum, in 1946, near the end of his life, “whose basis is that I was not born in Marseilles on September 4, 1896, but that I passed by there that day, coming from elsewhere, because in reality I was never born and in truth I cannot die. For medico-legal asses this is sheer madness, for some it is poetry, for me it is the truth just like a beefsteak with French fries or a glass of white wine at the counter across the street.”

Spent the day at my allotment, gardening, and reading. Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet* (again), Artaud's *Succubations & Incubations*, Lawrence's *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (again).

The tadpoles in the pond. Kale, and Pak choi, are harvestable. The quince tree is budding. Garlic coming up, broad beans that we overwintered. First buds on the fig, and plum tree. I passed by there this day, coming from elsewhere.

## Thursday 9/4/20

Hope is so often deferred, or given over to the future, as if only then, when we arrive at the idea of our destination, will we live or be redeemed or set free. The poet Edward Thomas, whose heart was stopped by a shell in the battle of Arras in April 1917, set out on a bicycle, in March of 1913, to find the first signs of spring as it came in across the southwest of England. And he found that there was spring in winter, and winter in spring. His *Collected Poems*, published posthumously, find hope renewed in the eternal renewal of time itself, in the magic of the passing moment, in which everything is forgiven, in the empty speech of birds, in a clot of dirt, fallen, between his fingers: “It is enough/To smell, to crumble the dark earth,/While the robin sings over again/Sad songs of Autumn mirth.”

## Friday 10/4/20

19:48 – 20:18

Good Friday. A white car pulls up. Five seagulls in airborne battle for what looks like a piece of pan bread. Two break off, defeated. The guttering of the white candle in the open window. A pair of binoculars. Someone is making an unappetising meal on the television across the way. I hate that guy that lives over there. A neon sign, reflected backwards, in a mirrored wardrobe. Carnations, barely budding. Basil growing in a pot on the window. The university library in the gloom, I can't stand that ugly building, almost as much as I despise the new art school that looks like a fucking Amazon warehouse. A wasp flies in the window, in trying to direct it back out, I stun it with my hand, but it recovers and flies off. The smell of marijuana, Amnesia Haze. A pencil sharpener purchased in France. A crystal on loan from Martine. A candle for Saint Mathurin of Larchant. A tarot deck by Rolf-Ulrich

Kaiser, *Sternemädchens Wahrsagespiel Tarot*. A business card for the long gone Mooncurser Records, out in City Island, out in the Bronx, what a place. Framed copy of International Harvester's *Sov Gott Rose-Marie*. It's fucking Rick Stein making the unappetising meal, I can't stand him, he has no charisma and a basic inability to genuinely connect with anyone. I hate almost all celebrity male chefs, except for Keith Floyd and Nigel Slater. Don't get me fucking started on Heston Blumenthal. The sound of the bell at Glasgow University, love to live in shot of bells. The blackbird has taken up its perch. Tonight feels like the 70s. Like 1973, or 75, that blackbird. That plastic bag in that tree is really starting to annoy me. I can hear the river. I fancy that I can hear the river and then I feel like what it feels like to hear the river. Somewhere in the distance, the drone of perfectly plucked strings. The orange glow of a streetlight seen through old bare trees. The same yappy dog that comes and yaps on the same walk every night at the same time. Well, at first it was 21:05, now it's 20:05 every night when he yaps, the carnaptious wee bastard, is the perfect description of an irritating dog. A blackbird and a gull in amazing duet, more Rahsaan Roland Kirk than Eric Dolphy. The light, leaving. The soft smirr of evening sky is swooning into night. The welcome home glow, isn't that what Kerouac calls lamplight? And when he sings to that smoke on the improvised soundtrack to *Pull My Daisy* it is too much. Up you go, little smoke, up you go, little smoke. Now bird song, and fire sounds. And peat, the smell of peat. Home. I have lived in this flat longer than I ever lived anywhere in my life now. This is truly my home. Yet I think of the house in Shettleston (which was called Tara), and the house in Airdrie (which was called Redcroft), as my 'real' homes, and as having lived there far longer than anywhere else. In Airdrie there were two trees named Tom and Elizabeth in the front garden. Is someone cutting grass, is someone mowing their lawn somewhere? It's the first fresh cut grass smell of the season and it is intoxicating. Me and my pal John Hogarty were really into dictionaries at one point and on the weekend we would phone each other up – he was in Glasgow, I was living in

London at the time – and we would think of mad words to look up in the dictionary and then laugh at the mad descriptions, and then look up the maddest word in the description and look through all of its descriptions, forever, on the phone, it was honestly the best fun, and then we got into meta-euphemising everything, like if someone had gone mad, as one of our friends just had, we would strain to come up with the most immediately understandable yet convolutedly coded description, and one of John's best was "he's mowing someone else's lawn". I still get a laugh from that the same way I get a laugh when I remember tripping with this asshole who, believe me, looked like the fucking Elephant Man, even when you weren't on drugs, and anyway but the story is we were all tripping and the Elephant Man walks into the room, and he is wearing jeans, no top, and with a brown leather jacket that is far too small for him, and he pulls open the jacket to reveal the words 'One Way' written on his chest in lipstick, and then he clenches his fists to show the words 'My Way' written on his knuckles. He then locked himself in his bedroom and we never saw him again for the rest of the trip. But we were crying with laughter for the best part of the night, after that. God, I hate Black Rebel Motorcycle Club. Home.

### **Saturday 11/4/20**

Dreamt of my old pal Trevor Manwaring, who died at the age of 50, all those years ago now. I met him through reading *The Wire*, where the company he worked for, Harmonia Mundi, ran an ad saying they were now distributing the legendary Japanese underground label PSF in the UK. I had been trying to track down any and all releases on PSF after reading a review of Fushitsusha's *Double Live*, which is still the greatest live album recorded by anyone anywhere. I called, we became pals, and when I moved to London a year or two later we got to hang out. I found a photograph of me and Trevor last week, which is what I

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guess triggered the dream, a photograph of the two of us hanging out on the Musica Transonic/Mainliner/Toho Sara triple headline tour that Trevor and I co-promoted and which was the first time any of those musicians played the UK. Trevor famously had two perfectly duplicated record collections, one at his flat and one at his mum's, in case one of them burnt down. What if they both burned down, I asked him, and he mimed shooting himself in the mouth. He was the first person I ever knew to have all the original Rallizes CDs, two of each, naturally. He was in love with high energy, he loved cars, he was a maniac driver, and he loved high energy avant garde rock and jazz, from Charlie Parker and John McLaughlin through Derek Bailey and Tisziji Munoz. When he died, genuinely tragically young, his girlfriend found a well-used blow up sex doll beneath his couch. Last night I dreamt we were both hanging from a steep cliff face with no way out and he told me it was only a dream and that it was okay to just let go. And I let go.



Divers to Dive #2



*Trevor and David, 1997*

*Digging [1]*

Today I think  
Only with scents, - scents dead leaves yield,  
And bracken, and wild carrot's seed,  
And the square mustard field;

Odours that rise  
When the spade wounds the root of tree,  
Rose, currant, raspberry, or goutweed,  
Rhubarb or celery;

The smoke's smell, too,  
Flowing from where a bonfire burns  
The dead, the waste, the dangerous,  
And all to sweetness turns.

It is enough  
To smell, to crumble the dark earth,  
While the robin sings over again  
Sad songs of Autumn mirth.

*Edward Thomas*



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*Caught by the River*



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EVERYTHING TO  
SWEETNESS  
TURNS

