

What were you thinking?

JULIAN STANNARD

Ceditions

for Jack and William

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Dear All

Just to let you know
the QMO document's been
converted to the intranet.

Pam

(Phew!)

I could explode
with happiness.

Bus Replacement

What's the point of sitting on a bus
and fuming? For days I've been dragged

across the fringes of English cities
falling into melancholy and despair.

Sometimes we pass railway stations
and dream of journeys that are linear

and which are free from the humiliation
of chemical toilets and sick bags.

But what's the point of sitting on a bus
and fuming now that this one's

drifted into a crematorium?

We're getting out and stretching

legs, some of us are lying down
utterly defeated but almost happy.

Jerry Hall Meets Salvador Dalí

I flew to Paris at seventeen
and got talking to Jean-Paul
Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir
over coffee. I was happy
to meet them. The trouble is,
I just can't write poems
when I'm happy.

Mother said, The Riviera
is the place to go.
I bought a pink bikini,
some high-heeled shoes
and walked myself along the beach.

I love cooking, I love gardening.
I keep chickens. Mick's an alley cat.
Happy, happy, mostly happy.

Salvador Dalí said,
Why don't you run naked
through my sculpture garden?

Alakefic

I'm lying on a brown leather sofa
chatting to Mother on the phone.
Mother doesn't hear awfully well

but that doesn't stop her from talking.
Sometimes she says, What's that?
My mother likes the word 'ballistic'

as in I nearly went ballistic or Veronica
went ballistic or the Bude-Smiths went
ballistic. And she often says

'facetious': I hope you're not being . . .
And a lot of people have chips
on their shoulders which is bad

and woe betide mutton dressed as lamb.
And the word 'log' turns up quite a lot.
I'm down to my last log, she says,

do you think I should ring Neville?
I would, I say, lighting a cigarette.
You're not smoking!?! she says.

Of course not! I've given smoking up!
I can hear my mother frowning.
And then she says, The trouble with

Neville is that he is so alakefic.
You're right about that, I say,
blowing smoke into the air.

King's Cross

When I lived in King's Cross
I used to lie on the bed and listen
to my bones melting. At first
I thought I was listening to Elgar
and then I thought I was listening
to the couple who'd moved
into the flat above and who were
getting to know each other better
and then I thought I was listening
to the music of the spheres.
I was listening to my bones melting.