

# MEAT FOR TEA

VOL 6 ISSUE 4  
THE VALLEY REVIEW

sweet





## Meat for Tea: The Valley Review

**Meat for Tea: The Valley Review** was founded by Elizabeth MacDuffie and Alexandra Wagman. We are a non-academic affiliated magazine committed to recognizing and featuring the work of the artists, writers, and musicians living in western Massachusetts and beyond.

### Staff:

**Editor-in-Chief:** Meaty Gonzales

**Editor:** Elizabeth MacDuffie

**Layout:** Mark Alan Miller

**Impresario:** Elizabeth MacDuffie

**Contributors:** Anait Abrahamian, Bahar Annoshahr, Cyn Capeloto, Peter Clarke, Ramiro Davaro-Comas, Kai Flanders, Howie Good, Maria Britt Hansen/Maria Rolling, Dan Hedges, Jane Hoppen, Sandra Hunter, Loren Kantor, Myra King, Laurie McClave, Amélie Olaiz, Tracy Pitts, Meg Pokrass, Jeremy Rice, John G. Rodwan, Jr., Nicole Shea, Denise Mostacci Sklar, Steven Ray Smith, Louis Staebler, Michelle Valois, and Bill Wolak.

**Cover Art:** FRONT: Ramiro Davaro-Comas  
BACK: Perry Carter

### Printing:

Paradise Copies, Northampton, MA

Typeface: Gill Sans, Libel Suit (Ray Larabie)

### Special thanks:

Mark Alan Miller and Justin Pizzoferrato and Sonelab, Amherst Books, Broadside Books, Food for Thought Books, White Square Fine Books, Platterpus Records, FOE Gallery, Christina Gusek & the RANT travelling gallery, Tovarish, Thick Voltage, Scotty Swan, Dan Richardson, and all of our sponsors.

Advertising in Meat For Tea is inexpensive and easy.

By advertising in Meat For Tea you are helping to keep print media alive!

Visit [www.meatfortea.com](http://www.meatfortea.com) for more information.

Send all editorial correspondences to [meatfortea@gmail.com](mailto:meatfortea@gmail.com)

Vol. 6 Issue 4, December 2012, first printing

All stories, column title and images copyright 2012 by meaty ltd. and the individuals contained herein. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, reprinted, or transmitted in any form without prior written permission from Meat for Tea: The Valley Review. Please address questions, comments, or concerns to Meaty Gonzales at [meatfortea@gmail.com](mailto:meatfortea@gmail.com).

For more information or to purchase back issues, PDFs and subscriptions, please visit [www.meatfortea.com](http://www.meatfortea.com)

<b>4</b>	Salutations from the Editor		
<b>4</b>	Ex Libris <i>Anait Abramian</i>		
<b>5</b>	Sweet Bloody Love <i>Nicole Shea</i>		
<b>6</b>	Collage <i>Bill Wolak</i>		
<b>7</b>	How To Resist Temptaion <i>Michelle Valois</i>		
<b>7</b>	The Buddha of Lesser Corrections <i>Michelle Valois</i>		
<b>8</b>	Top Ten <i>John G. Rodwan, Jr.</i>		
<b>11</b>	Charles Bukowski <i>Loren Kantor</i>		
<b>12</b>	Running Away <i>Myra King</i>		
<b>17</b>	Chocolate Notes <i>Bahar Annoshahr</i>		
<b>19</b>	Sealing Softness Against The Heart <i>Bill Wolak</i>		
<b>19</b>	Drawing a Lover to Bed <i>Bill Wolak</i>		
<b>20</b>	Row Me Over <i>Sandra Hunter</i>		
<b>21</b>	Sandwiches on the House <i>Peter Clarke</i>		
		<b>Bubbles</b>	<b>22</b>
		<i>Laurie McClave</i>	
		<b>218., 269., &amp; 149.</b>	<b>23</b>
		<i>Dan Hedges</i>	
		<b>Art</b>	<b>23</b>
		<i>Ramiro Davaro-Comas</i>	
		<b>Ulysses</b>	<b>24</b>
		(or) When it Started Raining <i>Kai Flanders</i>	
		<b>Testimony</b>	<b>28</b>
		<i>Louis Staebble</i>	
		<b>Café la Fortuna</b>	<b>29</b>
		<i>Denise Mostacci Sklar</i>	
		<b>Christmas Eve at 28 Tudor Street</b>	<b>29</b>
		<i>Denise Mostacci Sklar</i>	
		<b>So Long, Rat Dreams</b>	<b>30</b>
		<i>Jeremy Rice</i>	
		<b>Art</b>	<b>33</b>
		<i>Maria Britt Hansen/Maria Rolling</i>	<b>30</b>
		<b>Mr. Strong</b>	<b>34</b>
		<i>Meg Pokrass</i>	
		<b>It's Orange in Las Vegas</b>	<b>34</b>
		<i>Steven Ray Smith</i>	
		<b>New Temperatures</b>	<b>35</b>
		<i>Tracy Pitts</i>	
		<b>Collage</b>	<b>36</b>
		<i>Bill Wolak</i>	
		<b>Smart Car</b>	<b>37</b>
		<i>Jane Hoppen</i>	
		<b>The Phantom Museum</b>	<b>43</b>
		<i>Howie Good</i>	
		<b>Lean Years</b>	<b>43</b>
		<i>Howie Good</i>	
		<b>Water Tower</b>	<b>44</b>
		<i>Cyn Capeloto</i>	
		<b>Satyrsm</b>	<b>47</b>
		<i>Laurie McClave</i>	
		<b>With Umbilical Ink</b>	<b>48</b>
		<i>Amélie Olaiz</i>	
		(translated by Toshiya Kamei)	
		<b>Contributor's Notes</b>	<b>49</b>
		<b>Afoot in the Forest</b>	<b>51</b>
		<i>Christina Gusek</i>	



## salutations from the editor

Greetings readers. Whew! What a whirlwind time I've been having! While the Eastern shores of the US were being assaulted by Sandy, I was in Berlin witnessing one of the most vibrant art scenes I've encountered to date. (Rest assured, I gave generously to help support hurricane victims while partaking in this burgeoning outpouring of art.) I spent the bulk of my time at Kunsthaus Tacheles, a very large underground arts center which contains galleries, screening rooms, installation spaces and so much more excellence, and I wondered, why nothing like this exists here, in America.

Then, I remembered the upcoming Cirque at Sonelab, which promises to be a uniquely collaborative arts event, happens this Saturday, at a studio which has rehearsal spaces, two control rooms, a full performance space, and now, a gallery featuring the work of no less than six artists. Is it Berlin in America? A new Kunsthaus? Or just what we should all come to expect when Christina Gusek, Meat for Tea and Sonelab get their heads together and create an arts event? I'll leave you, dear readers, to answer this. I'm sure I'll see you there.

besos y abrazos,  
Meaty Gonzales



ex libris  
Anait Abramian

# sweet bloody love

Nicole Shea

There is something perfectly awkward and natural and sweet and stupid about the first time you find yourself in bed with a boy you love. All that luxurious privacy, comfort and time was almost more than my young heart could bear. I wasn't sure how far we would go, but I tried to relax and prayed my body would cooperate. I was delirious with a combination of self-consciousness, desire, trust and fear. Perhaps Clayton was feeling the same way. If so, he was hiding it better than I was. With every noise I jumped and asked if it could be his grandmother. Interruptions did not seem to concern him. All his attention was focused on me and my naked body. That single-mindedness is breathtaking and dangerous.

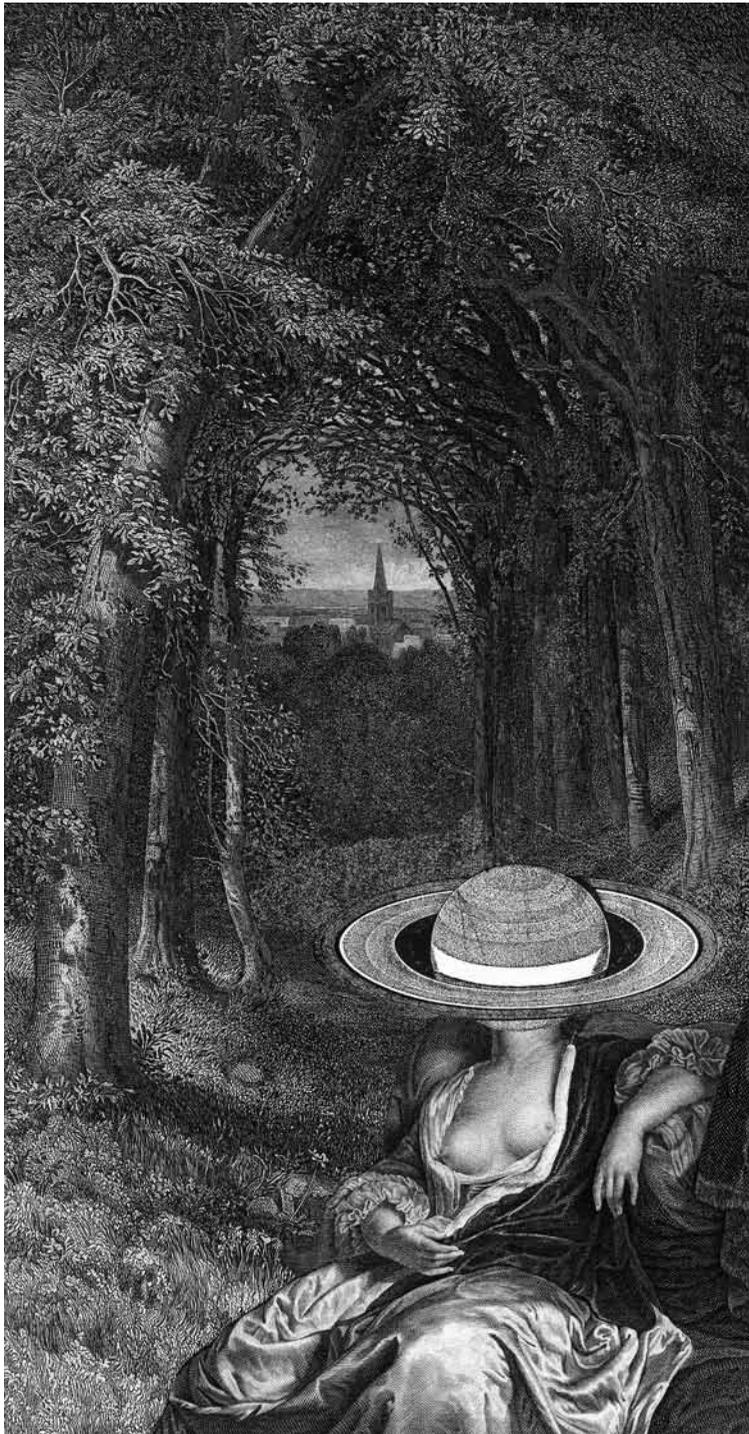
We heard a key enter the lock and the door bounce against the chain. "Clayton? Clayton, are you home? Why is the door chained?" his grandmother asked from the hallway of her apartment complex. Clayton, feigning disorientation, mumbled something about napping and vague fears of home intrusion. I scrambled my clothes on and slid to the floor on the far side of the bed. Clayton threw on his robe and hurried to the living area to unchain the door. He returned, dressed quickly and whispered a plan. She would need to use the bathroom soon enough. I would wait, ready at a moments notice to be slipped out the front door. Alert, I eavesdropped on their conversation. She talked about her church retreat and how happy she was to take an early ride home. Clayton offered to make her tea. I smiled as I heard him turn the water on and off repeatedly, knowing what he was trying to prompt. She chatted away, not a bladder concern in the world.

Clayton's grandmother gasped, "Clayton! It's almost 7 o'clock! You'll be late for CCD! You need to get going!" Clayton complained he wasn't feeling well, linking it to the mid-day napping and odd chain-locking behavior. She wasn't hearing it. And that's when I heard Clayton leave. I was stunned, hurt and amazed. Quickly accepting the fact that I had an hour and a half wait, I surveyed the state of my own bladder and began crafting the story I would tell. That's when I heard the door to his room open. His grandmother entered, walked straight to the far side of the bed and kicked me as she leaned over to turn on the floor lamp. "Nicole! Does Clayton know you're here? You are not allowed to be here when no one is home!" Explaining the less damning story I'd concocted, she interrupted and ordered me to wait at the table while she used the bathroom. I contemplated taking off, but decided that would be admitting guilt. I sat down to await my scolding.

Just then Clayton bust through the door covered in blood. Clayton had been going through a John Lennon phase and favored all white clothing. The white of his jacket intensified the fantastic amount and surface area of the blood splatter. He looked confused and hurt to find me sitting at the table. His grandmother returned from the bathroom before I could say a word. The sight of all that blood further flustered her and she busied herself with nose-plugging, head-tilting and cleaning up the mess. She delivered a baffling lecture. I humbly apologized and promised to never stop by un-announced again. I was allowed to leave and walk the hour plus home, alone.

We had to wait until school the next day to talk. He thought I'd been faithless. I'd worried he'd been callous. While I was settling in to wait out an hour and a half on the floor, he had been standing outside the door punching himself in the nose to save me. We shared some beautiful stories, and really, what more could we ask for.





# how to resist temptation

Michelle Valois

Make a fist. A firm muscle begets a firm resolve. Make a fist, but do not use it. Do not show it to anyone. Hide it. Keep it in your pocket or deep in the bowels of your red and black messenger bag. Pretend you are looking for your wallet. Or your cell phone. Or your keys. Bang the clenched fist around in your bag, but do not remove the ball of sinew and muscle, bone and skin until you have resisted the desire for what you desire, and you know you desire everything. That is your burden. That is your cross to bear. To want what is not, or should not, be yours. To want what you never had, or had and gave away. To carry want inside your belly like a hard, round marble, always, even when everything you ever wanted is already yours.

Make a fist. Hide the fist. Do not let anyone know your hand is balled into a fist. Make a fist and feel the muscles tighten in your hand. Feel your resolve harden. Then, open your hand. Do you see a marble? Or at least a polished stone? Is it round? Is it smooth? If you shoot it into the middle of a circle drawn in sand will it knock all the other marbles or at least one other marble out of the ring and is the one that rolls toward you the blue marble with the silver and maroon swirls the size of a small plum that you always wanted all your life?



# the buddha of lesser corrections

Michelle Valois

He is not well known, lived in relative obscurity, one thousand years ago, or two. He liked women – a little too much. He liked his beer bold. He liked contentment, but contentment did not like him. He savored satisfaction, but he was not to be, satisfied, at first anyway, and sometimes always. So he sat under a stack of unfinished memos, six feet high if a day. His was a multipurpose meditation, mindful, if not somewhat maudlin, all those moody mistakes and unwanted change. Each time he felt his mind erase the longing that sent him seeking solace between fleshy thighs, his thoughts would combust into self-effacing apologies, and he wept pasty tears the color of thick clouds. All flammable intentions were checked at the door, while he sat nirvana-bound but rooted in the misguided revisions that dictate how we remember and what we invent to white out the blemishes of our feverish past. He was the Buddha of Lesser Corrections, patron saint of slippery-fingered typists and mendicant misspellers. He was loved for his quick fixes, but few sought from him any lasting metamorphoses. Every woman wanted to rewrite her history on his scrap paper and prayed that it would not be rejected or otherwise forgotten; every man, too; everyone longed for his pure white liquid balm.



# top ten

John G. Rodwan, Jr.

At the end of many years, I made lists of my ten favorite albums released in the preceding twelve months. Though I ended this tradition of annual artistic contemplation, I still think it was worthwhile. Here's why.

1. *Self-examination.* List-making requires introspection and reflection. Sure, it's also a simple way of keeping track of things, a method of organization. Those kinds of lists are useful, and I rely on them. I formed the habit of maintaining several annual lists – books read, movies seen and so on – and these reflect my judgment and taste to some extent. But the top-ten compact disk lists really required thought to assemble. Doing so involved closely considering personal preferences. Often an album's top-ten status is apparent upon first listen. An especially pleasant occurrence for a music lover is to hear new music and immediately think it's something to return to again and again, to suspect you're experiencing a happy part of your future. In magical years of wondrous musical bounty when more than ten of these entered my life, the list-making forced me to do some aesthetic exercise and critical culling. In years when for whatever reason I found only a few obvious top-tenners, I had to sort out what I like best of the rest. Either way, making the lists told me something about myself – even if it was nothing more than that I sometimes lacked discretion and restraint in record stores.
2. *Mild mental calisthenics.* List-making requires setting parameters, and the rules also say something about the person who makes them. Compiling a list of well-liked releases from a given year might seem like a straightforward affair, but complications inevitably arise. The Thelonious Monk Quartet with John Coltrane played Carnegie Hall in 1957 but the recording of their set went unissued for several decades. Could music made in the middle of the twentieth century be in top-ten contention in the twenty first? (I voted yes and put *At Carnegie Hall* on my 2005 list.) What about something like 2003's *The Complete Jack Johnson Sessions*? Though most of the music on the five-CD set had not been previously released, edited portions of it had appeared on *Jack Johnson* and *Big Fun*, two electrified Miles Davis albums from the 1970s. (Because parts of it had been commercially available, I left it off my list even though I instantly recognized the claim it staked to a sizeable territory of my mental landscape.) I guess this makes me firm but flexible – or fastidious and foolish. I tried to follow consistently what I realized were arbitrary guidelines. Arbitrariness characterized the entire endeavor. After all, at the end of each December I ignored the CDs first released more than 365 days before, which always outnumbered the current year's lot. Some items that probably would have made a list I didn't hear until the following year or later. Considering all the music absorbed, regardless of copyright date, might have allowed for a fuller assessment of a given sonic year, but that's not the approach I took. The niggling involved in determining what qualifies for inclusion on my top-ten lists helped keep my mind in shape for less trivial kinds of mental work, or so I'd like to think. In any case, list-making beats doing crossword puzzles.

3. *Critical workout.* List-making promotes rigorous critical thinking. Figuring out what qualifies for consideration is just the beginning. Fully engaged listening is no passive activity. Often, deciding between a few potential top-ten designees meant careful track-by-track scrutiny. A single okay-but-not-exceptional song could be the undoing of an otherwise solid effort. If I weren't going to make a list, I might not have thought as much about each part of each album, and this critical listening entailed figuring out what qualities give music the power to affect me. Identifying the work with the most vitality calls for the vigorous analysis that makes real appreciation and enjoyment possible.
4. *Self-portraiture.* Lists can become a kind of unadorned autobiography. A random grocery list reveals something about the shopper who made it – their preferences and appetites, perhaps their economic class and maybe even hints about ethnic or regional background. A list of what music most moved a person provides an even more intimate, personal picture – a snapshot of the soul. I'm not a professional music critic. Even when I purchased excessive numbers of CDs, I never obtained enough for my lists to say anything significant about the state of music. (Did trumpeter Dave Douglas really make some of the tastiest albums several years in a row, or did I just buy each consecutive addition to his catalogue?) Instead, they tell anyone who cares to look at them about a solitary man. To my way of thinking (which might only be shared by fanatics like those novelist Nick Hornby depicts in *High Fidelity*), the fact that the list with Monk and Coltrane on it also names guitar wizard Sonny Landreth and country titan George Jones (as well as Douglas) reveals something more essential about me than a stray reminder to get bread and laundry detergent ever could.
5. *Growth chart.* A series of annual top-ten lists indicates how a person changed (or failed to) over the years. History emerges and the lists start to tell stories. The other, non-music-related lists allow for measurement of a certain kind: Did I read more or fewer books, see more or fewer movies than the year before? But I never ranked books and movies the way I did CDs. I might have read certain books in order to review them or because I was doing research for a writing project, but buying music always only had a single purpose: a bid for pleasure. Individual top-ten lists chronicle its attainment, while multiple lists show how my ways of achieving it varied over time. Jazz artists dominate my list from the mid-2000s. In 2004, seven of the ten CDs I picked would be so classified. Later lists show greater diversity. In 2008, the year I turned forty, I selected only two jazz records (or maybe three, depending on where a collaboration between Willie Nelson and Wynton Marsalis fits). This doesn't indicate any move away from jazz. Rather, it suggests that even in middle age a person continues to go through phases. My 2002 list also had only a couple of jazz albums on it.
6. *Reminders to be humble.* Aware of their own shifting sensibilities, list-makers become less likely to make categorical pronouncements about art. That 2002 list also names two CDs that ended up being sold to a used record dealer and another that fell out of rotation but that I didn't want to sell since friends made it. I can't recall now why I thought OutKast's *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* was a potential personal classic, or if I ever listed to it after 2003; I do remember deciding it no longer needed to take up space on my shelf. From the start I knew better than to call mine "best of" lists. After a few years I had to acknowledge that what I valued at one moment might not endure. I won't go as far as saying list-making

makes one a better, more tolerant person, but it's hard to be dismissive of others' musical taste when confronted with self-generated evidence of fickleness and critical lapses.

7. *Conscious admiration.* While lists may chart changes, they also document what remains stable. Each year's list may bear traces of faddishness or fleeting enthusiasms. But certain names that recur over long stretches of time indicate an artist who really matters. I wasn't aware just how much I liked Elvis Costello until I saw that every album he put out in the 2000s made my top-ten list. Lucinda Williams shows up again and again too. (Not irrelevantly, Costello and Williams made guest appearance on each others' albums.) And I wouldn't remove Douglas from those old lists if I permitted myself to revise them. Even if artists never learn of my gratitude, I know to whom I would express it if I could.
8. *Serendipity.* New names on top-ten lists spotlight the role luck plays in a person's life. I don't remember how I learned of Deadboy and the Elephantmen. I didn't put their *We Are Night Sky* on my list in 2005 (presumably because I didn't obtain a copy until 2006), but because of that CD I bought a band member's solo album when it came out in 2007. Dax Riggs's *We Sing Only of Blood or Love* provided one of those thrilling, immediate, single-listen-certainty, this-goes-on-the-list moments. (If Edgar Allan Poe wrote rock and roll lyrics, he might have come up with a mad fever dream like Riggs's "Demon Tied to a Chair in My Brain.") The guitar duo Rodrigo y Gabriela might never have made one of my lists if my wife hadn't happened to see their CD in a store with listening stations, put on headphones and made an unplanned purchase. On *11:11* they pay tribute to artists who inspire them. In my modest, invisible way, that's what I do with my lists, which also commemorate the fortuitousness of my having found these musicians work.
9. *Memento mori.* Lists of artists whose work enriches music lovers' lives eventually become lists of dead people. The music, or some of it, may last, but the makers don't. My 2003 list included posthumous releases by Joe Strummer and Johnny Cash as well as *Tribute to Lester*, the Art Ensemble of Chicago's aural memorial for their dead trumpet player, Lester Bowie. Long-departed geniuses like Monk and Coltrane only ever made my lists because old tapes turned up somewhere. My lists serve as reminders not only to appreciate creative folks when they're alive (as well as afterward) but also to make my own things while I can.
10. *Letters to the future.* Lists preserve something about practices technological developments could radically alter. In the short story "The Sound-Sweep," science fiction writer J.G. Ballard imagines a future when audible music has fallen from favor and people instead prefer ultrasonic music at inaudible frequencies. Even if music that cannot be heard never reduces musicians like Ballard's Madame Giocanda to tragic obsolescence, immaterial digital files do look likely to make tangible formats like CDs unnecessary artifacts (and when I no longer bought enough them to choose from, I stopped making lists). The earlier shift from 78 revolutions-per-minute disks to 33 1/3 rpm long-playing records allowed composers, especially in jazz, to develop longer works than procrustean limits previously allowed. The even greater freedom of the post-platter era could affect how musicians make music. Some might write works longer than could ever have fit on a CD. Then again, perhaps song-by-song releases will turn what I refer to as albums into curiosities. I don't foresee an end to audible music. But albums – sets of deliberately sequenced songs usually of about an hour's duration – might not always be around. For historians and archeologists

studying forgotten folkways in times when people receive music differently, top-ten CD lists could be fascinating finds – like recipes for cooking extinct animals. And if that's too grandiose a prediction, then I'll hazard that lists might at least amuse earnest music geeks, who will exist as long as musicians do.



charles bukowski  
Loren Kantor

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT BOOKS

*a not-for-profit workers' collective*  
- making struggle visible since 1976 -



106 North Pleasant Street  
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002  
p (413) 253-5432 f (413) 256-8329  
[www.foodforthoughtbooks.com](http://www.foodforthoughtbooks.com)

# running away

Myra King

Marshall hunched forward in his seat on the train and looked down at his riding boots. They'd been a gift from his father for his thirteenth birthday almost two years ago, but they'd been too big for him then and they didn't quite fit him now. Still too loose.

He could feel through his soles the vibration of the wheels over the rails, running him away from home, kilometre by kilometre. His stomach felt as tight as it did when he had to visit the dentist or on those nights his stepfather came home late.

When the train momentarily stalled, his old school bag, which he'd tucked under the seat, jolted into the back of his legs. He drew it out, held it between his feet and opened the zip. The money, newly stolen and accusing, spilled out. Retrieving it, he counted it again. There was enough for his trip Up North. His new life. It would days to get there. Australia was a big place.

The money smelt of his mother's tea-caddy, tea leaves, sweet-mown, although the container had not held tea for a long time.

Five years' savings. His mother's getting-away-from-it-all money. Now it was his. But he knew he would pay it back.

Marshall extended his vision past his shadowed reflection, and through the train's window grime, to the sidewalls of the railway tracks. A gallery of graffiti. The passengers captive viewers. Mandatory scenery for anyone with a window seat.

He read the scrawl: *Power To Us All*, stated in black dripped paint, in letters over a metre high.

A large, unkempt woman, hair receding in grey temples, flopped down across from him, murmuring an apology as her ancient handbag swiped his knees. Marshall could see her feet, grime-lined-cracked from what must have been years of walking the streets unshod, sticking out from beneath her withered clothes.

"Wot you got there, lad? Looks like you's headed off campin', hey?" She directed an overgrown thumbnail with its groove of black at Marshall's swag, which sat on the seat next to him.

He nodded and ran a finger along the straps, feeling the coolness of the buckles holding taut the green canvas roll that smelled of tents and summer.

The woman uncoiled her back and sucked her gums. "Looks pretty new. Like them boots. Where you's goin'? Hey, you wanna lolly?"

She brought out a dishevelled paper bag pleated at the top with strawberry stain. It fell open like an overripe flower.

Marshall shook his head and drew the swag onto his lap, folding his arms across it, almost an embrace. He looked down at his boots once more.