

## CHILDISH SCRIPT FINAL September 4th

**Cathy walk in quite slowly and seriously. Stand next to chair with eyes closed and hands resting on the back of the chair in modest prayer position**

*Now I lay me down to sleep*

*I pray the Lord my soul to keep*

*If I should die before I wake*

*I pray the Lord my soul to take. A-men.*

### 1. Don't say out loud: **The Black Plague** (red = NOT said out loud )

**Cathy, reminiscing, just to clarify...)**

That was the **Death prayer** I was encouraged to recite aloud every night for the first eight years of my life, after someone had read me a **bed-time** story.

That prayer had its origins around the time of the Black Plague - **still good to go, in 1950s Collaroy, apparently.**

**Cathy: new energy – explaining how this party game of HOPSCOTCH is going to work...**

I want to take you through a long, verbose and tangential game of **HOP-SCOTCH** going from my very, very **GOOD CHILD**-hood all the way up to my slightly-off-the rails **WHO-SAYS-I-CAN'T? GRANDMA**-hood and back again.

Along the way I'll be throwing and picking up stones, hopping, jumping and turning, quite often losing my balance (and pretending it was on purpose) and generally surviving through perfectly ordinary phases of immaturity. And hopefully, remaining CHILDISH. **Cathy leave script on lap in front of knife**

**Cathy have pencil 'knife' ready on table to demonstrate the correct hold**

### 2. DAMASK DENIALS AND SILVER SERVIETTE RING CERTAINTIES

I was going through my sepia database of memories the other day and thinking about some of **the petty bigotries** of my childhood.

By far the biggest mistake any poor, innocent guest at our table could commit, was holding their knife like a pencil so that the tip came up to rest between their thumb and their index finger (**Cathy demonstrate with a knife or pen: only two choices Right or WRONG**) – they were gone! Finished!

**(Cathy put cutlery down to your right and pointing offstage to door tell them EXACTLY what they need to do) RUN!!! Run for your life!**

Now my kind 6'2" uncle, Uncle **Shorty**, who my parents and I adored, would come to visit and (I swear on purpose) half way through a meal he would start using the pencil hold just to stir up the troops and keep it interesting and I loved him for it.

He always asked for our opinion, respected us and just assumed we were competent. When I was 10 he asked me to leave the garden lunch table and go into the kitchen, find the wing-type bottle opener and open a bottle of riesling he'd left in the fridge. My father had to restrain himself **Dad grips the table** from rushing inside to do it for me. **Cathy CHEEKY GRIN.... AND I DID IT!!!**

**Fear Snubbed (The Prig)** Cathy, be consumed by a spirit

### ***Fear Snubbed (The Prig)***

Fear, the pompous one,  
*Who knows what she's been up to*  
With powerful secrets  
Swept up in a bun.  
All her own inadequacies  
French-rolled out of sight.  
What naughty school girl (*yet unpunished*),  
Lurks there, bursting to get out?

The mirror's piracy reflects  
The never-ending truth.  
She slips the clasp  
And pulls the hat elastic free –

I watch as great tendrils unfurl  
A Jacob's ladder connecting and collapsing  
As locks fall open down her back.

**END Poem**

### 3. THE AFFILIATED UNDER 10s - inspired by the late great John Clarke

Thanks to my father, who was simply trying to keep all the billiard balls on the table, following the unforeseen death of my mum when I was 6 months old and my brothers were 4, 11, 14 and 16, we had a fiercely held, union-like, list of chores, conditions and awards by which to run our lives. One day my new step-mum asked me to cross my personal picket line.

## The Drying Up

### *The Drying Up*

NO. That's boys' work.

That's one of the boys' jobs.

Even that straight out NO

My first in living memory.

Was huge at 5 and a half

*But with the whole union*

*Behind me.*

*I set the table every night*

*For eight: Cathy count on fingers spoons, knives, forks and glasses.*

*Salt and pepper (mime each end) at each end.*

*I take away the plates*

*After the main course.*

*And clear everything after sweets.*

*I stack the rolled up napkins*

*In their individual rings.*

*I leave 8 empty milk bottles  
On the bottom step  
For the milkman (who sometimes is a brother)  
And bring them in cold and slippery with dew  
Each morning to the fridge.*

She's impressed I think  
But also amused  
That the little princess  
Has no idea of what's in store:  
The life-long expectations of women.

Her gentle remonstrations:

*'Well maybe you could learn how to now*

*Might come in handy later.'*

**END Poem**

#### **4. HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN**

My step-mum was a war-widow and a much-loved employee of the Royal Princess Alexandra Hospital for Children in Collaroy in the 1950s. Just before she gave up her job as book-keeper and married my Dad, she had taken me aged 5, on a tour of the hospital with row after row of beds with children struck down by polio.

And still to this day I wonder why she did it – something along the lines of 'You think **YOU'VE** got problems! Wait till you see **these** kids!'

# Routine

## *Routine*

Out on the care-worn splintered deck  
Their beds are trolleyed out (Cathy show the beds being rolled out  
A beach-viewing arc with your hands show the arc of the beds – look up  
Baking in the sun's kindness. (close your eyes - feel the sun on your face

Such glaring white sheets  
Snap-changed day after day  
Draped to camouflage  
The rock-hard plaster casts  
Binding agony.

A little girl my age  
(Only partially covered) (Cathy show your distress and look away)  
Pees flat on her back.  
Humiliated, right at my eye-level (Cathy try not to look again)  
Into a baby's potty.

And I am ashamed.  
Filled with wonder  
At such routine cruelties.

**END Poem**

## 5. OLD SCHOOL - The Class of '71 :

We are all brilliant parents. **That's** how come our children are more mature than we are.

When I say **we** I mean the women in the class of '71 - my HSC year back in the 20th century.

We all believe our partners won the lottery when they met us and were hit on the arse with a rainbow when we stuck around. We remain the most self-deprecating and humbly significant year ever to attend that school.

**And we have reached the age where people let you get away with trotting out self-indulgent shit like this, because (Cathy count on your fingers...)**

1. They don't mind us and
2. We have grey hair and might die soon and
3. Since none of us has gone into *politics*, we're not **hurting** anyone.

**(Cathy use dinner party inflexions...)** A typical example is a volcanic, warm, crazy, artist and human dynamo called Kim O'Callaghan. In 2005 I went to Adelaide for the first time for my brother's birthday and Kim drove 168 kilometres UP AND BACK to St.Georges from her beach house to collect me.

**(Cathy build the scene...)** Half way through the afternoon as a cool sea breeze started to come up over the deck, we took our wine inside and Kim suddenly disappeared upstairs and came down lugging the most magnificent knitted and woven blanket I have ever seen, and said 'I'm gonna GIVE this to you!'

## Therapy Blanket

### ***Therapy Blanket***

The weighted warmth  
Of her generosity.  
This rug, an encompassing reminder  
Of complex fibres.

Marine flotsam and woolly jetsam  
Ambushes a wave  
Of strawberry shortcake mix  
Caught in time.

**Never** homogenized **(Cathy get theatrical about Kim)**  
**Never** beaten  
**Never** ordinary  
Each fold a new discovery.

A hurt friend visits post divorce, **(Cathy evoke the weight, the benefits)**  
I find her *purring* under the weight.  
She and my daughter now benefit  
From fortnightly visiting rights.

**END Poem**

## 6. RESENTMENTS

I always say **(Cathy, pick up mug...)** you should never hold a grudge **(quick sip of water)** for more than 50 years and I'll give you an example of my **statute of limitations**.

**(SLOWLY Cathy, build up picture...)**

Almost to this day, 45 years ago, I was in first year Uni and enjoying myself at the Inter-college Garden Party when right in front of me, this **stupid bitch** asked the only person I had ever slept with (up till then), if he would like to put his hand down the front of her paisley blouse and see how hard he could make her nipples go.

**(SLOWLY – give them time to wonder what you're going to do)**

I took the '*Flight*' option. I ripped the pink silk ribbon from around my throat, chucked my daisy chain in the garbage bin and fled.

Now to be FAIR...she didn't know me from a bar of soap whereas **I** knew that she was a young newly-wed (to use a Woman's Weekly term) as the said boyfriend had been best man at her top hat & tails, establishment wedding the year before. And here was this ageing (4 years older than me) ditzy, free-love hippy, working her way across Number One Oval, and utterly fucking enchanted with herself.

So I had her backstory and I'd never liked it.

Now as luck would have it, we live in the same suburb. And over the years I've bumped into her a few times. This year a friend offered to introduce us, for the 4<sup>th</sup> time in 20 years. I tried to explain that we had already met, but it was a **goldfish-fresh experience** for her and she continued to maintain that she had never seen me before in her life.

Another 5 years of Resentment-therapy should seem me through.

## 7. HOMEWORK

I've never had much luck with homework. Oh my children were *fine*, I just had a poor attitude to schooling in general. I started giving my kids mental health days in kindergarten.

But it was at my third child's 5<sup>th</sup> Class Primary School Parent-Teacher meeting, that I finally came undone. This dame was one of the best, imaginative, collaborative, non-bullying teachers that I'd ever come across.

But around this time a number of enthusiastic, first-time parents, started paying for more homework to improve their child's chance of getting into a selective school. This has never been high on my agenda and my son hoped to get into Newtown High for Dance.

So as an older parent I bounded into my parent-teacher meeting with great Sagittarian confidence and reassured the teacher that I was **NOT** one of those parents hoping for more homework. And in fact, I confided, **(Cathy lean in conspiratorially)** I'd like to see homework in primary school **banned altogether. (Cathy getting over-confident and theatrical now – you're doing it for the children!)** "*Bring back childhood and good old fashioned family chores, running around with friends and actual time for silence, introspection and doing nothing*", I pontificated.

There was quite a long silence. I could hear kids outside playing handball against the wall

Then she said that she felt that homework was the essential core of all her work with the children. And that it was a crucial educational and reinforcement tool. Furthermore she concluded (with TEARS WELLING IN HER EYES) that my comments made her feel undervalued as a person and as a professional.

There was a very *short* silence but I have rarely moved so fast. **(Cathy put it into reverse)** I chucked the gear stick into reverse and **(Cathy look over your shoulder)** got my sorry arse out of there yelling over my shoulder as many apologies as I could muster and regretting that my comments had been so poorly chosen to unleash this terribly hurtful misunderstanding on her previously unchallenged confidence.



I managed to avoid being alone with her in the same room for the whole of the following year, and she LOVED me for it. The arrangement seemed to suit us both as she DID enjoy teaching my son again in 6<sup>th</sup> Class. She would wave hello joyfully across the playground to me. And I would call back: **(Cathy smile recognition at her and wave back)** "Hi Miss!"

I never spoke of homework again... (to anybody).

**Cathy glance over at your 'Grandmothers Against Detention' T-shirt or bag**

#### 8. GRANDMOTHER WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

is the unnecessarily *harsh* title my children have awarded me. Something to do with **Cathy use hand gestures but speaking quite quickly though**

- my propensity to talk about myself
- my ability to tell Non-English-Speaking-Background UBER drivers my life-story in under 10 minutes and
- the discovery that I can clear a large sized auditorium by asking if anyone wants to see **Cathy get enthusiastic** some of the 3,000 photos I have, of my *seriously* talented grandchild.

#### 9. JOY AND SADNESS

Bringing wonder to my life is my 3 year old granddaughter who regularly quotes scenes from the children's animation '**INSIDE OUT**'.

If there's a break in proceedings or she's feeling a bit ambivalent, she likes nothing better than to make her mother, pretend to be the character *Joy* dragging her, *Sadness*, on her back, along the floor of our hallway.

She also likes to quote the character of ANGER, saying out of the blue **(Cathy imitate Anger's up-tight New York accent)** 'Doesn't this **BOTHER** any of you people?

**(Cathy lovely CHANGE OF TONE...in more English teacher accent**

## 10. UNSUITABLE ROLES FOR CATHERINE A BRAY

(Cathy use with Marilyn Monroe / Lorelei Lee accent...) I always say that a girl like I, has to know her limitations. (end accent)

And I have come to realise that there are two roles in life for which I am **entirely unsuited**.... One, is as an art gallery attendant at the Picasso Museum in Barcelona and the other, is as an ordinary usher at the Sydney Opera House. These two roles require the patience of Job combined with highly developed interpersonal radar and a high level of idiot-tolerance.

Now let me tell you WHY as far as ushering goes...

We were seated in the very front row for the Sydney Theatre Company's production of ARMS AND THE MAN and the show was about to start.

Suddenly the young woman to my immediate left, lifted her phone and proceeded to take exactly six selfies including large swathes of the audience behind her. Oblivious as the curtain rose, she proceeded to do a full sensual stroke-athon of each of her Argan-oiled hair-extensions and followed this up with a decent chug-a-lugg from the water bottle in the bottom of her bag.

It was becoming apparent that her previous experience of theatre had been defined by her visits to the Gold Class seats at Event Cinemas. By the time she started looking for the popcorn holder, I was all set to taser her and administer pepper spray. As I said, **entirely** unsuited.

## 11. FOR THE LOVE OF HANDEL – ALCINA AT THE ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

(Cathy quickly, the dates aren't that interesting...) In December 1999 I was given free tickets to the ENO'S dress rehearsal of Handel's Alcina conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras and was **SO blown away** that I insisted on taking the entire family a month later, to this long, (nearly 4 hours long) opera, featuring gorgeous coloratura soprano and castrati-type singing. (Cathy appeal to the audience with 'What wasn't to like?' enthusiasm)

At the end, my daughters were politely circumspect. My husband however, said it was like being inoculated with a horse needle to the back of the skull.

My son who was 6 at the time says to this day, that I have never appreciated the full trauma of the evening for him... His seat was so highly sprung that he was almost cantilevered into it and his knees were forced up around his ears. The seat creaked nearly every time he breathed and when it did, the English lady behind him, directed a very long, **Cathy do exasperated sigh in English accent with eye-rolling:** "Herhhhhh" towards the back of his neck.

## **(Handel in Australia) Heatwave Harpsichord**

### ***(Handel in Australia) Heatwave Harpsichord***

No baroque hallucination.

The children sitting in the gum

peer down through a eucalyptus screen.

Native bees droning between the blossoms,

cicadas drilling in the paperbarks.

The heat beats up from the concrete path

As buffalo grass crawls towards

The lava flow of asphalt

Down Annandale Street.

**END Poem**

### **12. CONFSSIONAL**

I've often heard seasoned, academic poets deriding 'confessional poetry'.

**(Cathy grinning sarcastically...) RED FLAG to a bull!**

I heard the story of one of my least favourite academics, who in the middle of judging a poetry prize, came and threw himself down in the middle of the English staff-room, bemoaning the fact that he could not cope with reading one more 'barnyard testimonial'.

A few years before, I had completed a poem about a dear country friend and her heroic battle with mental health issues – I had *already* titled the 4-part 'testimonial' **THE CHOOK PENS**. I put it in bold and changed the font to 48 point.

# The Chook Pens

(Preamble)

*In the chook-pen at Urungie we find you house-sitting -  
Chicken-wired in peace against the foxes of this world.*

**THE CHOOK PENS (Preamble)**

*In the chook-pen at Urungie we find you house-sitting -*

*Chicken-wired in peace against the foxes of this world.*

*The children wandering with you through the hens and turkeys*

*All penned in, would have stayed all day to help you*

*Find the cream brown eggs plonked pricelessly on straw.*

**END Poem**

## 13. Cathy **DON'T SAY** out loud **LITTLE TOE – STRAIGHT** into...

My friend, who is a mother of five, has had a Holden Station Wagon-of-a-life, doing the mother-of-all round-Australia road-trips and often over the limit.

**(Cathy smile, you're relieved...)** **Today**, she's back, safe and sound.

## Little Toe

(Cathy very Jacki Weaver calling out to Ricko – “You’re gonna make it really hard for yourself, love!”) **NO DON'T SAY TITLE**

Go on why don't you make it  
Really hard for yourself,  
Sober and bust.  
A clean break.

Your 11 year old daughter's pain  
Acknowledged. Your loving, giving self  
Turned inside out. **(keep Jacki Weaver : I saw you shooting up in Westfield)**

You said you wanted  
To graft to your heart  
All those comedians you love.

Well I say graft ME  
To your little toe.  
Squashed and blistered sure  
But rarely stubbed.  
A 12-step bandaid.  
A vertically challenged rescue remedy  
From the fellowship of equals.

**END Poem**

#### **14.CELEBRITY SOLSTICE (HARBOUR CRUISE)**

Now I love a harbour cruise. I love it right up until it leaves Darling Harbour.  
Then I panic, thank the hosts profusely and make my way upstairs to see the  
Captain to explain to him that I'll be needing an early mark and a special drop-  
off or ferry-by at Yeend Street Wharf would be great.

So I find out that I've got another 3 hours (minimum) and I retire to a window seat to try to avoid the diesel fumes building up in the cabin and where I can keep an eye on the horizon and make sure I don't get seasick.

Eventually we pull into Circular Quay next to the great hulking ocean liner, Celebrity Solstice (WHAT DOES THAT EVEN **MEAN**? Celebrity Solstice – is that like TALENT ECLIPSE? It reminds me of Greyhound names like Bordello Boy or Phallic Cymbal)

Anyway, **Cathy continue cheerily** it still cheers me up no end, knowing that due to aversion therapy as a child, watching my oldies sail out on nine-month overseas junkets, I could never go the distance and commit to an ocean-going cruise.

**Just before 'WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE'...**

**Cathy take a swig out of your plastic see-through bottle of what appears to be pee and nodding towards a male friend in the audience (John MacL / Alistair C / Dave S/-types) as you screw the top back on, say**

"Thanks for wondering (full name)..... That's NOT my own urine, (or anybody else's), but my medicinal Basica Alkaline Wash"

## **15.WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE**

My cousin texted me urgently that she had inherited this **(Cathy say slowly and gingerly so they can visualise it on their phone screen) M T H F R** gene\* and that I should go out and get tested immediately. I thought fancy all those nice researchers in their Lab coats coming up with a name like THE MOTHER FUCKER gene so I SMS'd my kids and said, 'You'll need more than sunscreen for this one'

I don't know if anybody here has been tested for the **M T H F R** genetic mutation, but it turns out it affects over 40% of the population and our local Genetic Counselling service doesn't even **test** for it, as they have people with **real** problems.

Anyway my doctor reckons I'll be fine, if I cut down my intake of *Chocolate Croissants* and ease up on my enthusiasm for *Barossa Shiraz and Fettucine Siciliana*.

## 16. FORM ONE

Grandmothers Against the Detention (**Cathy hand to throat, look to side audience**) (oh, did I *mention* I was a Grandmother) of Refugee Children were having a VIGIL right outside Malcolm's Edgecliff office when a policeman appears and asks who's in charge? Gaby our main G'Ma wasn't there that day so 'That would be me, Cathy Bray' I said.

So this was Brad, from Rose Bay Area Command and Brad wanted to know if I had filled in a Form One? Seeing the smirking faces of the Grandmas around me, I venture 'No we haven't. Form One? PERMISSION to hold a VIGIL?'

(**Cathy BE DEEP VOICED Aussie Brad from Bunnings**) 'Yes' said Brad, 'That's the one! Because you see, we would appreciate it because you ARE outside the Prime Minister's office. So if you were walking up from Edgecliff Station with 4 or 5 hundred people, we'd just need to know for traffic management and personal safety.

How many people do you normally *get* at a Grandmothers' vigil?

(**Cathy, pause like you're going to say 2,000 – then chin out a little bit defensively when you realised you're stuffed**). 'Around 15' I said

Anyway I had no problem with filling in a FORM ONE. I comforted myself with the fact that if we were outside Trump Tower we would probably have been handcuffed, taken in for questioning and shot by now (and not necessarily in that order).

So I got home and I went to the NSW Police website to get my FORM ONE and to my delight BRAD WAS WRONG. This very first form, this NUMBER ONE FORM for a civil society and policing in New South Wales is **not** PERMISSION TO ASSEMBLE but **NOTICE OF INTENTION** to HOLD A PUBLIC ASSEMBLY.

(**Cathy under your breath...** Just don't tell Dutton!

We Grandmothers are as happy as Larry to GIVE **NOTICE OF INTENTION**. We'll tell you for nothing, we have NO INTENTION of **EVER SEEKING PERMISSION** to hold our VIGILS FOR REFUGEES at the QVB, right in front of Queen Vic's skirts.

## 17. TOO TIRED TO GIVE A TWEET

Most Australians are getting **Cathy feel their exhaustion awfully tired** of politicians only talking in Sean Micallef's MAD AS HELL-type scripts about each other's nationality, mistakes and pay rises.

Personally I would prefer First Dog on the Moon for Prime Minister but unfortunately First Dog has had to take his annual Rage Leave this week and go up the coast to voluntarily book himself into an ADVANCED ANGER-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP.

What pushed him over the edge was Green Senator Nick McKim's tweeting that his motion to **Evacuate Manus and Nauru with immediate effect** had failed and that *'Some Labor Senators voted against it, others fled the chamber'*.

First Dog's TWEET was fairly unequivocal... as he tweeted "**hey @AustralianLabor you snivelling murderous cowards – i hope you choke on your HYPOCRISY FLAVOURED RAINBOW ICING**" Un-tweet.

**Cathy get serious but tired and appealing to your biased audience who mostly agree with you...** You have to wonder if 85-90% of those arriving by boat were found to be genuine refugees, and only 30% of those arriving by plane, why did we keep on punishing the boat arrivals with offshore mandatory detention?

## 18. THE CHINESE ARE COMING

If I hear **one more** retired US Senator, previous-administration arms expert or former China authority on our nightly news, telling us with a straight face how to run our Foreign Policy, **I'm gonna scream**.

Their message as far as I can figure it out, is as follows:

- **Cathy in frantic American accent and pretending to ring Paul Revere bell: The Chinese are coming, the Chinese are coming! Cathy lose the accent:** What The Benjamin Law!?! Somebody fax the Pentagon that Sydney is a fully fledged and pumping Asia-Pacific city and we like it that way.



- **Cathy in frantic American again** *Also, you Oss-tray-liens should NEVER forget 1942 and the bombing of Darwin because now they are building bases in the South China Sea. (What? That was the Japanese? Oh)*
- *We are doing a LOT to counter Chinese aggression in the Pacific - we are increasing our B1 Bombers in all our bases: Guam, Hawaii and **Oss-tray-lee-ar***
- *America will continue to work together with our old friends as we prepare for the imminent invasion of northern **Oss-tray-lee-ar**.*

#### **Cathy lose the accent...**

Twenty or so paddle-pop licking locals and a Mr Whippy van, parked on a beach outside Darwin watching thousands of US and Australian troops come crashing through the surf, in their amphibious vehicles, were not sure if it was *real* or just a film-set for the re-make of MASH.

## **19. IRRELEVANCE**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Malcolm Turnbull asserted that the **Citizenship Test** is based on **our shared political values**.

*I* thought our shared political values were based on food, weekends, holidays, sport, leisure, travel, superb weather, droughts, flooding rains, a general disrespect for authority and an increasing cynicism towards politicians - with a mosquito net of apathy chucked over the top.

And I've always been a bit of a defender of Australian apathy – *you* try starting a war here on Grand Final Day.

## **20. JUDITH LUCY**

In October 2012, I made an unsolicited guest appearance at **Judith Lucy's** book launch '*Drink, Smoke, Pass Out*' at Gleebooks. **(Cathy pause to give them time to think 'Were you drunk? Is shit about to happen?)**

**(Cathy continue with dinner party story NOT Playschool tone)** We were sitting in the front row at the side and because Judith decided to sit **down** for the interview we could not see a thing. A Q & A followed and after taking a question from a Professor of Comparative Religion which she lost track of and

had to take as a comment, I finally **(hand up like a desperate 8 year old who knows the answer)** got the attention of the interview-er and put my question:

**“I was wondering if Judith Lucy could tell me why God punished me tonight by making me sit behind this lectern so I couldn’t see her face for the whole night!?”**

*She* screamed. The interviewer dragged the lectern out of the way and Judith came off the stage with her arms out and gave me a great big hug, went back, poured herself some more red wine and said 'Great question, by the way!'

As I lined up to get a copy signed for my daughter for Christmas, I felt like I already knew Judith. I mean I had finished reading '**The Lucy Family Alphabet**' and as it turned out we even have the same taste in clothes...we were practically in matching outfits.

## **21. ATTIC NIGHT SCREEN**

*We were visiting our 25 year old son in London. And went over to France to visit our friend Christiane, who we met when the planets aligned, and she was bill-et-ed with us, one year in Sydney.*

*Her daughter Maude, showed us how you could use an iPhone app to find out when the International Space Station would be going over your house. It seemed a long way from star-gazing as a 16 year old, flat on my back in a paddock outside Coonamble.*

# Insignificance Theory

## *Insignificance Theory*

Last night in Chalautre  
Pitch black and cloudless  
A Roman encampment  
Dropped between two thighs.

A lifeblood and laundry stream  
Running off the plateau  
Back to the 5th century.

The International Space Station  
(Thoughtfully on time) **(Cathy notice it up high over to the right!)**  
Googles itself from right to left **(Cathy point to follow the arc from R to L)**  
Across our attic night screen

**END Poem**

## 22. **BOOK LAUNCH OR POETRY READING?**

All over Sydney there are stoic EVENT organisers (herders of cats, poets, readers and writers) – this poem is dedicated to all of them\*.

### **Charcutieres - butchers or poets?**

#### *Charcutières - butchers or poets?*

Put those utensils down  
And move away from the pastrami,  
You can't have your poetry  
And eat it too!

There's only a tiny tiny delicatessen  
For poetry in Sydney.  
Quit carving the prosciutto  
Without checking or signalling  
To **all** the other poets  
On the road  
That you're holding your book launch  
Or other ritualised event  
At the same time  
As their existing monthly Reading.

You can have this as a Main Meal  
Or as an Entrée  
With a free side salad  
Of pear and rocket.....science.

**END Poem**

\*\*\*\*\*

As my husband said to the headmistress (after over-exposure to hundreds of end-of-year concerts): “A short show, is a *good* show Miss Jackson!” and here we are...back where we started, in pretty much original condition and in my case, as CHILDISH as ever.

THANK YOU **SO** MUCH FOR COMING – please come and join me outside.

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING**  
**– please come and join me outside.** **END Slide**

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:



**LEAVE UP while audience is leaving before END Slide**

**End show**