

Annabelle Haywood

SECRETS LIKE BATS

Your lie unravels with an open-mouthed kiss
And they fly out, these secrets like bats
Into the four corners of the Earth

Invisible on a sphere, yes, and dark

And I see you, face like my grandfather
Dipped in the sky, Queensland orange at dusk
On a balcony, smile as a story is told
With bats overhanging, filling the sky
As far as the Moreton peninsula—

There are splashes of childhood and wine
Between the lines of your fiction
My fingers tracing your skin; the twitch
That I feel, buried deep but still
Flying along the surface;

But only as far as my hands,
The boundary.

I'm unable to enter your star system
As I sit beside you;
The air is heavy with summer salt,
And the day has spat out the bats

Into the night, faces sticky with mango,
Paw paw, banana, various hot exotic
As they confuse the sky—

They make me wonder if it wasn't the day
But you that brought them forth;

They lace up the darkening expanse, and
A cloud passes over as you sit:

Back straight, square jaw, silence
Just like my grandfather—
And the past has, again, coloured the world

Sighing

I let myself fly with those bats
Those fleshy wings and blood-letting teeth

I may see the world, and I may find you.

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