

*Liam Ferney*

## THE FRENCH WORD FOR 'VOYAGE'

Much less than M. must have felt,  
I am in exile from almost  
everything I used to know.  
When culture shock strips you bare  
like blast zone atomic ground zero  
or a dream of showing up  
at school naked and all the girls,  
like the locals, spreading fingers  
across gaping mouths and staring.  
I am freer than a guard accompanied  
train ride across a tv static white night  
to an unknown destination but  
nevertheless I am alone.  
The street lights torment my sleep  
and I count my breathes in  
a parody of meditation though the clock  
ticks over and still the kelpie  
marshal's sheep and none of this matters  
much anyway. To feel trapped in  
the machinations of your mistakes  
is the verdict eternal, gavel stamped,  
signed and sealed by poor judgment.  
And I set off to see the world  
with all the foresight of an Industrial-era  
English kid nicking a loaf of bread.  
It comes down to this while I'm sitting  
around waiting for work to start.  
If the world's an oyster  
where's the fucking pearl?

•