

— a childhood deeply connected to this particular place, with its tapestry of seasonal creeks and towering oak trees, golden grasses and wildflowers.

I peered through the sagebrush as it rattled in the light breeze, spying mother quails zigzagging away with their clusters of chicks. I looked up at the ageless oaks to find blue jays chattering amongst themselves, as squirrels clamoured up their worn trunks. No matter how far away the wind had carried me, its circular voyage brought me back to a place where my blood surged stronger than ever. It was not about a particular house, or even about particular people, but about my own unspoken connection to this land. After so many years of drifting, I had roots all along, as thin as gauze, stretching across the sea back to a home that lived on patiently in case I ever was to return. And when I leave, it now travels with me, pulsing through my body as I continue on a life-long path with newfound wisdom and rediscovered comfort.



Nathanael O'Reilly

ANNA KARENINA IN CANBERRA

After viewing the Picasso exhibition
At the National Gallery, spending
A lazy afternoon studying
Charcoal sketches of nudes,
We watched *Anna Karenina*
In an almost empty cinema.

Oscillating between melancholy
And desire, we lay on the lawn
Beside the lake and drank
Half a dozen stubbies of VB,
Her breasts squeezed into a blue
Chesty Bonds t-shirt, and talked
Of the impossibility of true
Love between people like us.

