

JOHN BLIGHT

PENGUINS AND PEOPLE

— and would not tackle the larger issues of life, because he'd seen on film (and in flesh) parties of penguins standing, each with a glass of sherry under an embryo wing. All out-shouting the Antarctic howl to believe themselves individually

. . . why he was hard to drag to a party, even though lectured that the sea-leopard would pick off a stray loner.

“I'd delight”, he said,
“to shed ever the white jacket with studs of gore from the sea-leopard's bite; to don the black shirt of a cormorant, to be gone from the company of the camp — sycophants of the ice floes, who seek the mainland to gather stones for a bed; who pamper one or two offspring and educate them to the stature of adults.”

“Does stature rule?” he pondered, observing their mimicry and tête-à-tête, life-wasting hours preening the sea-leopard's future breakfasts on ice.

Not what a lone cormorant depths to gobble undersea in a day's probing — who knows in which direction? A guess where the head bobs up, black in the blue sea, not easy to spot straight away.

His meals are as much as he can eat. What are the issues bigger than meals? Swim off and ask the sea-leopard, and wear your white bib.