“His name was Honey”: Bi-Coastal Communication in the Age of Otherwise Unemployment

I’m English, my husband said, annoyed at his university’s pompous treatment of “one minute’s silence” for Remembrance Day. It’s not the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in England. He was feeling this sorely and unreasonably, being most put out by the newly announced slogan of his employer, it now being officially a place where “Great Minds Collide.” I don’t “collide” with anyone at work, he said, nor do I collude with constructed silences. Who writes this shit?

His name was Honey, I said, the Australian journalist on Fleet Street who’d convinced King George that silence and remembrance was a good publicity stunt. Besides, I said, it’s only 8am here on the west coast of this vast “colony” that irritates you so. If we keep this conversation up there’ll be silence rocking all over the world. Like the helicopters this morning, protecting Prince Charles and Camilla and their pretty poppies on their visit to the not-Scottish Perth. It was like Vietnam out there by the Swan River this morning, I said, feeling stupid, just stopping myself from pushing the metaphor north of Capricorn, to our current apocalypse: him, there; me here.
Dry toast makes a lot of noise when
munched (facetime is not flattering
to the upper-middle-aged) but a
kinder sound no doubt than the
collapse and crush of bones in
coffins. Silence is rarely polite—
hurricanes are merely ghosts of
such suffocation. Never a monarch
before sundown, “Fuck the Royal Family”
he offered, then, “My all-time favourite
Gibson Le Paul guitar’s colour is
called Honey Burst.” This, just I’d been
about to say goodbye. Which I soon
did, grateful for our fresh armistice.