

AnoMaly Street:

poetry with a difference



A twice-yearly collection of poetry
that creates jolts for flatlined minds

Volume 1, no. 2 - December 2022

Published by Geelong Writers Inc. 2022
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The background of the entire page is decorated with numerous yellow lemon slices. Some are whole circles, while others are half-slices, scattered across the white background. The slices have a textured, slightly grainy appearance.

AnoMaly Street: poetry with a difference

Anii

Adrian Brookes

Michael Cains

Jo Curtain

John Heritage

Michelle Nichols

Jean Pearce

Kevin Phelan

Quinlivan

Guenter Sahr

Giselle Sim

Fern Smith

Victoria Spicer

Ivor Steven



Painting by Emma Rutherford



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Introduction

Welcome to *Anomaly Street: poetry with a difference!*

Thank you for finding your way here to the second issue.

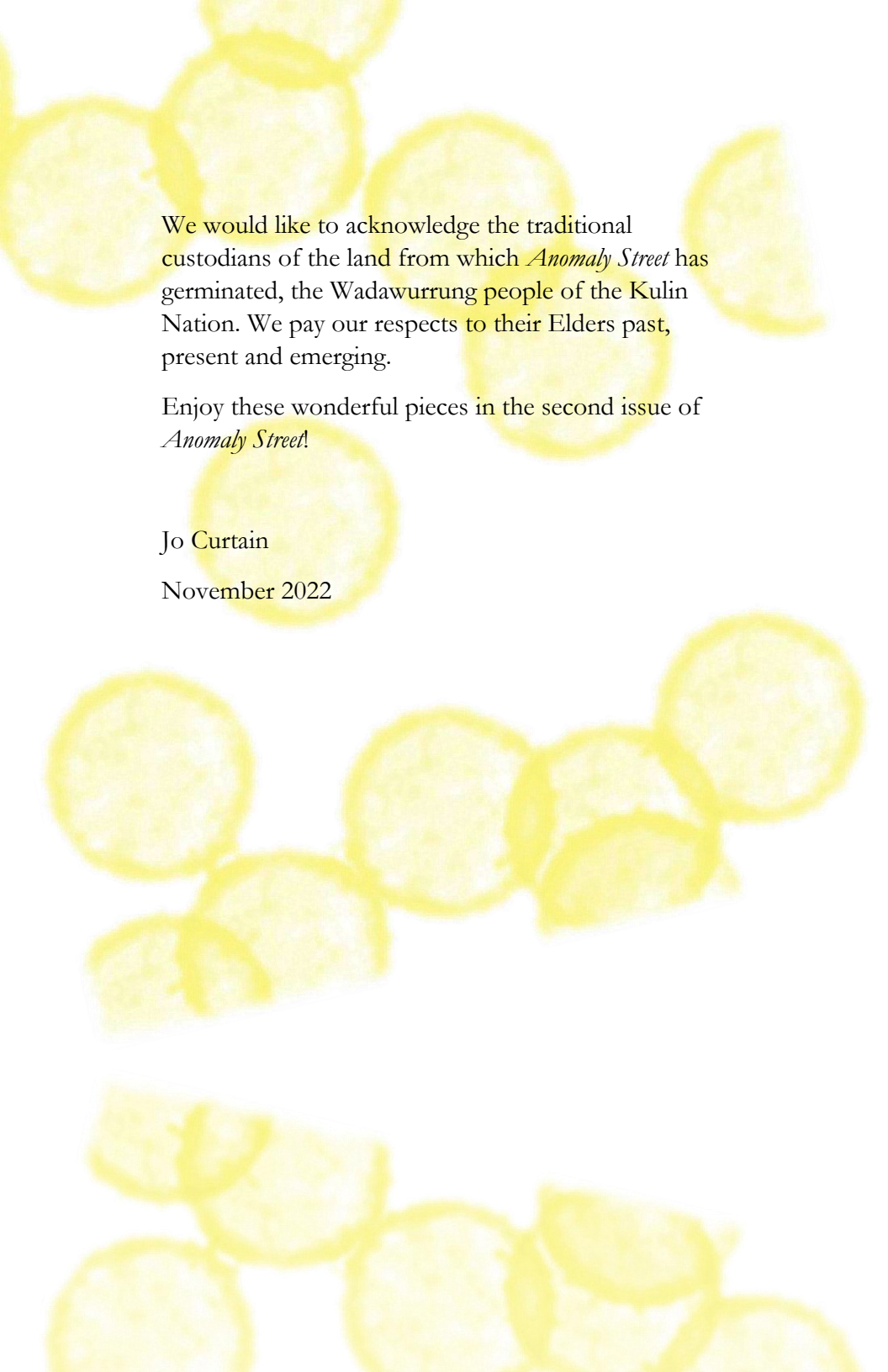
I am impressed with the quality of the submissions. In this issue, you may find yourself transported to underwater kelp forests looking up at the cliff lines in Jean Pearce's 'Underscore' or walking amongst fairy dust in Ivor Steven's 'Faerie Runnels'.

Many of these creative works hold a mirror to grief, isolation and discomfort, reflecting on childhood experiences, the dynamics of families and the things we inherit.

And there are pieces that are playful and quirky in their perspective, offering nuanced observations of the everyday.

I would like to acknowledge our fabulous cover artist, Emma Rutherford, and I do hope you enjoy her other pieces I have included throughout Anomaly Street.

Thank you, Victoria Spicer and Guenter Sahr, for their generous support, specifically the time they dedicated to supporting me in selecting and editing works for the publication.

The background of the page is decorated with numerous yellow lemon slices of various sizes and orientations, scattered across the white space. Some slices are whole circles, while others are wedges or partial circles.

We would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land from which *Anomaly Street* has germinated, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Enjoy these wonderful pieces in the second issue of *Anomaly Street*!

Jo Curtain

November 2022

Pillow Talk

Fern Smith

pillow wet

hundredth night

guilt dreaming

washing life away

churning waters

drown

muffled words

LONG.....

TRAIN.....OF.....RED.....ANGER

She lit the candle beside her bed on top of her
literature stack,

she dreamed into white light.

Mirror

Quinlivan

Looking in the
mirror

Practicing to
smile

Very clownish

It doesn't reach
the eyes

A sad face

Looking at my
face

Looking in the
mirror

Practicing to
smile

Very clownish

It doesn't
reach the eyes

A sad face

Looking at my
face

I Am Not You

Adrian Brookes

I am not you / can never be you / and with all due respect
/ have no wish to be you / for I see the ruin wreaked on
you / since aliens came / all fleshed in pink / brandishing
Bibles and guns / blind to what was / saw only what must
become / and when what was /

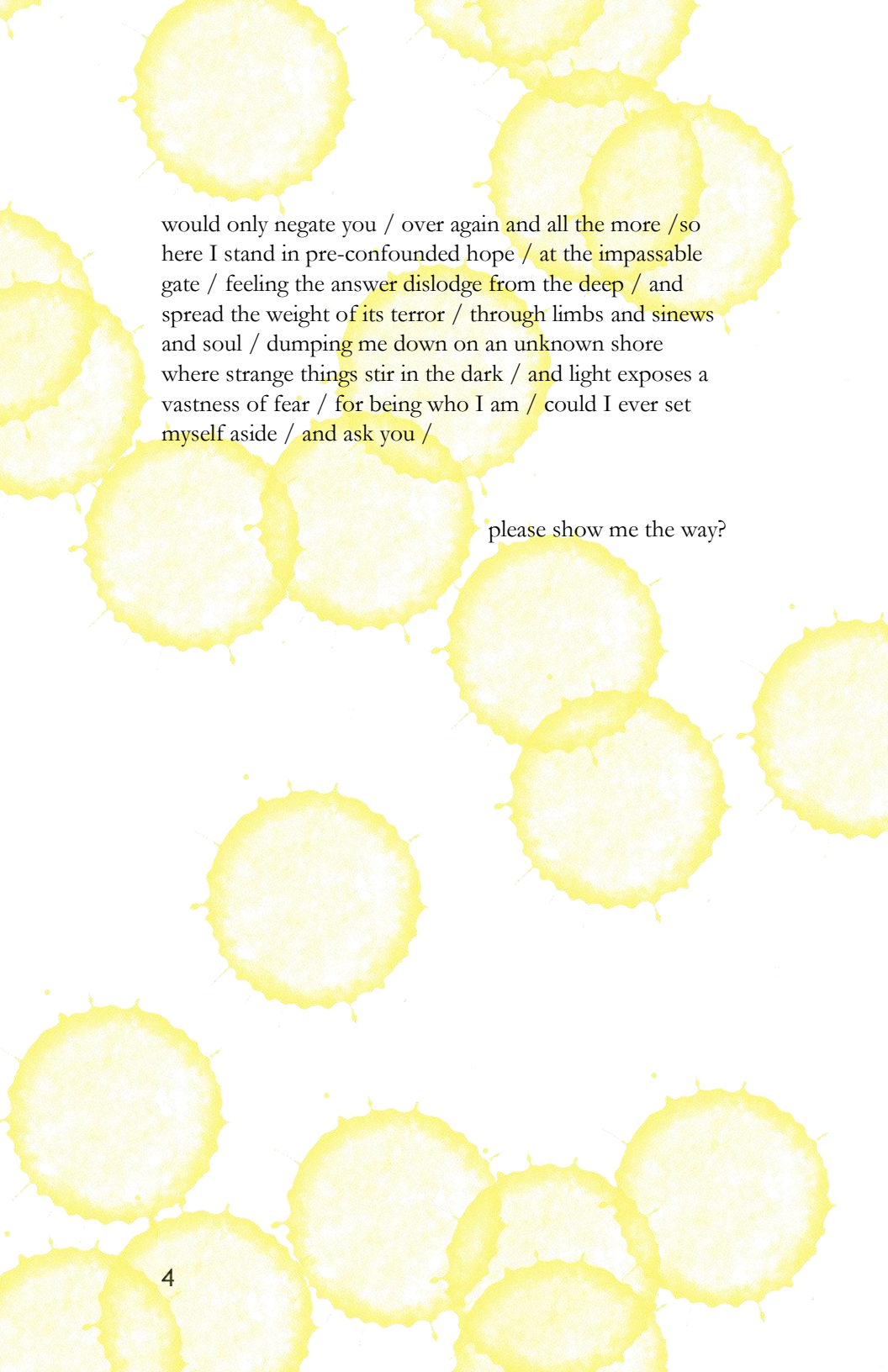
forbore becoming / turned on you

as prey for their wrath / and though I abhor what they've
done / and thought I was one with you / I saw / I'm not
you / nor can ever be you / ah! but if I *could* be you / I
wouldn't be what I see in you / I'd rise up in rage
irresistible / take up a hundred Mabos and win /
demolishing this and every claim of terra nullius / nipping
all sly intent in the bud / I'd reverse this headlong
scorched-earth flight /

ever further east of Eden / and lead us one and all back to
the beautiful garden

hail hero! the presumption of such powers!

but I am not you / and can never be you / whatever I see
in you is not what you are however much I pretend / and
whatever I did for you / no matter what best intent /

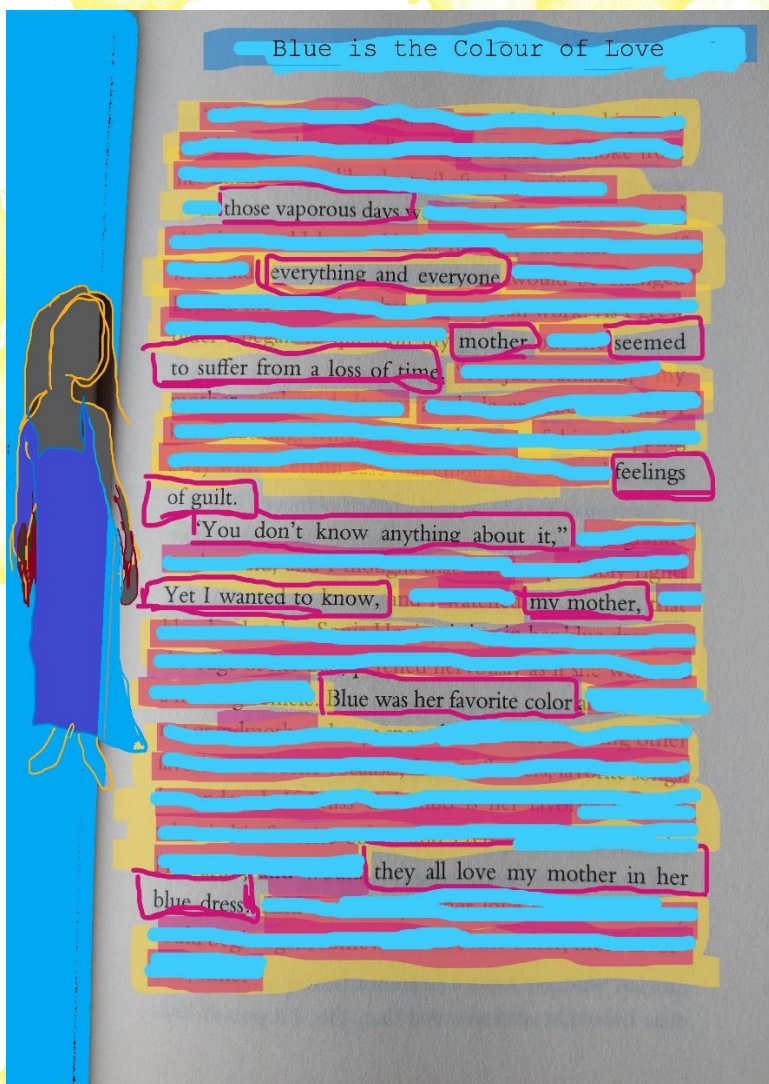
The background of the page is decorated with numerous yellow, circular, spiky patterns that resemble stylized suns or cells. These patterns are scattered across the page, with some appearing larger and more prominent than others. The overall effect is a bright, textured, and somewhat organic aesthetic.

would only negate you / over again and all the more / so
here I stand in pre-confounded hope / at the impassable
gate / feeling the answer dislodge from the deep / and
spread the weight of its terror / through limbs and sinews
and soul / dumping me down on an unknown shore
where strange things stir in the dark / and light exposes a
vastness of fear / for being who I am / could I ever set
myself aside / and ask you /

please show me the way?

Blue is the Colour of Love

Jo Curtain



First Poem

John Heritage

g
m a t e r i a l s
t
h
e s
c o n s t r u c t i o n
e a
d r
t
from plans e
i n h e r i t e d

The Hurt You Make

Giselle Sim

Do you know the hurt you make
Through generations
In time it repeats
Better choices are not made
Blame is passed
No accountability
To cry is punished
How dare I speak
For I am lucky
Love is unknown in the family
Communication through hurt
No one is listening
The aggressive delusion
It continues still
Grow up
I know better now
I do not accept the stupidity of the logic

All are culpable for harm done

All are responsible to look out

It is all so simple

To be good and to love

The insanity of your existence

I see all

I hear all

And I remember all

I know all the hurt you make

[CREATE TEXT]

Gunter Sahr

Last txt and testament from the abyss

O angelface meth
u that leadeth me in
soluble dreaming of
shape shifting
worlds on imax tall
canvasses
& vomiteth me across
jardinière tiered
valleys
wet with diamond dew
drops

2
drops of incandescent
blood sacrifice
on sacred altars hewn
from kakadu stone
ledges

2
ledges of sand stone
on tourist worn
north shore cliffs
high above the gap
from where i shall
trace the finest
gossamer trajectory

2
firmer terra
and there

2
be cleansed by
high tides brine.

[ENTER GROUP LIST] > [SEND]

Underscore

Jean Pearce

sea grass carpet shoreline.

giant whale shadows sway beneath
eddies of black clouds.

feet slide, squelch on sand.

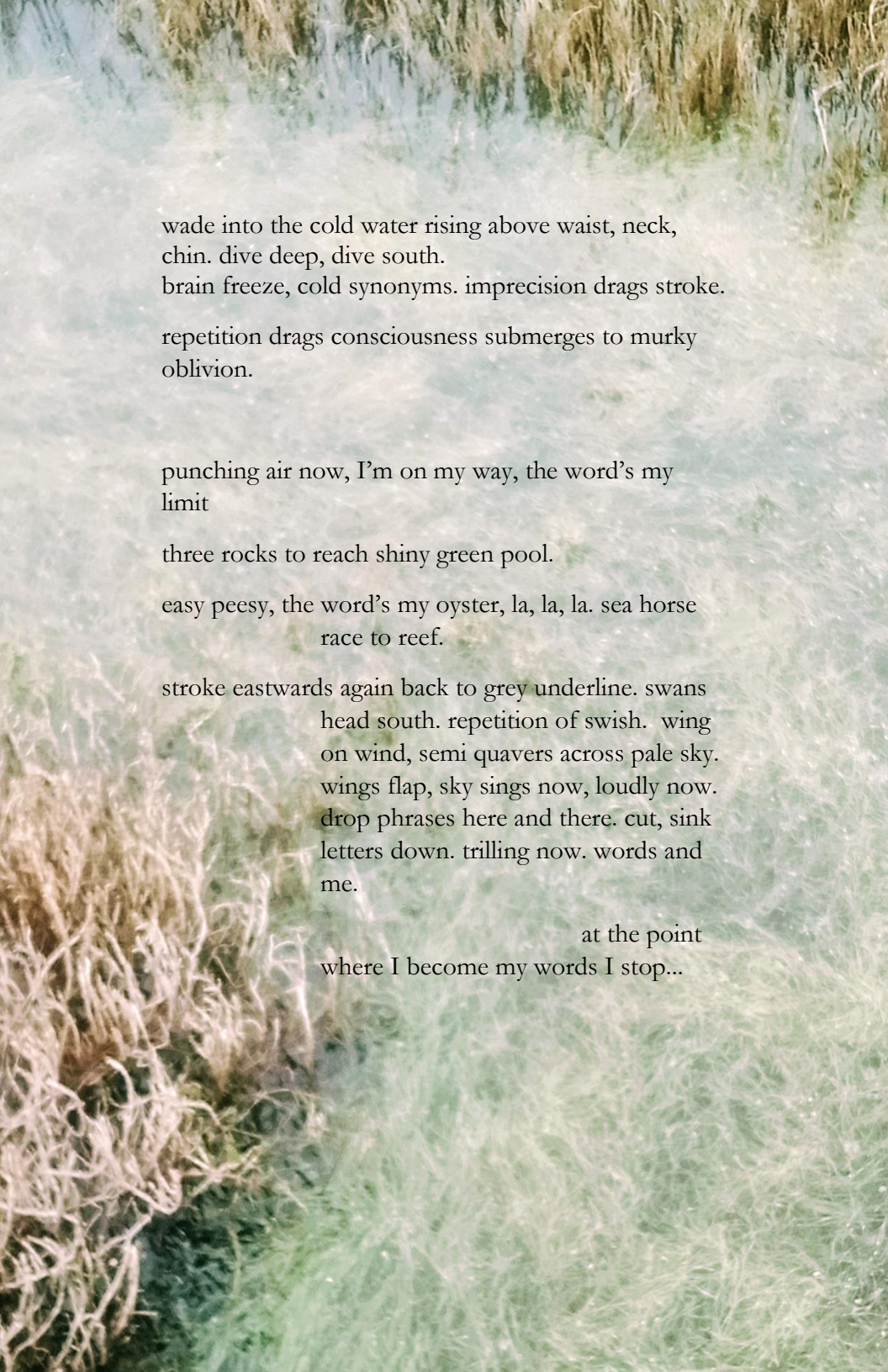
underscore breeze, underscore salt crusted kelp,

underscore pufferfish, blown up as footballs, poison
sharp.

interior solar showers form into chaotic insurrection.

coalesce of phrases. cold logic of metre. bounce of
black dog.

even and unbroken line to cliff. syllables unformed,
slip, fall on rocks brittle and inanimate. a winter of
disconnection. water spray, patinas across forehead,
tattoo of salt crusted words.



wade into the cold water rising above waist, neck,
chin. dive deep, dive south.
brain freeze, cold synonyms. imprecision drags stroke.

repetition drags consciousness submerges to murky
oblivion.

punching air now, I'm on my way, the word's my
limit

three rocks to reach shiny green pool.

easy peesy, the word's my oyster, la, la, la. sea horse
race to reef.

stroke eastwards again back to grey underline. swans
head south. repetition of swish. wing
on wind, semi quavers across pale sky.
wings flap, sky sings now, loudly now.
drop phrases here and there. cut, sink
letters down. trilling now. words and
me.

at the point
where I become my words I stop...



Painting by Emma Rutherford

Crooked Obsession

Michael Cains

Every day they glare at me,
hanging on walls everywhere
in hallways, corridors, meeting rooms, hotel rooms,
lounge rooms,
pleading for me to help,
to move them but a millimetre,
to adjust and to straighten.

Screaming out for my attention to detail, my savage
intolerance of crookedness,
my obsession.

Paintings everywhere, every day,
Screeching at me.

Hung without care or in haste,
with no idea of position,
of straightness or with conflicting, competing lines.
Perhaps imbalanced by poor hooks and wires,
or knocked when cleaning,

It doesn't matter why.

Hundreds of pictures. Thousands. Beseeching me.

Hung miserably, dying alone in their crookedness,
their misaligned commentary about our world,
ruining the Feng Shui in any space.

Demanding attention, my fingers twitching,
responding to an infallible eye, to superior judgment.

Crooked pictures, or a crooked mind?



Painting by Emma Rutherford

Second Poem

John Heritage

w
 a j o u r n e y
 v
 e
 r o u n d
 e
 l t o g e t h e r
 p a t t e r n s h
 t m l r
 i s e l f d o u b t h e
 o r o y a
 n g m i d
 s e s n s
 h g
 i
 p
 s

The Mirror

Anii

I struggle with
the volutes of mirrors
seeing my reflection
looking back at me.

Physically
and
metaphorically.
Gender Dysphoria.
Personality Disorder.

I see the hips people say will help
birth a plethora of playful children.
Breasts large enough to feed an entire nation.
I am filled with disgust and nausea.
I envy the boys who can stare at their reflections.

Toned surface. Smooth lines.
Gender Dysphoria.

I do not recognise myself.
A stranger staring back at me.
I am an amalgamation of personalities, blending, bending
the likes and dislikes of everyone I've crossed paths with
in the hope of fitting in and desperately wishing to be loved.
Are these attributes truly my own?
Or a mere mask I dare not cast aside for fear of revealing
myself as that scared 7-year-old whose world and brain
function was ripped apart and left warped, empty and cold.
Personality Disorder.

I struggle with mirrors.
Literally and metaphorically.
Gender Dysphoria. Personality Disorder.

On Hold

Victoria Spicer

Please wait
your call is ~~important to us~~
to ~~dictate~~ placate demand

Please wait
for trickle-down
funds
to activate desire

Please wait
while our operatives
~~attend to~~ accumulate
assets

Wait
Maslow's pyramid
turns on its tip
~~self-actualisation~~ lies

Hold on
breathless starving loveless sick homeless frightened—
a paralytic prick of empty despair

Wait

diverted
Siri says
sorry
I didn't understand that
crumbs
of lies flood the market
Siri says
sorry
I can't help with that
subdue and appease
and mutate
neoliberal
disease
while
deficiency needs
meaningless
motivation
denied
if you're

Fading

Michelle Nichols

the tension, the racing heart, the shortness of breath
lack of oxygen to my brain

the crying, the fear

I am strapped in a ride I cannot stop

vision is blurred

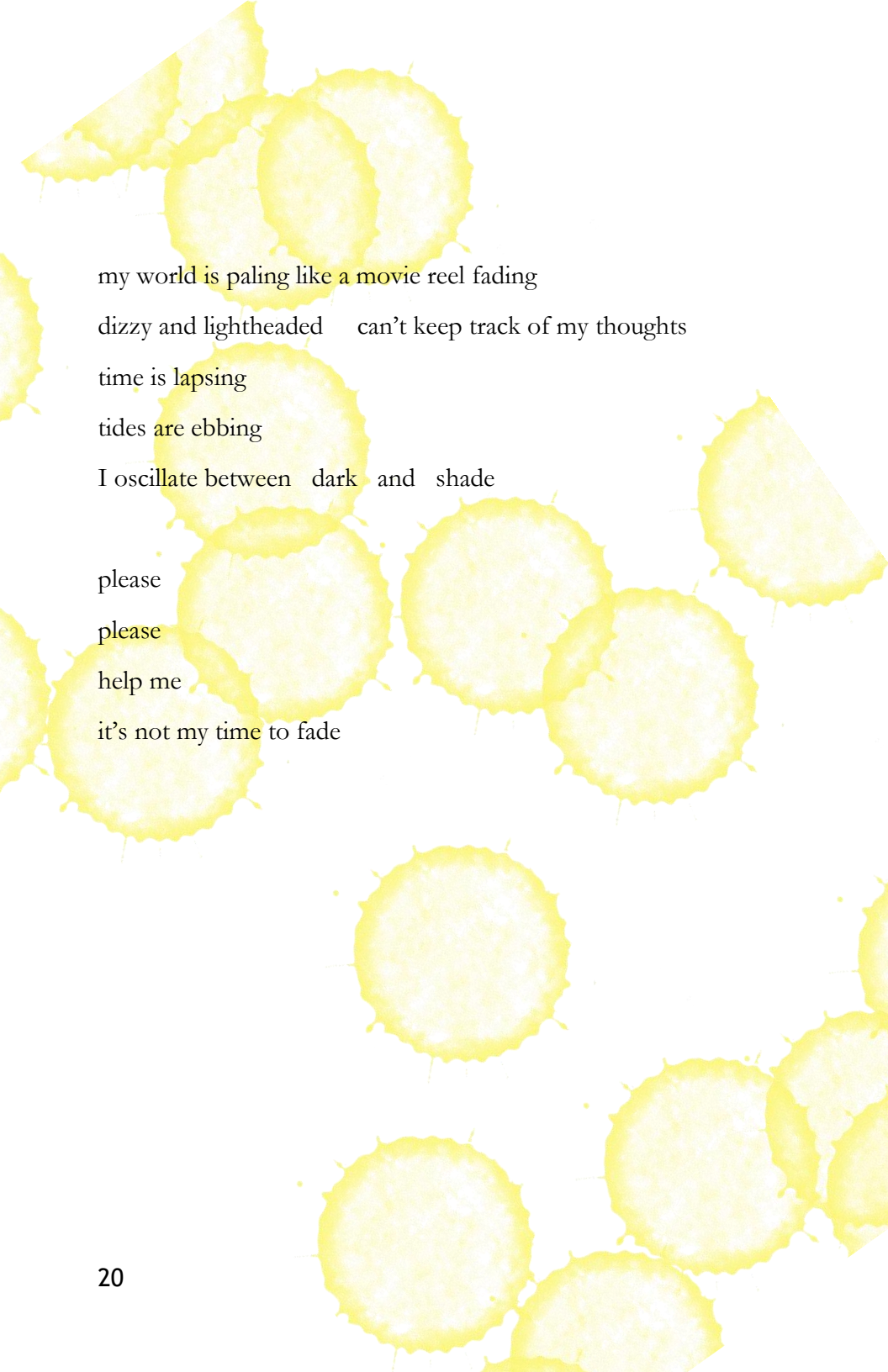
I feel out of my body

head is spinning

my blood pressure

d
r
o
p
s

the crying, the fear

The background of the page is decorated with numerous yellow circular watercolor splatters. Each splatter has a soft, textured center and a darker, more saturated outer ring with irregular, spiky edges, giving them a sun-like or cell-like appearance. They are scattered across the page, with some overlapping the text.

my world is paling like a movie reel fading
dizzy and lightheaded can't keep track of my thoughts
time is lapsing
tides are ebbing
I oscillate between dark and shade

please
please
help me
it's not my time to fade

Faerie Runnels (a Mariannet)*

Ivor Steven

Brave

A dark cave

Chase the faeries down secret tunnels

Find their hidden runnels

A spring full of magic sparkle

Dare

Be aware

Sip from their fountain of bubbling youth

One nip of ancient truth

Will turn your dreams into nightmares

* The Mariannet is an isosyllabic rhyming poem named after poet Marianne Moore.

Third Poem

John Heritage

C A T S

e

b l

s I i

i sit e

d in f

my out
life played

being

on

stage

the actor is purring

straight at me

I

furiously

bark my reply

before being
lead out

The background of the page is decorated with numerous yellow, circular watercolor splatters of varying sizes. Each splatter has a soft, textured center and a more defined, slightly irregular outer edge, giving them a hand-painted appearance. They are scattered across the white background, with some overlapping the text.

Chaos on the Freeway

Kevin Phelan

The man has a plan, man
listen to the man

God has a plan
listen to him man

You look the part
you're a work of art
pin-stripe suit – a piece of fruit
 in a briefcase
full of plans, man
the man's plan, god's plan
budgets, forecasts, plans, man

Heading home on the freeway
too far away
concrete cage like a rat in a trap

The background of the page is decorated with numerous overlapping yellow circles that have a spiky, sun-like texture. These circles are scattered across the white background, creating a vibrant and abstract pattern.

breakdown shutdown

nowhere to run now

breakdown shutdown

engine

sirens

no exit

No exit

Stuck – there's trucks

in front, trucks to the sides

can't see ahead

can't see the sky

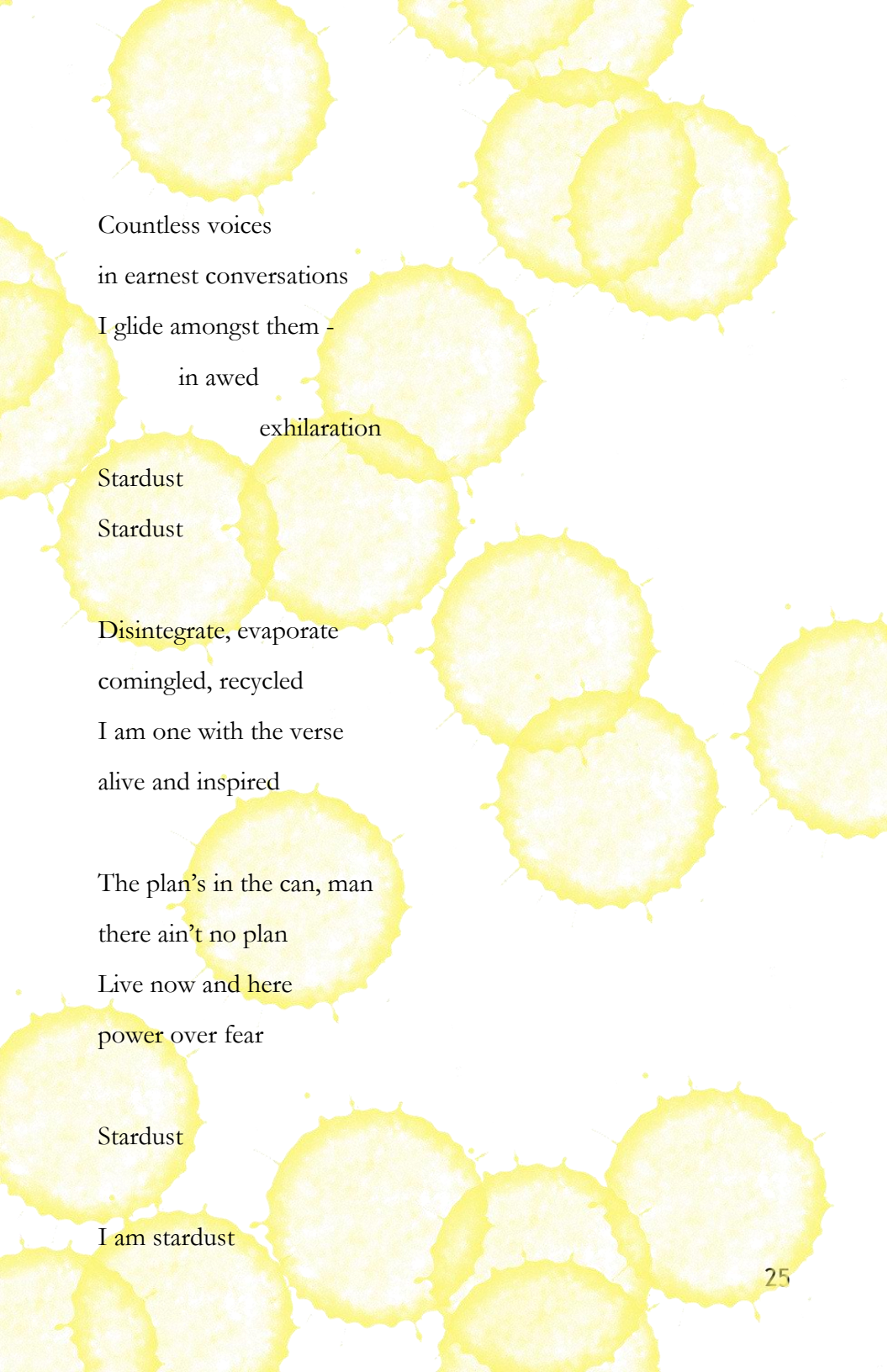
Gonna be here a while ...

Chaos. Traffic chaos. All is chaos

All is chaos

Shut my eyes, visualise

stardust, galaxies – the stars are alive!

The background of the page is decorated with numerous yellow circular patterns that have a spiky, sun-like edge. These circles are scattered across the page, some overlapping each other. The text is arranged in a central column, with some lines indented to create a sense of rhythm and flow.

Countless voices
in earnest conversations

I glide amongst them -
in awed
exhilaration

Stardust

Stardust

Disintegrate, evaporate
comingled, recycled

I am one with the verse
alive and inspired

The plan's in the can, man
there ain't no plan

Live now and here
power over fear

Stardust

I am stardust

Horns blare behind me
traffic's on the go
wreckage on the tow truck
briefcase out the window

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