

MARK MORDUE

From Darlinhurst Funeral Rites, a work in progress about my experiences in
Darlinghurst in the 1980s

Album Cover

It must be 3 in the morning
And someone has put on 'Lady Godiva's Operation'
All the passion in the room spilling
And undoing. Upstairs a secret is brewing.
I'll be happy to let it come down.

Here below, across two rooms, people sway,
Dancing, rutting, laughing, reading,
A little coven in the middle frown
Attempting some pretend telepathy.
They'll make that novel float apart some day.
Every page will be a wing somewhere.
So much is imminent. Our end is singing.
We just talk and squawk our minds away.

Tanya has a drawing on the door: a dead sparrow.
Right now she's cutting Phillip's hair,
His speckled painting of Graham leans
Drying on the stairs. Tim believes
He might just fly up through the ceiling.
Who need wings when you've got arms and hair?
There must be something magic in this droning air.
On a caved-in green lounge two people kissing.
Who are they? No one knows. Thieving love
Before our ocean eyes, the floor is drunk:

I think I think this vision splendid but really I got no idea.

Lucia and Brad have just arrived. Take a potion.

Here, let me light your index fingers, welcome.

Ellen has the photo snapped. While Lou and Mo conspire
With smiles to make such pure gravity out of men's desire:
Painter girls, Matisse hips, Joy Hester lips,
My kiss will be goodbye. Goodbye my kiss that lingers.

One more brushstroke, please, let it pass through
Our varnished, nested hair. The artist deep inside of us
Looking on at bested friends and lovers, our dreams unharnessed,
As Ellen pours a happy hex over another set of leaking photographs.
Candle wax from the melting corner of her crooked, burning smile:
The bare energy distorting through a worn-out speaker
And bleeding out onto a bootlegged album cover.