



Source: Ed O'Loughlin, 'Peres defection offers poll boost for Sharon', *The Age online*, 02/12/05.

Tags: [intimacy](#), [death](#), [plants](#)

Writer/s: [Declan Kelly](#)

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Have you smelt the flowers today? Spring has fattened their petals and nursed their scent to bursting. Now on this first day of summer, a hot north wind blows them around and I travel through paths of memory, prompted by the olfactory. Smells and memories are tightly woven in my mind; a certain perfume takes me straight back to kindergarten. I see the wire fence that surrounded the corner and I see children playing although I know none of them is I. But that perfume is so old now, it's so uncommon, I rarely think about that time. Have you smelt the flowers today? The jasmine is so pervasive but I wouldn't have it any other way. Its sweet scent reminds me of you and that makes me happy because I know that jasmine won't disappear like that perfume so I'll have cause to think of you often as my life goes on. I already think about you a lot you know but I mean in the future, if say we parted ways or you moved away or something happened, that's all I meant.

Here look, I have some here now, do you mind if I tuck it behind your ear? Hmm, it's sweet, makes you look like a Hawaiian princess. Have you ever been to Hawaii? I once spent a day in the transit lounge with only a little bit of money. I'd been on the plane for so long and when we finally got off I was desperate for a real meal so I went straight to this terrible diner and ate a huge meal but it didn't satisfy me and I had to listen to my stomach groaning the rest of the day while I tried to sleep in uncomfortable positions and then read and then when I could read no more, look in soulless tourist shops. I thought it was strange that a country that identifies so strongly with flowers had no florist in their airport.

There are some lilies over there in the vase on the mantle. Do you like lilies? I was tending lilies the day I met you, the first time you came in to the nursery. I think they might be my favourite flower. Well at least my favourite smelling flower, orchids are probably the most beautiful but they don't really smell that much. Someone once told me that all their energy goes into looking beautiful and then there's none left for the smelling part. Is that what happened to you? Were you so exhausted with looking beautiful that you couldn't speak to me?

I can't think straight today, these hot days make me so

restless, I just feel like lying down. That's why I made you this bed of flowers. Do you like it? At first I thought roses but then I opted for something more exotic; a whole range of beautiful flowers. It befits you better having all these wild leaves because of your jungle beauty. You're so tall; your feet are nearly dangling off the end of the mattress! It was such a process because first I had to make your bed but not as in with sheets, with petals. We could have sat around and torn the petals together one by one. All the different types of flowers would have prompted great stories from our olfactory memory banks but you said you were busy. That's okay, I had nothing to do so I did the petals by myself and now everything is just so. You look resplendent there on the bed, the bed that we created, I'll bet it was nice to fall asleep there, to just drift off into the hot afternoon and imagine that you never had to come back for anything.

But I saved one flower in case you fell asleep before me. Just one little apple blossom with which to trace around your body and especially over your closed eyes. Can you feel that? I'm tickling the flutter of your dreams with the petal of a flower and if someone could see me, they might imagine that I was writing love poetry upon your eyelids, the stem of the flower my pen. Imagine if you could write someone's dreams like that, would you be able to make them as interesting as real dreams?

It's nice to finally have you here in my house. You were so drunk after we went out I had to carry you inside. The neighbours were looking at me a little strangely but I told them you'd had a bit too much to drink and they just smiled in the odd way that they smile. It's such a long sleep you're having, I rang up your work and told them that you were ill and that you might not come in tomorrow either so you don't have to worry about that. We can stay here all day writing dreams on one another's bodies. Would you like that? I'd like that.

*Just a short paragraph on page 10: 'Two bodies were discovered yesterday after neighbours reported an overwhelming smell of dead flowers emanating from the house of their neighbour Mr Alan Endicott.'*

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Declan Kelly.*