



Source: Benjamin Joffe-Walt, 'Union votes to boycott Israeli unis', *Guardian in The Age online*, 31/05/06.
Tags: [intimacy](#), [language](#)
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Trust me—I'm the full bottle on this. It's the honest to God truth or I'll eat my words. It's a real horror movie—you'll love it.

She was playing with fire and he was pissing in the wind. This was more than a storm in a tea-cup. There was a bone of contention between them and his goose was cooked. He was stewing in his own juice. 'Too many cooks spoil the broth', he said. She took it with a grain of salt. His bark was worse than his bite and he'd soon be biting the dust.

He was away with the fairies and his head was in the clouds. He was building castles in the air and feathering his own nest—because come rain, come shine, a man's home is his castle in the putative lucky country, the land of milk and honey. Those were the days. Riding on the sheep's back. When he was flash as a rat with a gold tooth. He'd been wheeling and dealing but he'd taken a wrong turn. He was heading down a blind alley. He'd gone the extra mile, he'd been in it for the long haul, but this was the end of the road. It was a dead end, he'd hit a brick wall. Now he was running on empty. There was nothing left in the tank and he was living off the smell of an oily rag, doing it on a shoestring and borrowed time, tightening her belt to make his ends meet.

She had gone along for the ride, but she'd been down that road before, and this was throwing good money after bad. Here she was again walking a mile in some one else's shoes when she had meant to be as tough as old boots. Instead she was running around like a headless chook. As if she were the one with a few kangaroos loose in the top paddock. When all the time he was the one who was a couple of coupons short of a toaster. He wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed, people had said. You didn't have to be a genius to figure that one out, but there's none so blind as those who don't want to see. The lights were on but no one was home.

It was the name of the game, he said, an idea whose time had come. It's a mug's game, she said. She didn't mince words. 'You wouldn't know your arse if it was on fire'. He was up shit creek without a paddle. He was perched up there like a shag on a rock, talking through his hat, the same old story. Reinventing the wheel, putting the cart before the horse and then closing the stable door after said horse had bolted. Every cloud has a silver lining, he thought. But he was barking up the wrong tree.

The winds of change were blowing, a breath of fresh air, a real little ray of sunshine. The best thing since sliced bread. Well, better than a slap in the face with a wet fish. There was more going on here than met the eye. She had never been one to let sleeping dogs lie. He couldn't lie straight in bed but there were no flies on her. Honesty

was the best policy, she thought; besides, you never give a sucker an even break. He'd taught her that and she'd learnt her lesson.

He'd been flat out like a lizard drinking: pissing in some one's pocket and making hay while the sun shone—but the shit had hit the fan. 'May as well be hung for a sheep as lamb,' he thought. 'What goes up must come down.' All the same, he was hanging on for grim death. 'It's not over till the fat lady sings.' Though it was true she had him by the short and curlies. She didn't turn a hair.

'I won't beat about the bush,' she said. 'I'm fed up to the back teeth with you. You wouldn't know a good thing if it leapt up and bit you. You've got a hide as thick as an elephant and you've been walking a fine line. It's the last straw. I've been writing in pencil, now I'm going to make my mark.'

He was shitting bricks. She threw caution to the winds, went ballistic and stabbed him in the back. There was blood on the floor. She had scored a bull's eye. Hit the mark. He was dead meat.

A word to the wise. You gave me an inch and I took a mile. It was a dream run, going by the book. I've spilt the beans. It wasn't a pretty picture. But that was par for the course. Blind Freddy could have seen it coming, but you were like moths to the flame, lambs to the slaughter, lemmings over the cliff. It was culpable blindness. I'd say it was un-Australian, if I didn't know better.

Well, it was all in a day's work and it's an ill wind that blows no good.

The ball's in your court now, because I'm throwing the book away and these are my famous last words:

This is it—
the end of the line
we're all done, all through
all washed up
all fagged out
run out of oomph
run out of puff
at a standstill
nowhere to go
as dead as a dodo
finished
finito
terminal
end of story
full stop
curtains.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Anna Gibbs.