



Source: Michael Shmith, 'Saddam the snuff movie is really the end', *The Age online*, 05/01/07.  
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There is nothing you can do in this heat. Swimming won't help you, beer neither. You'll feel hotter afterwards no matter what you do. It's the kind of heat that dopes you, makes you lose your smarts. All you can do is walk around the flat in your stubbies and complain about the heat. And don't think of driving anywhere cooler—you won't be able to touch the car steering wheel. There's no one around. The streets are empty. Everyone is inside with the curtains drawn and the fan on. The yellow dog next-door just lies on the concrete driveway, his nose under the gate, too hot to move, too stuffed to bark at strangers. The mechanics at the car yard out the back started work early today. I heard their radio first thing in the morning but it is quiet now. Maybe they packed up after lunch. It'd be like an oven over there. From the kitchen window I can see the metal roof of the garage waver and shimmer like some fucked-up oasis. And everywhere you go is the smell of oil and rubber coming off the old tyres piled up round the back.

You can go stir crazy in this heat just because there is no one to talk to. I rang a mate who usually lives in Darwin and he said he came down here for some cool weather. Yeah, good timing. The only other conversation I've had all day is with the Asian guy who runs the Milk Bar. 'Still hot outside?' he said. Any other time I would have given him the kind of sarcastic response the question deserved but I just said 'yeah' and paid for the paper and the cereal. Couldn't be bothered really.

They say that crime rates soar in this kind of weather. Break-ins, domestic violence, all kinds of fights and arguments. People are fired up, their blood boiling. Who can blame them? It makes you mad, this heat. You can't sleep, you can't get comfortable, you can't eat. There's no

relief. Me, I'm trying to keep my cool and taking January slow. There's a couch and there's cricket on the TV. Easy. There's worse ways of passing the time. And it is better than bashing up your missus.

Here's a funny thing. Last night, after the cricket finished, I stayed watching the National Nine News and half way through the bulletin was a story about a guy wanted for a couple of rapes in the Western suburbs. The journo interviewed some cops and they had a few shots taken from security cameras in a suburban shopping centre along with the usual grainy identikit sketch. Does anyone ever recognise someone from these? The story continued to an interview where some mayor was being interviewed at Federation Square and there was this same guy, this rapist, in the background. He was showing off and rubbernecking in front of the camera like a fan at a film opening. What an idiot. The cops are now saying that he is a person of interest. But here's the trick. Something clicked with me. I know him. I didn't recognise him from the security shots but in the second scene when he was mucking around in the background I said that's Gary. That's bloody Gary. I used to work with him. He was always a goose. And by the way, good one Gazza, for showing off in front of the cameras. If that was me, I'd lie low, you know, draw the curtains, not talk to anyone, just take to the couch and wait for the fuss to pass. Guess I could call the cops with his name. Maybe tell them what I know, so long as I give a false identity because you don't want to get into any trouble. I even wonder if they could trace your phone number. I might do that. Not right now though. Maybe I'll just wait for the weather to break.

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Kate Latimer.*