



Source: Michael Howard, 'Turkey warns of plans to invade northern Iraq', *Guardian Unlimited*, 30/06/07.
Tags: [child/parent](#), [food](#), [sexuality](#), [animals](#)
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I think my brain and I have always had a tendency to wander. My brain forgetting the finer details. Me testing the idea of disappearing. I do not think I was ever interested in being part of an extensive family album.

From home, I ran. I only ended up at the other end of the road, thinking, if I kept still, in this position, they would never find me. I thought—and I was convinced—that the world had a one square mile surface area.

I do not think I ever had a sense of distance. Not really.

I think of all those days, totalling five weeks on a boat from Holland to Australia that my Mum, my Oma and Opa travelled on. I think of the many houses my family has lived in. I think of the landlords that have chased us down the road. I think of the debt collectors and their terrifying terrorist tactics. I think of the shady business deals in Hong Kong. I think of bankruptcy in triplet. I think of bad decisions and my father's perverse relationship with money. I think of the day we had to give it all away.

The day mum sold the piano so we could eat.

The day dad ran over our small white dog as he was waving goodbye to travel to another dead-end job.

The day another dog came proudly bounding towards me with a headless chicken in his jaws.

The day I threw a baby goat across a field, believing it could fly.

The day that started as a heatwave and kept rising.

The day in the nursing home, visiting the great-grandfather who didn't know my name.

The day my sister was pinned against a fence by a frightened horse who was intent on impaling her.

The day Opa was admitted into the hell that is the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

The day we visited Oma at the Glenside Psychiatric Hospital, after Opa's death.

The day Oma was pinned against a padded wall by a knife-wielding maniac.

The day this maniac was given day release and went north on a train and shot his entire family.

The day my sister got married and I read the awful story about Adam and Eve and some exchange of ribs, bodily parts, Eve's descent and loss of self.

The day I took the piss out of my sister's marriage vows.

The day I pissed myself on a school boat trip out of pure fear.

The day my mum gave me instructions on how to piss into the toilet and not on the wall.

The day I didn't want to visit the cousins.

The day I was incredibly attracted to Craig, one of the cousins, a footballer (because he had a soundtrack of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and those football legs, you know the sort).

The day I was incredibly attracted to some other guy, one of my sister's friends.

The day dad took my friend, the black dog, to be killed.

The day when an ex-friend decided to inform my immediate family and extended relatives, that I had been manipulated and brainwashed by these 'men' in order to make me gay.

The day my parents argued.

The day my parents helped out in the garden and I put my back out.

The day my mum worried that I might have drowned but in truth I was just holding my breath to see what would happen.

The day we moved house for the sixteenth time.

The day my Oma's brother shot himself in the head.

The day my Oma travelled the world on a cruise ship and waited for someone to ask her to dance.

The day (in fact, just yesterday) when my Oma found out her sister was dying in Holland from an incurable gall-bladder infection.

The day my uncle left me alone in his flat and I got to watch his black label gay porn collection.

The day we had Christmas at my sister's husband's family house and I was accused, by stares alone, of being a dodgy queer.

The day my sister turned 21 and I was sad, fat and depressed.

The day when I became thin and gaunt.

The day I had to move back in with the parents and live like a child again.

The day it rained and my shoes were soaking wet.

The day in Queensland being force-fed.

The day in the Big Pineapple.

The day everything we ate had ginger in it.

The days I spent at home, still ill, pretending.

The days mum pretended with me so I didn't have to go to school.

The day my dad asked me if I was going to die from AIDS.

The day I looked as if I was going to die from AIDS.

The day my sister ran home from primary school screaming because she was being chased by the local serial killer.

The day I stared very hard at the collection of guns that my sister's husband owned.

The day two friends had to drive me, crying, to my parents' house.

The day my mum poured me warm cups of tea.

The day my mum asked me if I was lonely.

The day my mum finally got a house of her own.

Those were the days.

Adopted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Jason Sweeney.