

Story for performance #953  
webcast from Sydney at 08:03PM, 29 Jan 08



Source: Anne Davies, 'Mr Smith goes to Washington', *Sydney Morning Herald* online, 29/01/08.

Tags: [travel](#), [language](#)

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To esplanade, to escapade, to escalate the ante, to evacuate into tonight.

She is scratching and itching. She is shifting tenses. She is in process.

She rose, put on her coat, checked her pockets and walked out into the crisp winter night. She walked, noting the Christmas lights beckoning and twinkling in every window. Past the shop and onwards to the traffic lights, across the road and to the bus stop as always, she came and stood and tapped her feet with the oft-tapped tapping of impatience.

She looks to the place where the moon should be but it is a cloudy night tonight. She looked to the place where she usually found the moon at this hour but this evening the sky was thick with cloud. She will walk to the stop as she has before and look for the new moon in the sky above the flats all alight in their festive chains.

She has smoked her last cigarette. She will smoke her last cigarette; She will save that final cigarette, rattling in the box like a rattlesnake, until later. She has toasted a slice of bread on a candle flame. She can make wine from cherry soda. She will make a plan for the night en route, devised from the sounds of branches striking the upper deck of the bus for which she is waiting whilst tap, tap, tapping her toes as she has innumerable times before now. She will make a plan only to overturn it like a canoe as she eases on into the night, a swimmer.

On the bus, she is scratching and itching and thinking and sighing. She flies with the transport and keys into the conversations taking place around her, en route. She flies like a restless wind. She flies to her destination, as a bird knows its way to its nest year after year. She rides on a bus listening and looking.

She can hear teenagers squealing, people arguing behind sealed doors, women in cab offices repeating themselves, the singsong of mobile phones, the drum of the tarmac, the quicksilver of newspaper pages, and she smells the ordure of Silence waiting in the wings with Morpheus clutching his special potions for sleep.

She could see the road ahead. The road ahead will be seen. If she couldn't see the road ahead she would be dead. She thought, she thinks, she will think: if I couldn't see the road ahead soon I would be dead. And sure enough the road ahead is visible for all who care to see.

She bites her tongue and rolls her eyes at the road ahead, reaching the numb point of her journey, set down on the scales of indecision. With degrees of incessant imbalance she fluctuates; where she has been, where she wants to be, the weight of where she is now.

She will arrive. She is arriving. Surely she has arrived.

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Michael Curran.*