

Story for performance #967
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Source: Sami Moubayed, 'Maliki rises from the ashes', *Asia Times online*, 12/02/08.

Tags: [child/parent](#), [drugs](#), [disease](#), [intimacy](#)
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Hey Sis, how are ya? I've had a long day. Took a tumble on Smith Street today in front of all these people. God, it's bad enough to fall over in your own home let alone in the middle of a crowded street. Had a bit of a falling week! On Tuesday night I was pretty smashed. I came tearing in the front door 'cause Pat was chasing me and then tried to kick my slip ons at him. I stubbed my toe on the edge of the couch, lost my balance and fell back on my coccyx. Fuck it hurt. He just smiled his beautiful smile and sat with me licking my wounds until we fell asleep on the floor.

Then today. So, the doctor was running forty-five minutes behind and the smell of the clinic was making me kind of edgy. Too clean and sharp you know? The air conditioning just a tiny bit too cold but not really enough so that you feel like you can ask to have it changed. Next to me was a young guy trying to chat up this older lady. She was gorgeous so I don't blame him for trying but she wasn't having it and he just kept going. I've seen plenty of flirting (and received it) but this kid had no clue. Do you reckon we get more brittle as we get older? I think I always thought my heart would get bolder but I'm scared about it now, feel like it's in a box or something. So I was looking at this kid and I thought: He's never going have his heart in a box, it's always going to be out there getting scraped up and bruised and he'll always be fine with that. Some people can just roll can't they. There were also two junkies in the waiting room with their kids. Par for the course down Smith Street. Beautiful children. Parents not so beautiful today. They had skipped lunch for a taste and were floating in and out, generally when one of their kids would ask them something or if their nonsensical games became loud enough to burst through the stone. I was like a yo-yo between anger and sadness trying to stop in the middle at indifference, when the receptionist finally sent me through.

Truth be told there was more going on but I probably hadn't clocked it until just now. The appointment was initially for a blood test. Not much for needles as you know. I'm pretty sure everything is fine with me but Pat got a call from his ex, Suzie, and she'd just found out she's got Chlamydia. Apparently women can have it for a while before showing any symptoms and she didn't find out until she fell pregnant about a month ago. So she's a mess. Rang up Pat in a state on Wednesday. I like Suzie, we've met a few times. It was only a year ago they split and she and Pat are still pretty close. I think she really wanted to have children

and Pat wasn't quite there so that was sort of why they split. Anyway, she got it from some one-night stand she had just after they broke up and before she met Andy, the father-to-be (let's hope). God we get into some big messes don't we? Do you remember that guy James I was seeing before Pat? He was an unforgettable jerk. Suzie said on the phone that if Pat hadn't got it by now then he's probably fine but we thought it would be wise to check. So there was all that going on and then I had to get the morning after pill 'cause Pat broke a condom last night and I'll be ovulating sure as day. Sorry to be writing all this but it's good to have you there. I really miss mum.

So I get the needle and I'm feeling woozy as all get out but I think I'm going to be alright. The doc writes me a script and sends me on my way. I'm feeling pretty shaky as I pay the receptionist and she says I should sit down and have some water and I figure she would know so I sit back in my chair. The kid is still flirting and the junkies are still on the nod. It's depressing so I get up and walk out and then I faint right there in the middle of the footpath. When I came to there was no one around me, just people walking past looking the other way. Do you remember Smith St from last time you came? Bit of a freak show sometimes, people probably thought I had a bad hit or something. Anyway it was a disaster, my phone was on the ground, must have slipped out from my bag, I would've looked a picture. Then the lovely Turkish man from the fruit and veggie stall came running over with some water and asked if I was okay. The receptionist came out and the doctor too and they took me back in for a lie down. The Turkish man came with some honey-covered almonds. God, they were good.

So I just walked in the door and thought of you and decided it was time to write. It's great to write a real letter, wish I had the discipline to do it more often. Spoke to dad the other day, he sounded alright but it's always hard to tell. How do you think he's doing? Give him my love when you see him on Sunday. The stupid pills are making my guts churn now, think I'm gonna have a little nap before Pat gets home. Write soon.

love

Amy

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