

FLASH FICTION

punk

by Klau Stepien



"Hiding" by Jonathan Borthwick

Punk is what you pull out of your sleeve and wave in the air until the scent of it floats around and hits your nostrils at one... two... sniff! It makes your blood rush in your veins; now it's all over you and you can forget what you are. Just this smell and the tingles of excitement. Let's sway to the right, and now to the left, forward, backward. That's how you salsa. Or did you get it all wrong? Go on the bed now; jump like a snotty-nosed brat. Momma's gonna scold you, I'm gonna tell on you, but there's no momma around here. Next available momma: Three hundred miles away. You can even break the bed for all I care. One plank after another, crickety-crack, breaking bad, breaking down, pine wood, moral spine, you're fine fine fine. Who needs a bed anyway? *You make the bed you lie in*, you hear echo in your head. But it echoes in a long-forgotten language. It's like deciphering obscure ancient runes — psychiatric explorations of the brain with needles — excavation set for a little archeologist. Language is a corset, let's get naked and burn it! Or just fold it and set it aside; let mommy take care of it, darn the holes, handwash, and iron. Oh what irony! Turns out it's more difficult to breathe *without* the corset! And everything gets shapeless and blurry. "Mommy, I'm scared", you whisper, but there's no mommy around — maybe play the role yourself. No, not the *Psycho* way! Just be gentle and compassionate. Aha, you forgot you had put aside the corset. La da dee, la dee da, shhhhh! Pffffsssssuuuuzziip... Roof roof woof grrrr grrooo grooow. Grooowin' grumpy. OK, that's enough. Have a break. Here or there? Here — hear her? Or there... order! Or there... dirty, here — hard. Heart hurt, heard her. There! Dare. Dry! Try! Drive, thrive, throw, row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream. Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily; life is but a dream. How's that an innocent nursery song? It's a philosophical treatise! Don't know about you, but I get tired and bored fast. Let's take all the pictures off the wall now — *iconoclasm*!!1 And throw them out the window — *defenestration*!! Look at you, getting all fancy again with your words that swell like blowfish. Breaking news: nobody gives a shit! What does giving a name to an act change about it? It makes it into a statement? Rounds the edges, sets the limits. Politicise. It's two acts in one. Oh boy, it needs double the energy, if not more. And then you need to take some rest, put your feet up, take a few deep breaths. What are the *icons* you would *clast* anyway? A museum postcard, a cheap poster, a family photograph... You cannot just do it though, you need to figure out *why* you're doing it. And this is where it gets complicated. Let's say you commit a defenestration of a Salvador Dali reproduction — it could happen for different reasons: Aesthetic (so exalted, and this cringy color scheme!), political (was it bought on Amazon?), more political (in our oppression we conform to canons imposed by the upper class that help to solidify their power), religious, but actually political (idolatry!), generational/socio-political (reject the old, embrace the new), pragmatic (that tape you used to hang it keeps falling off), philosophical (keep the walls empty to have more space for ideas in your head), aesthetic-philosophical (maintain harmonious minimalism around

yourself and within yourself), emotional (the person who gifted it to you has disappeared without a word), social (you don't want your taste to be mocked when someone visits). Could it ever be simply *throwing it out the window* without any motive? Ladies and gentlemen, and non-binary folks, we're floating in space! If you numb yourself, get linguistically naked, start huffing and puffing, moving uncontrollably, and in this folly, take the pictures off the wall, stick your hands outside the window and loosen your grip, until the sheets of paper slide down — if you do all this not even realising you're doing it — you're still fucking floating in this goddamn space, there's no escape from it! And again — it's not something you can feel, so it's words again, words and systems — scientific or of belief, doesn't matter. So you could simply write it down and save some energy. “Mommy, could you type it for me? My wrist has been hurting again... And the bed is waiting.” Jump, jump, jump, up high, bluntly on the bed. Dreadfully, dreadfully, dreadfully, dreadfully, right until you're dead.