

*Quick-Change*

Liam Andrews

## I.

### ***Technique: Spoken Monologue***

“...and you know, it’s kinda hard not to let your feelings get the best of you at night. It wells up from under you and... Yeah, during the day you’ve got your anxieties and your worries but they’re all just part of the surface noise of it all. If you can find the right circuits, you can walk around a neighbourhood for hours and never once have to think about whether you know someone from somewhere, or where you need to be in an hour, or how to avoid eye contact without seeming like you are. What? Look, nobody likes eye contact. If they tell yo-. Sure, right. I’m the only one that’s lying to you. Believe that if you want to, but really look someone in the face next time you pass them on the street and tell me what you see behind their eyes. It’s not pretty. It’s not something you wish on a stranger. You’ll start hoping to God that its not something a stranger would wish on you. But, you don’t have to worry about any of that at night, is what I’m getting at. But y’know, we don’t know what to do with that sort of freedom. You give your noggin something to work on and it’ll whirr along all day, worrying but never really worrying, get me? When you’re out there and the sun’s not and the people aren’t either, you’ve got nothing to whirr on and so you just revert. Suddenly you’re in the middle of some street that you’ve never seen before and it’s four hours later than you thought it was and the signs are in a language you can’t read and your toenails are bleeding from running for so long and who knows how your lungs have been putting up with all the smoke in the air? It’s not something you can control, but it’s something that you can inhibit. With being out during the day, have- Have you even been listening this whole time? Listen, I’m not saying its something that everyone can handle, but I firmly believe you owe it to yourself to try anything at least twice.”

## II.

### *Technique: Spoken Dialogue*

[RECORDING BEGINS]

A: ...what really messed with me as a kid? That "3-2-1 Green" stoplight trick that dads do.

B: What's the-

A: [coughs] Your mind is fuckin'-[coughs]-*blown*, man. At that point you're probably under the expression that the lights are like, totally random or something, and here's your dad seeing through the fuckin'... *aether* and just predicting when it like...

B: S'like magic.

A: And, it doesn't even stop there, is the thing. Your parents know things that they can't conceivably know, or at least like, that's the way you see it. Dad says green, light turns green. Mom says her show is on, she turns on the TV and it's just... *On*.

B: 'kay.

A: They're like *gods*, man. You don't know how far that precognition shit reaches, so you just assume it's got no limits. Course, when you get older you eventually, yeah, look at the other light and make that connection, one light goes red the other goes green.

B: But at the time...

A: You've got no fuckin' clue. Yeah. All you know is that they're adults and you're a kid and they know more than you do. And you wanna get older to learn what's behind all of it. Beyond their position as like, a role model, you wanna be like them because you wanna be a *god*.

B: Must be disappointing I guess.

A: Its a dull epiphany. Dull epiphany... You think you've been chasing like, an *uber-munch* the whole time but then you just figure out that they're just playing magic tricks.

B: It reverses, though.

A: What's that?

B: People want to be old when they're young. You're saying that as a child, the adult is like a figure to aspire to because they have some kind of omnipotence or divine consciousness beyond what the child can comprehend.

A: That's one way of-

B: But when you get older, people start idealizing the child instead. "Childlike innocence" and all that. Adults think that children have an untarnished view of the world and want to access that through art or un-learning cynicism. Do you think if adults went back to being kids they'd get jaded in the other direction? That they'd realize kids are just like, too simple to see through the magic tricks?

A: Y-[coughs] you lost me, man.

[RECORDING ENDS]

### III.

#### *Technique: Iridescence*

Sit. Write.

Sit in a room and think about writing something.

He sat thinking in the room, writing something.

He, sitting in a room, was writing some things and thinking.

He'd written, thinking, sitting: *Something In A Room*.

He was sitting; having written some things, he looked about his room, thinking.

"Heed!" looking about the room, "Writing! Something about thinking." He sat.

"He's at his writing, in his room." Sitting, they thought about his writing.

After a bout of thinking about a thin king, the Sitter in his room wrote.

In the afternoon, sitting aft of the room are they?

Ohm. Rohm. In a room they sit.

You would think, writing in a room, that some sitting about isn't a thing to do.

Things to do: write, sit, think something is it.

Write sums, things. As thee sits, think: "Is this it?"

Sit, write: "'tis".

#### IV. *Technique: Critique*

Here we are again, I guess. Time to review another trendy offbeat pop album, this week's exhibit: *Time n' Place*, the sophomore album from Kero Kero Bonito, a Japanese / British trio who you might know from "*That song in the memes about eating shrimp and turning pink*".

Unfortunately, talking about KKB critically is a bit of a touchy subject in some internet circles, so here's what I'll do: I'm not going to mention how low-effort vocalist Sarah Bonito's performances are, or how it seems like she's been singing the same song since 2013. I won't talk about my stance that in the switch from *Bonito Generation*'s synth-heavy PC Music-influenced style to *TnP*'s guitar based noise-pop sound, the group lost any semblance of innovative production. I'll omit all hairsplitting complaints about what exactly *noise-pop* is supposed to mean, and how it's usually a bit of a deeper marriage of the two genres than what we hear on "Only Acting" (i.e. a pop song with some tape-skipping effects and some blown-out shrieks near the end). You can try, but you won't find a single mention in my review about how the album opener "Outside" made me remember why grunge died in the early 00's. I'm not even going to talk about how the simple act of being self-aware about how bad your lyrics can sometimes be doesn't change how bad your lyrics are! All of that is simply besides the point, and would make none of my devoted readers very happy.

REVIEW : Kero Kero Bonito - Time n' Place (Released 1 Oct 2018)

It's fun!

Score - 8/10

## V.

### ***Technique: Internal Monologue***

Out the door and in the air. Cooler than it was. Enjoy this season: grey and red. Shame that it seems shortest. Makes you savour. Got 'till it's gone. Should walk more, autumn spendthrift. Flies like an arrow, others like a banana. Fourth year now, last beat of a bar, lest you're irrational or waltzing. Or nonwestern. Wonder how our pop sounds to them? Wearing blue jeans but twelve bar blues don't fit. Orb with one village. Give it a hundred years and it will all sound the. Think the King worried 'bout British beetles? Invasive species. Head under the overcast now, please. Time we got? Ten to nine. Loads of. Enough for a cup of? Lets see: four for detour, three to pay and pour, two to walk the remainder, one to—free for—. Adds up. So we go. Simple rerouting, cafe is basically on the anyway. Don't walk on this side of the street usually: suboptimal. Holding doors still considered polite? Question is when to let go. Always get slammed on someone. Busier than I thought in here. Hotter than I was. Walking fast raises the. That a line? Unlikely to wait it and still make it. Time we got? Five left. Abandon it. Will surely yawn all day, no breaks between lectures, *say la vee*. How did we ever manage without? Six hours for twelve grades. Bye gone bygones. Breath of fresh. Back on track. Just a hop skip and jump. JHE door held for me: balanced karma. Up some stairs and into hall. Plenty of room. Spot at the back. Get settled in while the old man starts to speak.

## VI.

### *Technique: Telescopic Series*

Having long since been born, the person died.

Uncountable years before Mrs. Rachel O'Shea's (matrimonial) name was added via keyboard input to a list of occupants at St. Audrey's Home for the Aged, Rachel Caffery's (birth) name was written via graphite pencil on a birth certificate at St. Stephen's Maternity ward.

Several decades after tiny baby Rach's tiny baby legs were finally strong enough to support her weight, she fell to the floor of her kitchen in the midst of an ischemic stroke that left her indefinitely bound to a motorized wheelchair.

Approximately six dozen years before Mrs. O'Shea completed an introductory-level course in conversational French with sixteen fellow retirees, she clambered onto a yellow schoolbus en route to her first day of preschool at Clongowes Day School for Small Children.

Around fifty-two years after Doyle O'Shea leaned in very close and kissed little Rae Caffery in the shade of the oak that grew behind Doyle's father's house even though he'd just that afternoon said in front of all the others that he didn't like her like that, she felt his hand go limp in hers in a room that had a chill about which she'd complained to the nurses nine times to the sounds of various mechanical whirrings.

Twenty-nine years, seven months, and three days before Kathy — the fourth and final iteration of Rachel and Doyle O'Shea's progeny — was driven and subsequently delivered to a dormitory on the campus of Trinity College for the purposes of post-secondary education, the two first engaged in physical copulation in the backseat of Doyle's father's Ford Model 91.

Nineteen seconds, forty-eight milliseconds, and seventy-three nanoseconds after Doyle O'Shea first confessed his feelings of unspeakably deep affection and desire to Rachel Caffery, she told him that she loved him too.

## VII.

### ***Technique: Drama***

*(A CHAPEL, noon. Flaxen beams from what can only be assumed to be THE HEAVENS flood every handwaxed inch of the granite floor. Impatient noises throb from stuffed makeshift pews. ENTER GROOM from the wrong place.)*

GROOM *(loosening his bowtie)*: This is truly the happiest moment of my life. Where is my father? Is he out there in the audience? The lights are just so bright. Could we have them dimmed a bit?

*(A CHAPEL, dusk.)*

Groom's FATHER *(wiping nose on a moth-eaten sleeve)*: I'm right in front of you, son, in the front row. Your mother and I are so proud of you.

GROOM *(tying his left shoelace)*: Glad to hear it. Is that a new septum piercing, mom?

Groom's MOTHER *(comatose)*:

CHAPLAIN *(sweating)*: You're sure about this now, are you?

GROOM *(straightening a plumed hat)*: Obviously. When did you get here?

CHAPLAIN *(blowing dust off an ancient tome)*: If you'd just look at some divorce statistics here...

GROOM *(flicking dried blood from his collar)*: Fuck the statistics, with all due respect. I'm clearly in love, just look at these star-struck eyes. Look at them.

*(ENTER BRIDE stage left, looking presentable. Several ACQUAINTANCES in the audience stand.)*

BRIDE *(blushing what seems to be an unhealthy amount)*: Aren't I supposed to walk down the aisle instead of coming in from the side? How is there so much glare coming off the floor? Was it waxed right before I came in?

*(A CHAPEL, a near-pitch-dark moonless night. The floor is grimy and strewn with litter.)*

GROOM *(trying on a pair of ivory kid gloves)*: Hi honey. You look great. I'm really pumped about this.

BRIDE *(looking really just okay)*: Me too. Where's the guy who's supposed to read the stuff?

GROOM *(picking a bit of something out from his front teeth)*: The chaplain? He was here a minute ago.

CHAPLAIN *(gasping for air)*: I'm really on a tight schedule here so if we could wrap this up soon...

BRIDE *(aging by the minute)*: When did you get here?

CHAPLAIN *(at inhuman speeds)*: Dearly beloved [...] wedded (husband / wife)?

BRIDE and GROOM *(in unison, but barely)*: Sure.

CHAPLAIN *(from offstage)*: We're done. The bill's in the mail.

*(A BELL rings sinisterly, obviously a foreshadowing device.)*



## VIII.

### *Technique: Revision*

so im fuckinaround in the study when the irving knocks on the door and tells me that i have to actually put effort in if i want to get anywhere and i told him to go fuck himself

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So, I was fucking around in my study this morning when Irving knocked on my door. I told him to come in, and he said he thought I needed to include more exposition.

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I'm a failing author. After breakfast this morning, I was fucking around in my study when I heard a knock at the door. I yelled out that it was open, and in slunk my editor, Irving. He said that he'd read my latest draft and thought it would need to be less depressing and vulgar if I wanted to get published anywhere. I told him to get the fuck out of my sight.

•

I'm an aspiring author and journalist. After enjoying a hot breakfast, I was daydreaming in my study when I heard a rude knock at the door.

"Come in!" I chirped. My editor Irving oozed into the room. First, in his trademark whine he asked if I would be nicer to him in my writing. When I didn't respond for about a minute, he also brought up his old nitpick about how authors don't usually live in the same house as their editors. Without a word, I glared at him and he winced back through the doorway.

•

I'm an author and journalist. After enjoying a hot breakfast, I was daydreaming in my study when the phone rang. IRVING showed up on the caller ID. I smiled.

"Hello?"

"It's me," chimed the voice, "Your favourite editor in the world!"

"Hey Irv, what's up?"

"I just finished reading the draft you sent me, and uh..."

"Come on Irv, you know I can handle it."

"I'm worried that the meta thing won't really work."

"What do you mean, 'won't really work'?"

"The whole 4th-wall breaking, winking-at-the-audience shtick. I don't think it'll resonate with readers."

"Why not?"

"Look, I can't talk for long but could you please just write something normal for once? Something with a normal, straightforward narrative?"

"I'll try just for you, but I can't promise anything," I said, and hung up.

## IX.

### *Technique: Nightmare*

They're on my tail, and I hear the shambling squishing footfalls of what must be a thousand ragged soles, and I can feel the sour heat of their breath on the nape of my neck, and I don't know how they found me (here of all places, it's absolutely outrageous) and I don't know the precise nature of the unutterable things to which I might be subjected if I ever slip up and let them get their filthy fingers on me, and I don't know how many generations of my extended family are already doomed to suffer the same consequences for my actions, and I don't know how much longer I can run from them before the snow freezes all the blood beneath my kneecaps.

Rosevines like barbed wire wind and twist for miles above my head. Ferns with rusty razor edges lurch towards my feet as I tiptoe through a clearing, slicing closer to the bone with each step. When I reach the centre of the glade, the moon contorts and bursts into a bloated sun, revealing me to all who are there to see. Cowering into a foetal ball, I feel the skin on my back begin to cook. Blisters burst as soon as they form and I slip deeper down.

I sit at the head of the table. The guests are ravenous, and with no music being played I hear each smack of their lips and contended grunt after they swallow their food. I cannot eat. I cannot move. I cannot speak. I am too frightened to scream.

No matter which direction I face, I see nothing but dirty snow. I trudge to and fro arbitrarily. I am probably going in circles. If my lips were just a bit less encrusted with ice, they would be curled into a grin. I've escaped them, I think. I know it is foolish to say this so soon, but I feel I will be safe here.

**X.**

***Technique: Questionare***

## **FINAL EXAMINATION**

Time Allotted: 2.5 Hours

Date: Friday, 14 December, 2018

Please answer the following questions in the space provided on the next page. You will be marked on your argumentative prowess as well as the validity of your evidence. Marks will be docked for questions left blank.

1. For which course is this exam being written?
2. What is the Professor's full name?
3. What did you think of the course?
4. How many lectures did you attend?
5. Which year in the period of 1966 - 1999 had the biggest impact on the Professor's life?
6. What effect did the Professor's somewhat unconventional parental situation have on the Professor's life pre- and post-childhood?
7. What effect did the Professor's mother's employment have on the Professor's life post-childhood?
8. When the Professor's voice cracked during the 5th lecture of the semester, how much respect for the Professor did you lose?
9. Do you think that the Professor is deserving of love?
10. Do you think that the problems that befall the Professor's attempts at dating are by the fault of the Professor or a symptom of a greater problem in society?
11. How many people would you estimate that the Professor has slept with?
12. Would you sleep with the Professor, given the opportunity?
13. How personally hurt would you be upon learning that the Professor would not sleep with you, given the opportunity?
14. Is true love real?

**Good Luck!**