



Rode Out

I sit on my favourite rock at the end of my beach and contemplate those words you left me with: *'Is this darkness I feel, the darkness you earned,* says the one on the rocks to the one who was spurned'. Your hair got in your eyes as you blew me a kiss. Then away you sailed to the streets I would miss. I've turned those words over thousands of times, but have yet to find a kitemark. Prophetic projection perjured—perhaps. Ironic inversion injured—a lapse? Once a loose tooth, those words are now cankered and so sore that there is almost no chance of finding meaning in or about the rotting

and figurative skin flaps that conceal their painful and stunted roots. I'm guilty. I'm not guilty. I have no conviction in my judgments. I've been on this island and I've been on my own, frazzled by suns that have scorched dreams of home. Home: an indistinct and desperate longing that pounds dully and ceaselessly, like the rays upon my closed eyelids. At night, when I can rest from suchlike squinting, I fantasize about artificial light. Lampposts hunched like overzealous butlers, keeping loneliness at bay. Lampposts cowering like mute witnesses. Lampposts threatening to sing. To sing of the shadows that dart between their watches. To sing of the shades that cannot evade their piercing scrutiny. To sing of the crimes of the street. Ah and oh the street! How I yearn for the streets. Glutinous tarmacadam abrading my face, please mix with my blood in my very last scrape. The gentle and regular lapping of the waves spitefully mocks the pulsing of traffic at night. The constellations above illuminate darkness with patterns provided by my own cortical modules. And I'm hankering after neon and the nascent threat of sex and violence. This station is slowly becoming unmanned. It seems that inevitable isn't quick enough. And the final accelerant comes in the form of an unbidden footstep pressed into damp



sand—the sign I’ve awaited to start going mad. I’ve been thinking: How many ways can a man kill a man and can you think of a way without dirtying your hands? The footsteps proliferate overnight. I take a stick of koa wood back to the cabin and fashion a makeshift cudgel. Then I break it in two and burn it on the beach, scared it could be used against me. The trees have taken their sides. They watch and wait for my demise. I cut them down piecemeal and systematically, feeding the branches into bonfires in the evening. It’s no use. There are two distinct sets of prints now—one small and one larger—and my hope and my fear is that they are manifestations from some other world. A parallel island where you walk with a parallel me on a parallel beach by the parallel sea. My fear is that that’s no crumb of comfort, just a guarantee, of my apparent desertion in this reality. If I’m on the rocks, may I break your hull, in a parallel world where you never feel whole. If you gave me this darkness, I hope you drown in the slick, in that other dimension where you mix with the sick. And any which way and any which how, I know the only thing that I can do now... is miss you; just sit here and miss you; disappear incompletely and miss you.

