

in a dream of a life



# ABBODIES



nicky melville



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Sad Press

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10.0<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This poem is part-homage to Néstor Perlongher's *Corpses*, translated by Will Rowe, which has the refrain 'there are corpses.'



knowing me  
I must have left  
my house at 8  
because I always do

I was sick and tired  
of everything  
when I called you last  
night from Glasgow

thinking of Nigel Farage  
in the thrush of the train  
slow dancing  
with himself  
that Brex-tit  
and 17 million others

in a country that works  
for everyone  
there is a body on the line

my train I'm certain  
left the station  
just when it was due  
because there was no body  
on the line

and the destination  
makes it all worthwhile

*Arrival*

an ABBA album  
from 1976

and a film  
about alien visitors  
40 years later  
starring Amy Adams  
takes my breath away  
as Louise        sees the future

coincidence?

beams are goanna blind me  
but I won't feel  
blue

every time I talk  
to my mum and dad  
there is a body on the line

so        then        the other night

I realised I couldn't do  
the 'Bodies' poem  
but maybe I could  
put it together with my 'ABBA' poem  
but I couldn't remember what it was called

the 'Corpses' homage was called  
'there is a body on the line'  
and  
just next to it  
in the folder  
    adjacently  
    as CB might say  
was my 'ABBA' poem  
'This is not about the Brexit'

next to each other  
not bothered

this ABBA fixation of mine is weird

well it's not [it is]  
but it seems  
as if it means / they mean something else

to do with  
relationships                      bodies on the line

the whole ABBA relationship thing  
is a never ending  
                    well      since last summer  
fascination for me

they were married      couples  
but wrote lots of songs  
'S.O.S.' in 75  
                    the year I was born  
about breaking up  
but didn't      break    up  
and      divorce              till 82

'Waterloo'  
Eurovision song  
contest  
Scandinavia  
F(j)ordism

Brexit                      obvs

when I type      'obvs'  
into my mobile phone

predictive text suggests invasion

IndyRef : the original  
IndyRef 2 this time it's personal  
Indy Ref 2  
(spin-off)  
: this time it's personnel

*The Visitors*

ABBA's last album

from 1981

title track's a belter

my mum and dad used to  
play it in the car  
when I was wee

2 years later

an American TV programme started

called *V*

starring Marc Singer

of *Beastmaster* fame

about an invasion

of aliens reptiles

disguised as humans

V is for visitors

coincidence?

I think not

I believe in angels

Jeff Ferrell      MSW  
                         whatever the fuck  
                         that means  
followed me on twitter

he's attempting  
2 evolve in 2  
the best [he] can be  
fore leaving planet Earth

he followed me

F4F  
follow for follow

did he find  
out about  
my poem's themes  
from the interweb?

follow for follow

that!

co in ci dence?

I think not

#notnormal

and this            today

junk mail

in my

inbox

that said

[Nickemelville, Alien camera is our newest high performance camera](#)

a hyperlink

that leads to

coral.globalcurrently.com/? etc

I didn't click on it

ain't no big decision

take it now or leave it

Yes!

I've been broken-hearted

blue  
since the day we parted

and lots of other  
lots of other lots  
of other  
lots of other  
and

knowing me  
knowing EU  
there is nothing  
we can do

it's funny  
I only thought of that bit  
after the first time I read this  
poem in public

but it's too obvious  
so I won't include it  
in the new version

and I certainly  
won't use it as a refrain

indeed  
the judges will decide  
the likes of me abide

I just typed that last line  
in time  
to the line in the song  
just by chance  
take a chance  
chicka chicka chan chance

the game is on again  
to help me through  
reality

and  
I have a new passport  
now  
an electronic one  
with all my details  
and face without glasses  
a body on the line

I have contacts (crutches)  
now  
though am thinking  
it might be more efficacious

to get laser eye surgery  
so  
I won't have to worry  
about my eyesight  
during the war  
incarceration  
torture  
etc

though I'll be fucked  
without insulin

I cannot move  
I'm standing  
numb and frozen  
an enemy of the people  
fucking cuts  
among the things  
I love so dearly  
the books  
the paintings  
and the furniture  
holds a body on the line  
  
help me

(I wrote 'help me'  
for a joke once  
—but it wasn't—  
on a bit paper  
on an easel  
then I went to bed  
and that was  
'fuck you        like an animal'  
a few days later)

and they don't care  
to come here  
any more now  
a body is on the line

whatever happened  
to our love  
I wish  
I understood

I remember the first time  
I got an *Oor Wullie* annual for xmas  
a Scottish        xmas tradition

I must have been 6 or 7

on the cover it says  
OOR WULLIE!  
YOUR WULLIE!  
A'BODY'S WULLIE!  
'a' apostrophe  
body  
apostrophe 's'

horrified  
I went up to my mum  
and said

Mother            I'm slightly discomfited  
by one of my xmas presents  
this annual seems to be  
referring to *my* willy  
because it says  
'YOUR WULLIE'  
i.e. *my* willy  
                  why did I ever  
                  let you go?  
and the general willy  
'A'BODY'S WULLIE'  
the day before you came

V is for visitors

please can you explain these  
possessive apostrophes?

how my parents laughed

it's a'body's Wullie  
i.e. everybody's Wullie

proper Broons' moment!

& if you don't get that  
joke  
or other national  
istic references  
then you don't pass  
the citizen test

Scottish jokes  
for  
Scottish folks

jokes for Jocks

so when you need me  
darling can't you hear  
me

S.O.S.  
the love you gave me  
nothing else can save me  
S.O.S.

when you're gone  
how can I even try to go on  
when you're gone  
though I try  
how can I carry on

I can't go on  
knowing me  
knowing EU  
ah! go on

in the video for 'S.O.S.'  
there's a weird bit  
when Agnetha's singing  
the second verse

she's standing  
    possibly numb and frozen  
in front of some woods  
or a copse of trees  
which are out of focus

at 1:32  
two men enter the frame  
bottom left  
    it's not Benny & Bjorn  
and just stand there  
for 5 seconds

when I saw some guy  
begging on Waverley bridge  
    I say some guy  
    but his name was / is David  
        a protection  
that was in my class  
in the jail  
and seemed to have  
aged 10 years  
in one winter

there is a body on the line

under ground  
in tunnels  
on railway slats  
beside WH Smith's  
Tie Rack  
and Subway

there is a body on the line

in the trash of a tube  
that now  
never stops  
in the kiosks  
by papers  
there is a body  
on the line  
in the oyster

when the eyes of a Tory  
open in the morning  
there is a body on  
Iain Duncan Smith

it's not so much how  
does he sleep  
but why should he wake up?  
and Theresa May  
Theresa may but will  
put millions of bodies  
on the line

they already have  
fucking cu ts

and each time superfoods  
are mentioned  
are prepared  
are harvested  
are discovered

a body is on the line

mate!

you got any Gojis?  
Skyr?

all war  
is desire  
for more cows

Tom Betteridge  
tell me the truth

[I'm] enchained  
by [my] own sorrow

in [my] eyes  
there is no hope  
for tomorrow

I just put that in there  
    we can patch it up together  
cause Tom said  
his favourite ABBA song  
is Chiquitita  
    not chicken tikka  
    as per Peter Kay  
    what the fuck's he got to say?

Tom Betteridge  
tell me the truth  
    is out there

writing this made me  
remember  
that when I was wee  
my dad used to tell me  
he was actually an alien  
and would remove his mask  
when I was 18  
and show me his spaceship  
which he kept in the woods

I asked him about it  
the other day

and he said he was making it up  
obvs  
as a bedtime story  
before I went to  
(hopefully)  
sleep

what a weird thing  
to tell your son

it explains a lot

when I sent a manuscript  
alertstate.pdf  
to my publisher  
my publisher  
sent it back  
entitled  
alienstate.pdf

coincidence?  
I think not

is that true?  
it's better  
than I ever even knew

beetroot too  
oysters man  
from *Scotland*

fucking check shirts

this is no post-Brexit come down  
on newcomers no  
(under) attack  
on hardworking (European) families  
and individuals  
who (come here to) do the right thing  
with their bodies on the line

when lines of poetry  
are catalectic  
there is a body on the

each time I watch the Bake Off  
to help me cope  
with anything  
the Great British  
this or that  
body is on the line

each time I'm the first to like this  
a body is on the line

when I give a homeless  
a note  
ten pound        once  
or a fiver  
twice    now  
and my friends say  
did you just give a note?

there is a body on the line

every time I answer the house phone  
even though  
I gave no one  
that number  
a body is on the line

when the price of rice  
when the spreadsheet s(p)ells wheat  
when there's some hedge fun  
for all the family

a body is on the line

on every track  
from here  
or there  
to him fucked too  
knowing me  
knowing EU  
    ah hah  
this time we're through  
a body on the line

there are two sandwiches in my pack  
from Tesco

where many bodies  
are on the

bacon lettuce tomato mayo  
I give one to him  
cause there's a body on the  
line 'em up  
hold 'em please

when Bill Gates drops  
    slipping through my fingers  
    all the time  
a million

it's not worth  
stooping so low  
to retrieve  
by the time he picks it up  
he's doubled  
fuckupled  
the bodies on the line

I try to catch her  
every minute

what happened  
to the wonderful adventures  
now a body is on the line

I think about my daughter  
and son  
and you  
and think about  
my mother  
crying about  
*her* daughter  
listening to this song

loss of  
con fi dence

since her heart attack

I can't say fuck all  
I cry at adverts

wiping my tears  
when I know            it's wrong

there's a body on the line

but you see

somewhere deep  
inside you  
must know  
I love you  
r body is on the line

I don't want  
to talk  
if it makes you feel  
~~bad~~  
~~sad~~  
about things  
we've gone through

you were in my arms  
a body on the line

standing at our table  
spread eagle led  
looking at these words  
writing them  
while listening to ABBA  
was / is a soundtrack  
I you tried to reach for me  
but ~~you~~ I have lost my mind

it's actually closed  
my ~~your~~ mind

you I make me feel alive  
but something  
died I ~~you~~ fear  
you seem so far away  
though you were  
standing near  
a body on the line

I have been waiting  
for these visitors

follow for follow

when I know  
the time  
is right  
for me  
I'll cross the stream

*Ghostbusters* reference is forthcoming  
don't cross the streams

help me

V is for visitors

for example  
what the fuck is 'Eagle' all about?

they came flying from far away  
now I'm under their spell  
I love hearing the stories  
that they tell  
they've seen places  
beyond my land  
and they found new horizons  
they speak strangely

but I  
understand

doesn't seem to be  
about a bird of prey

but birds come  
(evolved)  
from reptiles  
don't they?

look at a gannet

the talons  
of a raptor

scaly  
very scaly

according to *I'm A Celebrity:*  
*Get me out of here!* 2016  
52% of British adults  
believe  
there is extra-terrestrial life

Carol Vorderman said  
I think if there is  
anything  
we don't know the signs

ah hah!

ah ha ha

*Signs*  
a reference  
to the film  
by M. Night Shyamalan  
    starring anti-Semite  
    Mel Gibson  
    and Joaquin Phoenix  
about aliens who come here  
that we repel with water

cliché!

building me a fence  
building them a wall  
building me a home  
thinking I'd be strong there  
is a body on the line

crackin up  
crackin up

I thought it was

breakin up  
breakin up

breaking up is never easy  
I know  
but this time we're through

breaking her way  
making her May  
pushing through  
unknown jungles  
everyday  
there is a body on the line

and with no trace  
of hesitation  
she keeps  
falling  
pushing  
head over heels

not knowing me  
not knowing EU

she's extreme  
if you know what I mean

and Trump is  
master of the scene

can't resist the strange attraction  
from that giant dynamo

look into his angel eyes  
one look  
and you're hypnotised

don't look too  
deep in to

one day you'll find  
out he wears a disguise

a'body's on the line

when I first started  
this poem

I wrote

this seems like  
a suicide note  
but it's not  
but I didn't include it

[though I did now  
in the fourth incarnation]

now  
I'm not  
so sure

so  
sure

Saussure

So I said to the kids  
just after we left *Ghostbusters* reboot  
[they crossed the streams]  
when I saw a Deliveroo deliverer  
in the street  
a body on the line

that they should get  
a box  
with a buzzard  
in it

[chef got a box  
perhaps  
a chicken's  
in it – Ivor Cutler[t]] [LOL!]

I always point out  
these common birds of prey  
often            buzzard!  
in the middle of a sentence  
then continue

knowing me  
knowing EU

that's what you should do  
for my funeral

I want a buzzard  
at my funeral

can I/you hire one?

when Pierce Brosnan's  
voice breaks  
my heart

Mamma Mia!

WTF  
is going on?

#notnormal

nick-e [nicky] sees the future

there are moments  
when I think  
am goin crazy

am crackin up  
not breakin up

but it's [not] goanna be  
alright

in the background      Frida sings  
we'll soon be changing  
everything

this is in 'Super Trouper'  
(storm and starship  
spring to mind)

'The Visitors'  
'The Day Before You Came'  
*Arrival*  
'Eagle'

in America  
buzzard means vulture  
with a body on the line

vultures are pretty  
reptilian  
aren't they?

I really tried  
to make it ~~up~~  
~~work out~~

Dancing to this at Studio 54, WOW  
what great nights  
plenty bodies on the line  
I wish I was still there!!!!

when all is said and (not) done

in the autobio

graphy biopic

or at least

as a little story

at my funeral

the following scene should be included:

buzzard!





A group of people dressed in white costumes, possibly representing a protest or a performance. One person in the foreground is holding a sign that says "I'm not a terrorist". Another person in the background is holding a sign that says "I'm not a terrorist". The background is a solid yellow color. The text is overlaid on the image.

'the most singular state-of-the-nation poem you're likely to read this year'  
*The Scotsman*

A'BODY'S

sad press