

Âme perdue

Written by Geoff G Turner © 2005. Finished: 18.24, 17 April.

Another Rear Cabin 67 Winifred Composition

Sunday afternoon, Woy Woy station, he shuffles wearily as the busses jockey for position
If he was living up north, he would be an honored tribal elder
But here he is just another derelict, scrounging through the bins, looking for a cigarette
butt with an unused section, so that he can pretend, for a moment, he isn't on the lowest
rank of the social ladder

His face is gaunt; his body is thin - my father (when he fought Cancer in a winner-take-
all title fight) looked in better shape than he does now!
His shirt is long, like his hair and beard, and is probably just as greasy
But his shoes (for some reason) look in pretty good condition, and they clank as he
wanders hopelessly amongst the 5.30 Route 50 patrons

He asks me for something - I have no idea what he has just said, so I shake my head
The young woman sitting on the next bench (with a piercing protruding just above her
upper lip looking like a silver mole) says she doesn't smoke - so he tries someone else

He picks up used tickets - valid to nowhere (much like his current situation), then slings a
large garbage bag over his right shoulder and shuffles away, as my bus turns 90 degrees
and begins the last leg of my Sunday Odyssey

I'm reflecting on the fact that I'm only one rung on that ladder up from him

Winning entry of the 2015 SFNSW Poetry Competition.