
~ 5 QUESTIONS ~

with

CLAIRE
JANSEN

of earth shattering importance

1. If you could take one book to a deserted island, what would it be?

It would be *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac. I love the sprawling poeticism of the narrative, but I also think the isolation of a deserted island would help focus the stream of consciousness prose for the reader. I love the characters Kerouac writes about, the stories, and the every day detail that has this sense of embedded movement.

2. What is your writing space?

There is a little study at my house with a small wooden desk I bought in Penguin with a matching yellow chair. That, or a grey desk in a shoebox at uni where I write, but assuming I have my laptop, anywhere. I love to write in notebooks when I'm travelling and I like to find the study desks in libraries where I can scrawl away amid a crowd of silent people.

3. If you are in a writing rut, how do you get yourself out of it?

There are times when I just don't write. But in terms of getting started I try to follow these two essentials - read (this conjures inspiration and can help to influence style and technique), and sit down and do it. The latter I do by setting a daily word limit. Write hard and fast and fix it up later.

4. Pen, pencil, computer, typewriter, lipstick on a mirror - what is your preferred tool of trade?

Pen and notebook, although my handwriting is nearly illegible. I like the speed with which I can jot an idea or description down on paper no matter where I am or what time it is. Perhaps this is the downfall of my handwriting. Computer after the initial idea is set. Lipstick? Only for my face.

5. If the world was going to end in a week and you had to choose between a small remote island or a metropolis to live out your last days, which would you choose?

I would choose the metropolis and if I wasn't all consumed by trying to stop the imminent end of world or spending the time we had left with friends and family I would try write some of it down as a record. Observe.

I think being in the heart of a city would make me feel closer to an audience. It would feel like I was creating a time capsule. And also most movies about the world ending are set in cities so maybe that skews my perception of the event.

~ About the author ~

Claire Jansen lives in Hobart, Tasmania. For the past five years, Claire worked as an adviser with the Tasmanian Greens and as a policy analyst in the Tasmanian State Service. She studied literature and creative writing at the University of Tasmania, and is back there now undertaking a PhD in Cultural Studies. Claire plays in two bands, Catsuit and Heart Beach and her writing has appeared in *Cordite Review*, *Lithuanian Papers* and *The Journal of Ecocriticism*, *Aphra* and *Lipmag*. She also has two poetry collections – *Landing on Snow* and *Outside in the Sun* that have been published by Fire Door Press.

You can read her story, *Manhattan is an Island* in **Islands and Cities: A Collection of Short Stories from Tasmania and London**

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