



*Tips
for the writer
on writing
about
Tasmania
in a manageable way.*

by Lucinda

“Manageable” is what the Writer Wranglers of the new* and very excellent Transportation Almanac have said about the submissions for the online residency. Keep your posts to a manageable length.

In other words, don't write an essay.

In other words, be succinct and let there be a point to what you're saying and let that point be something to do with Tasmania, or to do with writing.

In other words, don't bite off more than you can chew. Be realistic. Avoid finding yourself at 3am paralysed before the white screen of your laptop, chiseling down non-existent fingernail tips with coffee stained teeth, wearing yesterdays underpants and a cheese encrusted jumper. After all you're a writer. That means you write things. Not stare into the hollow eye of a computer wishing that you had someone to spoon.

Definitely do not attempt to write about the love-hate-embrace-break relationship you have to the heart shaped island because that's impossible.

For instance, do not admit that you will engage in hand to hand combat with the mainlander who dares throw shade on Tasmania and yet have spent LITERALLY hours down the pub complaining to Tasmanians about the island's flaws, in particular:

- a) tourists
- b) the way the winter never really leaves the island and instead roosts inside you, hibernating like a living thing, asleep but always coughing and rolling over and getting up for a glass of water. Filling your insides with the dank rising river damp of the Invermay floodplain
- c) Tasmanians

Definitely do not make any allusions to Tasmanians being like migratory birds or to the island being a living throbbing heart or BOSSOM whose rhythm echoes through time calling back it's scattered children and mourning those who died here unjustly at the hands of invaders who keep their guilt alive in pocket watches and bottles of Coca-Cola and mysterious claims about empty land.

Do talk about MONA and David Walsh having Asperger's. Definitely mention this 1 million times. Perhaps you could write a whole post on how amazing MONA is. Perhaps you could write about how you convinced your posh Sydney cousin that they should visit Tasmania by insisting that MONA had converted the entire state into an installation art experience replete with free floating facial tumors and found objects and that all the people had been moved off to a smaller island. After all, they've done it before.

Definitely don't set out to capture the swirling indefinable madness of Tassie. Don't talk about 'realness' or use the words 'down to earth'. Definitely don't talk crap about dew beading the button grass and your blood turning to cider and the weird heroin quality of the sunlight here that keeps you flocking back like a migratory bird that you promised in an earlier paragraph not to talk about. Definitely don't talk about your dead friends. Definitely don't talk about your living ones and the tiny unkempt family feelings you've built on their shoulders. Definitely don't try to capture the indescribable sadness that hangs around you like mist. Don't talk about how when the wheels of the plane hit the tarmac of Launceston Airport you can only think of winged things preening and settling into nests, flush as puzzle pieces, because this is just another bird analogy (see above).

Just fill the page, send the thing, stop chewing your fingernails trying to define the indefinable, a task that no one has set you anyway, and go to bed for the love of god.
