

loves The Harvester. He lifts her from the car. She unfolds back into Nan before the stroke. Uncle Paul puts all her favourite food onto a plate and chops it into squares. Nan looks like she's whistling when she eats. I want to laugh. I stir my soup.

Pa died the night we had the hurricane. We drove through Bushey Park and saw the biggest trees out of the ground, their roots pulled up like branches.

Nan tells me to come upstairs. This was his, you know, she says. She fastens Pa's St Christopher round my neck and kisses me on the cheek. Her skin smells of rose petals soaked in wheelbarrow water.

Nan's Irish family have travelled across. Nine brothers and ten sisters, mum said once. I count black suits. Two of them died when they were babies.

Me and my brother are alone in Nan's house. We watch Uncle Paul's video of

"I watch the frosty hills until the grass is marked with white lines and flags."

George Best. The doorbell rings. The adults are at the church. I open the door.

Paula is the mum of Andrew Johnstone, the boy with burning hair from the end of our road. Andrew Johnstone wears nappies. Paula's hair is black and white like a dead badger.

You help me with the sandwiches, she says.

My mum and Duncan's mum, Zdenka, and Paula used to butter rolls for the school summer fair. When Paula had brown hair.

Aunty Fiona, Uncle Bill and my cousins Calum and Gavin live in Dubai. They can't come to the funeral. Aunty Fiona is mum's sister. Uncle Bill is Scottish. My cousins are babies who won't remember Nan.

We'll all be farting for Queenie, Uncle Paul says. Mum drops peas and carrots and brussel sprouts between my mouthfuls. Uncle Paul takes me and Jamie to watch Woking Football Club. He drives an MG.

I look to see if everyone's finished. Mum is always last. Eats like a bird, Nan says.

For... Tony! Nan pulls a present from the Christmas Bin all wrapped in angels and bells with purple tinsel round the top and stuffed full with newspaper. The presents are only small. Nan makes ooh sounds. She shakes the bin like a lucky dip.

Alan stops for an old lady on the zebra crossing. We both click forward in our belts. Alan looks across at me.

You know she might not leave the hospital, he says.

I stare at the shoppers.

Will it be soon? I ask. Alan taps the gear-stick with his thumb. Alan is my dad but he's also Alan. It was better to call him Alan

when I was younger. I can't remember why. Now I want to call him dad but it's difficult to say that when you're twelve.

I watch the frosty hills until the grass is marked with white lines and flags.

Will Nan go to heaven?

My voice echoes inside my head.

Alan stops at Aaron's house. He plays as sub. I want to stay inside the car with Alan; with my dad.

Alan pops his door.

She's off to that place we're all headed, he says, stepping away.

To heaven? I call again, pushing my door. Cold air slaps my face.

Perhaps, he says and slams his side.

Or somewhere better.

We look at each other across the roof.

No-one knows I lost it. Every time we visit Uncle Paul I crawl in the grass. It looks like a Roman coin. On Saturday nights we

watch *Blind Date*. I lie down by the window staring through myself into the dark. To St Christopher lost, to Pa and to Nan. There's a shadow on top of the telegraph-pole.

I don't like it, I tell Nan on the phone.

It's horrible, she says. Disgusting.

I'm getting the bus tomorrow, I say. I'm coming home.

Our new house in Brighton is hours away. We followed Alan in mum's blue Metro. Darren Harris shook my hand before we left and started crying. Alan drove over my foot.

See you there, he said.

I looked down the road at our old house. It'll be nice soon, Nan says. You'll forget all about me.

The Future, One Day At A Time

Krishan Coupland

Like always, she'll wake up at 7:15 when He leaves for work, open her eyes at the sound of the door, shut them again, sleep some more until sleep becomes uncomfortable. Around then she'll get up. Piss, wash, dress. Shumble downstairs and turn up the heating and get herself some breakfast. They're almost out; just broken flakes and dust in the bottom of the box. She'll watch TV. Nothing is on, ever, but there're talk shows to watch. *Trisha*. That kind of thing. The day's *Trisha* will be a good one. It will involve babies and prostitutes and lovers, and it will be very heartfelt and intense.

She will go for a walk, aimlessly, out by the guildhall. It will be sunny. Couples will

New Releases

Flight

Sherman Alexie

Harvill Secker

Sherman Alexie's *Flight* is a compelling novel. It is the story of Zits, an orphaned Native American teenager who has been moved from foster home to foster home. He has no one, and is quickly running off the rails when he meets a new friend called "Justice" in prison.

Justice teaches him how to use a gun, and the novel unfolds with Zits in a bank about to commit a mass act of violence. Just as he is about to pull the trigger, he finds himself travelling through time from the 1970s civil rights protests to Custer's last stand. Throughout the journey the notions of "right" and "wrong" get called into question, as well as the concept of justice.

Flight looks at human nature, and why as human beings we commit acts of violence and hate. Alexie crafts a landscape so vast and unpredictable that at the end, a new life emerges, one with hope. *Flight's* introspection and historical relevance creates a work that digs deep into the human soul.



Finnegan Durfee

Truth or Dare: Art and Documentary

Edited by Gail Pearce
& Cahal McLaughlin

Intellect

Truth or Dare: Art and Documentary is a collection of essays that highlight questions that surround documentary filmmaking. With increased experimentation, a clash between "authenticity" and "realism" is emerging. This undoubtedly signifies that the walls between art and documentary are collapsing.

Truth or Dare: Art and Documentary is a product of the Whitechapel Gallery conference (February 2006), which brought together renowned artists, filmmakers and writers that questioned the ethics of this new wave of documentary filmmaking. How true is true?

This collection provides reflection and analysis about the interdisciplinary nature of documentary filmmaking. *Truth or Dare: Art and Documentary* engages the reader inasmuch that you too will become part of the debate. Any filmmaker or arts practitioner should read this book.

Shirley Stevenson

