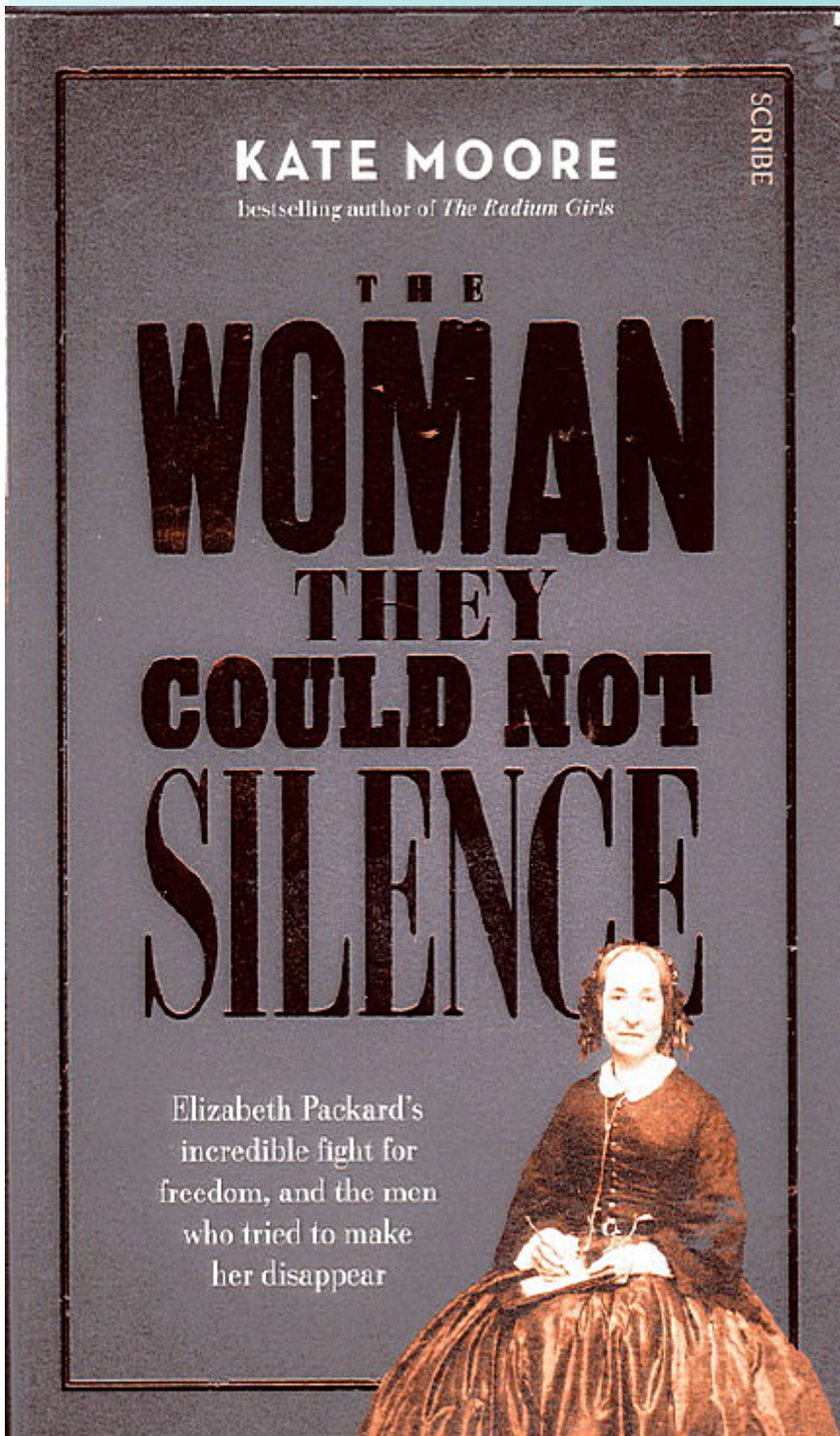


Cat's Eye Weekly

alias *The Ferret*

No. 140

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Happiest Man on Earth

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<http://users.tpg.com.au/genetree/catseye7.html>

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Any excuse for stirring up the universe

Edited by
Graham Price

Once was weekly now highly irregular in more ways than one

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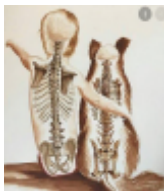
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The editor's desk

A new year is here, full of doubt and distrust regarding Covid-19: the nasty little virus that sneaks around so fast, so difficult to contain. But there is hope. Here in Australia at Melbourne University work has been going on behind the scenes to develop a nasal spray that will effectively kill the virus and prevent it from spreading. After six months trial, this spray container should be manufactured and released to the public. Wonderful news.

Did you ever stop to consider, when out walking or running, that you are not really stepping on something flat or undulating, but that you are simply a minute figure on the very top of a giant ball of earth, water and atmosphere floating in space? Imagine all of that underneath you as you step along. It is so magnificent. It's really some kind of miracle that it exists at all. Why should it have ever occurred? Each of us, silently walking along on top of a world that, at times, belongs to us. We've been given the caretaker's keys — virtually the keys to the universe — to fathom why we are here and what is out there. But sometimes in looking out there we forget what is in our own backyard. Do our footsteps on the top of the world make a difference in the vast cosmos? Perhaps the butterfly's wings, beating softly also have some significance?

Most of us know of the perpetual moaner, the one who always sees the grey skies coming when everyone else is staring at a sky of blue — the one whose world is always wrong. During Covid restrictions, numerous folk felt as if they were unfairly treated, locked in with nowhere to go, continuously bemoaning the fact. But human nature is better than that. Last issue we portrayed the story of Cynthia Banham whose body was 60 percent savagely burnt in an aircraft crash, who lost her two legs, but managed to go on to a fulfilling life with her partner, raise a child, and come up with a manifesto which read "Life is not defined by the bad things that happen to us. It certainly isn't for me." which is what all of us ought to be taking to our heart. Then there was the story of Eddie Jaku who wrote the book *The Happiest Man on Earth*, who was arrested by the Nazis, beaten, taken to a concentration camp where he spent almost seven harrowing years trying to survive. When eventually released, he promised himself he would smile every day. See page 3.

Some decades ago my first cousin Lois, all of a sudden, had a vicious stroke which paralysed her whole body. For years she remained in a nursing home, where the only part of her body that could move, was her eyes. Everything else was totally locked up in this deadly frozen prison. No voice, no movement of fingers or toes, or anything else. She was snared within an iron fortress where only thoughts could survive — and what thoughts would these be? Why am I here in this hell hole? Won't someone come and free me?

If we have survived Covid lockdowns, it should have taught us one thing — that we have life, movement, love between friends and families. That we are not forgotten like those in nursing homes trapped within bodies that no longer operate satisfactorily. We should be giving thanks every day for the minimum we have instead of bemoaning our fate and wanting the maximum. It's simply up to us. See page 13.

Continued page 7.

Feedback to Cat's Eye Weekly
is always welcome.

Click onto my purrfect nose!





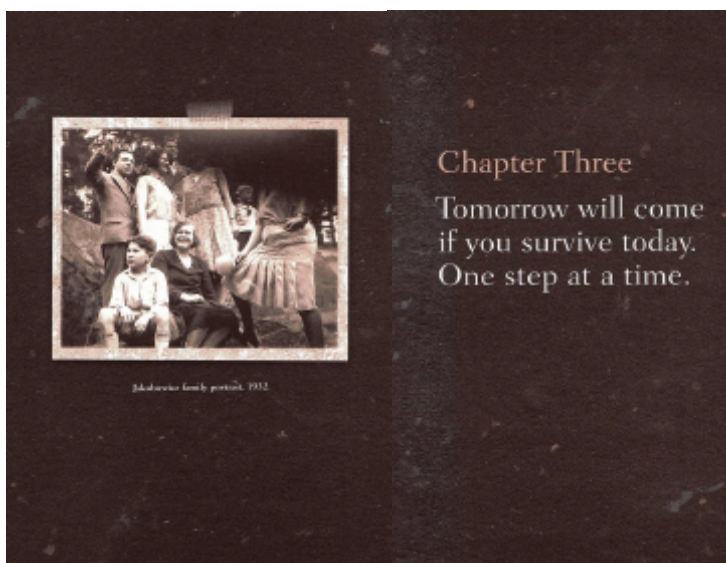
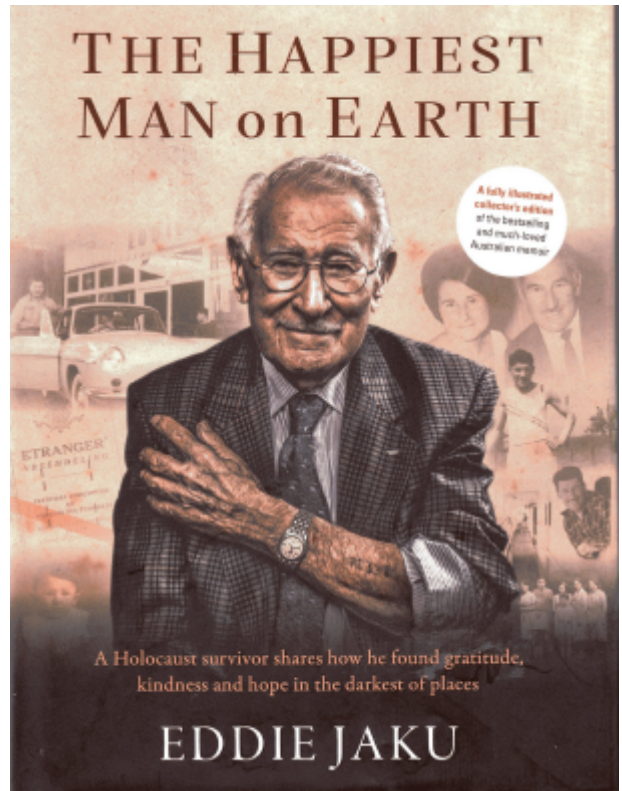
A Smile a Day

The family was proud to be German. No doubt about it. German first, German second, and then Jewish. The country came first, as always. But the country was changing, recovering shakily from the First World War, and looking for someone to blame for the lack of certain economics. For the Jewish population, life was pleasant, stable, and in most instances they were free to worship at their synagogues and carry out their business. They were an essential part of the community.

For the Jakubowicz family, much rooted in a genealogical history which boasted a chaplain in the First World War and originally settled into Germany from Poland, life was a hoot. The family settled in Leipzig, the city which for 800 years had been a centre for art and culture. Leipzig had inspired Johann Sebastian Bach, Clara Schumann, Mendelsohn, together with numerous writers, philosopher, and poets. The Jewish community had been prominent in the arts for centuries.

The Happiest Man on Earth pp4-8: “Harmony was part of life. And it was a very good life for a child. We had the zoological gardens just five minutes’ walk from my house, famed around the world for its collection and for breeding more lions in captivity than anywhere else in the world. Can you imagine how exciting it was for a small boy. We had huge trade fairs twice a year that my father would take me to — the same ones that had made Leipzig one of the most cultured and wealthy cities in Europe . . . my father worked hard to provide for us and we were comfortable, but he was careful to make sure we understood that there was much more to life than material things. Each Friday night before the *Shabbos* dinner, Mother would bake three or four loaves of *challah*, the special, richly delicious ceremonial bread made with eggs and flour that we ate on special occasions.”

But difficult times were to come. It was not all happiness and harmony. *The Happiest Man on Earth* pp9-13. “In 1933, when Hitler came to power, he brought with him a wave of anti-semitism. This was my thirteenth year, and our tradition called for my Bar Mitzvah, meaning ‘son of commandment’, is usually followed by a wonderful party with delicious food and dancing. In older times, it would have been held in the grand Leipzig Synagogue, but this wasn’t permitted after Nazi rule began.”



Eddie attended a wonderful school about one kilometre away from home, which took him fifteen minutes to walk there. But of course, if it was winter the river was frozen solid, so he could skate upon the surface all the way to school within five minutes. Eddie graduated from high school in 1933 and attended the Leibniz Gymnasium school, but this happiness was not to last, for one day he turned up at school and was told that he could no longer attend, simply because he was Jewish.

However, under an assumed name, Eddie enrolled in a mechanical engineering college in Tuttlingen, to the south of Leipzig. This was a new life, though mostly separated from his loving family. By the time he was eighteen he was selected as the top apprentice



of the year. It was 1938 and there were rumblings in the country. After graduation, Eddie took a job making precision medical instruments, but one night coming home he found the house empty. He had no idea where his family was, but somewhat exhausted fell asleep in his bed. At 5.a.m. the door was crashed down and murderous hands grabbed him. He was dragged into the street and forced to watch as he witnessed the destruction of his family's 200-year-old house. And that night was infamous, known as *Kristallnacht*, Chrystal-night, the Night of Broken Glass.

The terror had begun.

Nazi thugs beat him and flung him into a truck. His journey would end up at Buchenwald

concentration camp where every morning machine guns would greet a certain group of prisoners who were 'not suitable' for work detail.

Because Eddie was good at tools he was allowed to leave the camp and rejoin his parents. An escape plan was made for a journey to the border, but it failed and he was eventually sent to a concentration camp in southwest France. It was there that he first heard the name Auschwitz.

The sign above the gate read 'Arbeit Macht Frei' — Work sets you free. It was then that Eddie realised he had lost everything — his parents, his dignity. Everything was stripped away from him. He lined up for his tattoo and received a number on his arm that would last forever: 172338. He had no other identity but that. Everything about his former life was gone, totally demolished.

How to survive? First of all, do not fall because if you fall you will be immediately shot. All inmates were under armed guard and one never knew if one was to return to one's bed at night. "We slept through freezing nights, ten men to a row, without mattresses, without blankets, the only warmth coming from other people. We would sleep in a row, curled up like herrings packed in a jar, because this was the only way to survive. It was so cold, eight below zero, and we were forced to sleep naked, because if you were naked, you couldn't escape. . . . those who survived would awake to a cold shower, a cup of coffee, and one or two pieces of bread before walking to work in one of the German factories which relied on slave labour from prisoners." Eddie became indispensable because of his superior work ethos and mechanical skills, but even so, he was not above criticism and bullying. "My guard picked up a stone and had thrown it to wake me up. It cut a big gash in my head and the guard panicked, afraid he had killed me — even he would be in trouble for killing an Economically Indispensable Jew." All in all, it was education that had saved Eddie. Though he was easily manipulated by the Nazis, his work for them in manufacturing hopefully set him on a path of survival. He could not say the same for many of his friends. He often wondered why he was surviving while those around him were being beaten, wounded, and sometimes simply shot dead.

The Happiest Man on Earth pp107-108: "Under the Nazi regime, a German man was not immediately an evil man, he was weak and easily manipulated. And slowly but surely, these weak men lost all of their morals and then their humanity. They became men who would





Eddie and Flore on their wedding day, 20 April 1946.

Chapter Twelve

Love is the best medicine.

torture others and then still go home and face their wives and children. I witnessed how they took children from their mothers and bashed their heads against the wall. After this, they were still able to eat and sleep? I don't understand that. The SS would sometimes beat us just for fun. They had special boots with steel toe caps on them, sharpened to a point. They had a game of waiting until you were just past them, and then kicking you as hard as they could, right in the soft part where the buttocks joins the leg, while yelling. '*Schnell! Schnell!*' (Hurry! Hurry!) They did this for no reason except the sadistic joy of hurting another human being."

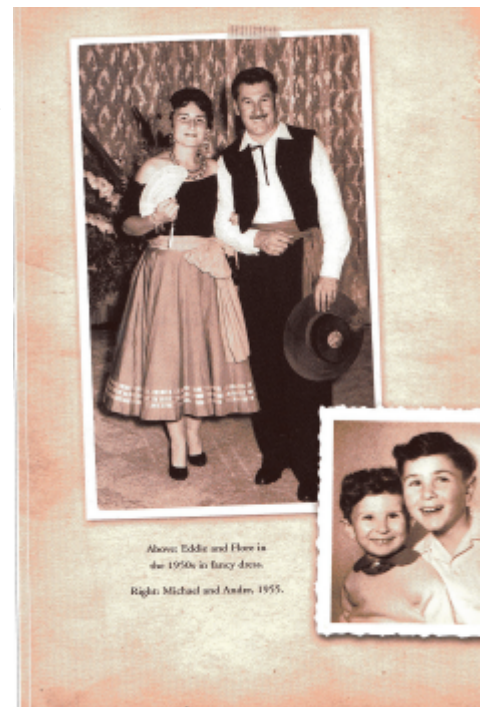
You could only survive Auschwitz one day at a time, and any incidents or brutality that happened to you

had to be kept silent, away from the Nazi overlords. "I had befriended Monsieur Kinderman, 'I have a bullet in my leg,' I said quietly. 'Would you be so kind to take it out?' . . . He had no tools but managed to find an ivory letter opener, like a tiny knife. He told me it was going to hurt like hell . . . I still have the scar, but I lived, thanks to Dr. Kinderman."

And then, one day, fearing the onslaught of the Russians, the Nazis took them on a forced march and Eddie managed to escape into the fields where he was welcomed into a farmhouse. Eventually he was amazed to see liberation in the form of an American tank. Six weeks in hospital and then he was out looking for family. But they were gone and he was alive. In time he found his sister, Henni, in a boarding house. Oh joy of joy! What a reunion!

And the remainder of the story? Eddie met Flore and fell in love. They were married 20 April 1946 and a child, Michael, was born in 1949. The family emigrated to Australia in 1950. Eddie's mechanical skills came to the fore in his adopted country, resulting in settling on a service station in Mascot, New South Wales. Another son was born in 1953 — Andre, and Eddie and Flore celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary in 1966, April 20th, the day of Hitler's birthday, to which Eddie wrote: "We are still here; Hitler is down there."

Eddie's strong positive attitude to life, which saw him survive through the horrors of Auschwitz, enabled him to build further and manage a Renault dealership. Eddie has now reached his 101st birthday, with a loving family surrounding him. His message is simple: "I am still the happiest man on Earth, even more so than I was this time last year. I have seen my story plant seeds that will grow into whole gardens of kindness. I hope that, in time, your story becomes one which will inspire people to kindness, to their own happiness, and to happy, peaceful lives for everyone on this planet . . . we survivors of the Holocaust have a saying 'Never Forget.' . . . It means never forget the horror, because to forget the horror opens the door to it happening again. But it also means never forget that there is hope. Never forget that there is kindness. Never forget that kindness begins with you." •



Above: Eddie and Flore in the 1950s in fancy dress.
Right: Michael and Andre, 1955.

The Happiest Man on Earth

By Eddie Jaku

Pan MacMillan Australia, Hardback

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Some large stores have discounts



Courage and determination in the face of sheer opposition

Committed to an insane asylum mainly upon the word of her husband, Elizabeth Packard stood her ground. She was not insane, she simply had voiced her concerns about a repressed society in Manteno, Illinois during the summer of 1860. A mother of six children, Elizabeth had been an outspoken critic of her preacher husband's narrow-minded views. Theophilus could not have that — no way, so he drew support from male religious friends and acquaintance male doctors, together with certain compliant women, to have his wife certified. Simple. Problem solved. As easy as slicing a knife through butter. All of this based upon the scripture passage "Women obey your husbands."

But Theophilus, his associates, and the superintendent of the State (Asylum) Hospital at Jacksonville, who looked upon Elizabeth as mad, bad, and dangerous were to find that they had imprisoned a tiger — for Elizabeth did not meekly bow to the demands or their so-called therapy designed to crush the female mind into submission. Elizabeth realised that she had to be calm, but at the same time she was determined to discover a means of release, not only for herself, but for most of the female inmates of the asylum, who in her opinion, had been locked up under false accusations. Wives, who were unsatisfactory to their husbands had been incarcerated without due process. Elizabeth mingled with women who were as sane as she was. There was a terrible miscarriage of justice and she was determined to right it.

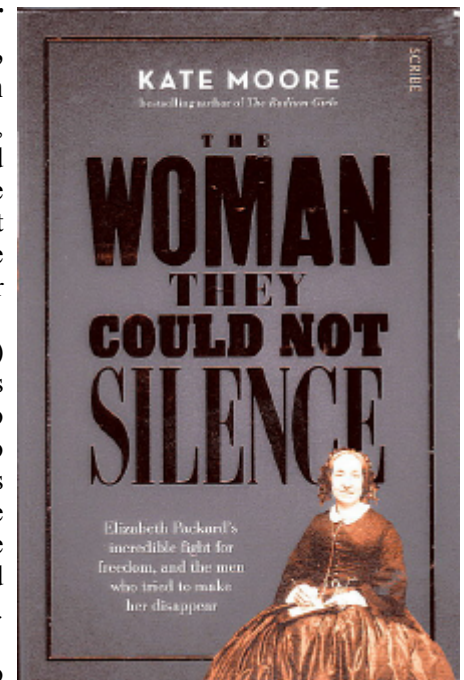
But what could she do, locked up within a secure asylum with almost no contact with the outside world? The few original visits by her husband soon ceased and letters from outside also failed to arrive, or were as she suspected, waylaid by the superintendent, Dr. Andrew McFarland. She had developed a rapport with him, and seemingly he with her as they talked for long periods about interesting subjects. They appeared to be like-minded spirits. But in the end he was simply like many other men of his time and betrayed her, shutting her away with some of the most heavily disturbed women. Her intelligence was too strong for him. He could not cope with a woman who appeared to have a high resolve and whose mind was centred in truth. So he had resorted to deceit, much the same as her husband had.

But Sutherland had made a grave error in locking her away with the half-crazy, and Elizabeth found that some of them were not and were as intelligent as she was. There were those who also had been signed away by their husbands because they were free spirits. They gravitated to Elizabeth and she also began to scrub and wash some of the more mentally deranged who were not looking after themselves and gradually under her kind treatment, they assumed a certain peace. Battle lines had been drawn. She was going to show McFarland that he could not win.

"Her feelings for McFarland had turned 180 degrees from her previous admiration . . . She would turn away, mute, when he entered her dormitory, refusing even to exchange pleasantries . . . McFarland might have hoped that her removal to Eighth Ward would suppress her spirit, but Elizabeth was finding the opposite true . . . she said with patronizing clarity 'you cannot kill a spirit; it lives after all you have done to destroy its existence.'"

And then, one day "she came to realize that 'abused patients was the rule at the hospital, while those justly and kindly treated were the exceptions.' It was even worse than she thought . . . she started to plot. She came up with a plan . . . a secret journal of daily events, just as they occurred ." She had no pen, no paper, but sometimes doctors dropped their pens, so she used the edges of some newspapers that were allowed. And she would somehow, one day, get her writings out of that hospital. She had the courage, and the ability to change.

To describe any further would be to reveal too much of this shocking and suspenseful story, which reads like a thriller novel. It took many years of incarceration, writing on the side, until eventually Elizabeth was able to present a bill to the Illinois Senate which sought justice for women presumed to be insane. But she did not stop there, she went on drawing the public into reality concerning asylums. As for Doctor McFarland, well, things didn't turn out too well for him. •



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Editorial continued >>>

Sadly, it has come to radio (and perhaps TV at times) that presenters are saying “am I allowed to say that?” We are living in a world of incredible social media change where people are tippy-toeing around language and culture of earlier centuries and even recent decades, just in case they might offend someone.

Brilliant! May I say that if you are offended by something I write concerning years past or culture, that is your affair. There's no necessity to make a big party of it. Let me know, or let other authors know that you have a disagreement, but apart from that there is little need to build an earth-shattering movement against something that is written in good faith at the time. Of course, what they are all calling this strange busyness in the 21st Century is 'Woke.' The Woke people are those, it is said, who seemingly are awake to everything that is going on, but the truth seems to be that they are simply energised by a love of wrecking something they consider reeks of older culture. Therefore, cancel that culture. Pull down statues, censor children's books, ban books from libraries and schools, censor Shakespeare, Marlowe, and many of the earlier poets and writers. Rip a page or two out of *Romeo and Juliet*, because some of the words 'offend'. But what they 'offend' is simply emotions . . . feelings! Which are always open to conjecture. •

Review: 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

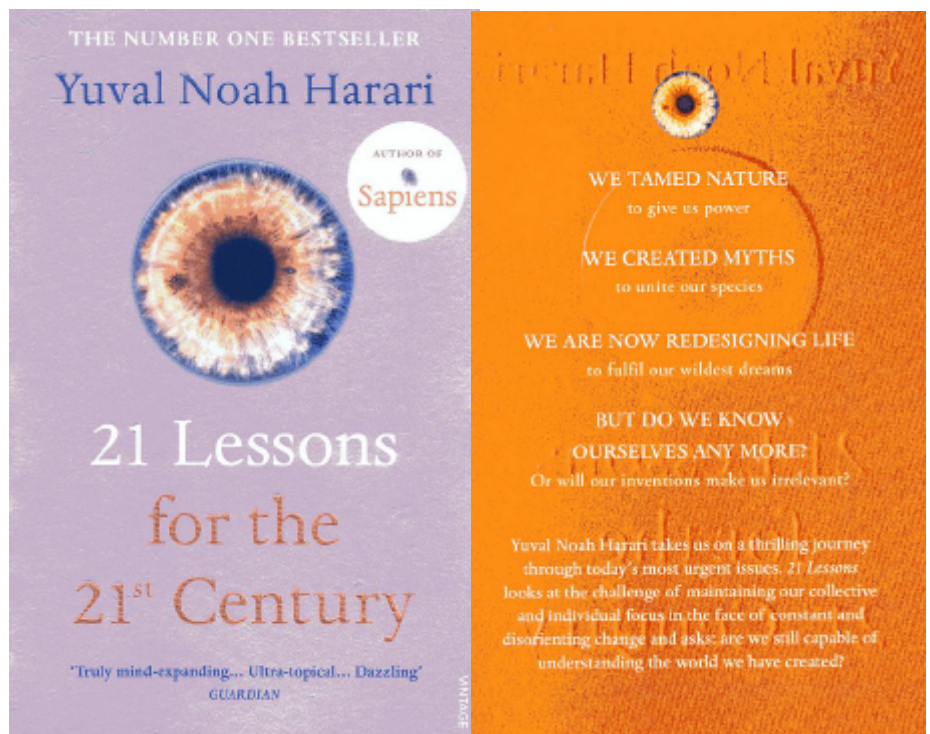
Wow! This is something mind-blowing, which will push you out of your comfortable arm chair.

The author of *Sapiens* has written a guide for global acceptance of a pathway toward renewal. What kind of world have we created in recent times? Harari checks out the whole gamut of modern change and its effect upon the 21st Century.

In his introduction Harari writes: “In a world deluged by irrelevant information, clarity is power. In theory, anybody can join the debate about the future of humanity, but it is so hard to maintain a clear vision . . . If the future of humanity is decided in your absence, because you are too busy — you and I will not be exempt from the consequences. This is very unfair, but who said history was fair!”

Well, nothing is fair, and the sooner we realise that the better. Harari's sections of the book begin with the Technological Challenge which includes disillusionment, work, liberty, equality. He roams through politics which includes religion and immigration to the inevitable forms of terrorism, war, up to the fact of truth and fake-truth. He finalises this great swathe of intelligent thought with the idea that humans can no longer predict the future with certainty. “But today it is more difficult than ever before, because once technology enables us to engineer bodies, brains and minds, we can no longer be certain about anything — including things that previously seemed fixed and eternal.”

In his section of Education, he writes “In such a world, the last thing a teacher needs to give her pupils is more information. They already have too much of it, instead people need the ability to make sense of information, to tell the difference between what is important and what is unimportant, and above all to combine many bits of information into a broad picture of the world.” •





The Big Issue

We are an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting and creating work opportunities for people experiencing homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage. Simply put, we help people help themselves. We run social enterprises to create work opportunities for people who are unable to access mainstream work. These include *The Big Issue* magazine, the Women's Workforce and The Big Issue Classroom, as well as the Community Street Soccer Program.

People come to *The Big Issue* from a wide range of circumstances, including homelessness, long-term unemployment, intellectual and physical disability, mental illness, drug and alcohol dependency and family breakdown. Our programs provide low-barrier opportunities for people to earn a meaningful income, build their confidence and connect with their community and support networks.

More highlights in this long, hot summer edition

- Carric Anne Moss talks *Matrix*, martial arts moves and you won't find her in the metaverse.
- Nat's What I Reckon serves up a "good time" and a great dish, sharing his recipe for Wake and don't Bake Orange Lemon cheesecake in his irreverent style.
- From the mushrooms being trained to eat trash to herd dogs and a global boos in goodwill, we give you 21 of best news stories of 2021.
- Photographer Gabriele Calimberti takes us to our happy place in The Big Picture.
- Our arts eds round up the best films, binges, books and music from 2021 — it's your summer sorted.
- Grab your mates. It's time for our Annual Big Quiz. How closely have you been paying attention to *The Big Issue*?



What a year, hey? While 2021 didn't exactly go as planned, a few good – even great – things did happen (we promise!). In this summer edition, we bring you 21 feelgood stories from the last 12 months. Our arts editors dive into the best books, binges, films and music that defined 2021. Plus, The Big Quiz is back to test your 2021 knowledge, *Big Ish* style.

You can help by subscribing to *The Big Issue*
At <https://thebigissue.org.au>



About chiropractic

from the editor

Normally, I wouldn't be commenting on alternative health practices in CEW, but perhaps this is a 'need to know' info page!

Trying to manage an apparent sciatic nerve pain in the left thigh over several years, including physiotherapy, osteopathy, acupuncture, with no resulting cure, I turned to chiropractic, because as you know, chiropractic centres throughout the country advertise help for sciatic nerve pain. Perhaps they should clearly revise that thinking. The site will remain anonymous as I have no wish to bring down a storm upon the practitioners, but let me fill you in on some history.

Numerous decades ago I attended a local chiropractor for several months at a time, who apparently eased up my spine, helped keep my body in shape, and was a lovely bloke. Fine. When I was on a trip to Hong Kong I came down with a stiff and semi-painful neck; checked out the local Yellow Pages, found a Chinese gentleman chiropractor who fixed the neck in no time flat. **One visit was all that was required**, all back to normal and the holiday continued peacefully. No problems with the neck after that. That's the history. Fast forward to the present time and an appointment with a recommended chiropractic practice 2021, which advertised help for numerous complaints including sciatica.

The people in control were lovely, caring, and attentive — they required numerous X-Rays of my spine, more so than I had ever been asked for in a lifetime; did a physical run up my spine counting the vertebrae, and finally a digital scan of the spine, which looked rather beautiful when viewed on the coloured computer screen. There was also a digital questionnaire to be filled in, which I managed to the best of my ability, handling the iPad, the initial screen which kept dropping out on me. In one section I had entered a tick to the question of 'have you ever had Hepatitis?' I ticked YES. And later I was surprised to find that nobody questioned which variation, considering that Hepatitis has had dramatic effects upon society. This should have been queried. Fortunately for me at the time, it was the simple variation, caused by eating apricots off the tree, unwashed, in 1957. No drama, no recurrence, but the chiro people should have queried it.

First appointment. I attended — a light crack here, a light crack there, very gentle manipulation; after all this was the beginning, so that is what one would have been expected. Previously at an osteopathy clinic, the practitioner only caused further pain and made the situation worse. But that, surely, would not occur here? Treatment carried on, adjusting the spine, and a few weeks went by. I did consider that the chest press adjustments were far too heavy. Ouch! To which other clients also 'protested' while being manipulated. Anyway, after a number of appointments that would be it, I thought; appointments would now be fairly well spaced out, but no, I received a text for further Saturday morning appointments so close to the earlier Wednesday appointments. Really! Well, okay, better turn up — I enquired of the very lovely receptionist why my treatments were continuing like this instead of being gradually spaced out? She said I was booked in for (as far as I recall) 13 weeks twice a week, of which I had absolutely no knowledge of. Oh well, might as well continue. Why not? Several weeks later the pain and walking was no better, if not somewhat worse, and then during treatment the chiropractor touched or massaged into the very spot on my thigh where the pain was and rocketed me up through to the heavens:SHREEEEEEEEEK!!!!

That's it, I thought, no more for now. We don't seem to be getting anywhere after about 16 visits. We talked, pleasantly, and the chiropractor mentioned several options apart from chiro. Lovely guy. We parted as friends, but I wasn't going to return in a hurry. Really, they were all very sweet people, probably doing their best to help those in pain. But all the same, there were some negatives. I thought that they would have advised me of the continuing close appointments (twice a week) at the beginning, but they did not. I thought their preparation requirements re. X-Ray etc., were handled well from their side but which they didn't appear to refer to at later treatments. The numerous



Image: theluckypup.com





chiropractic couches that one would lie upon had changeable protective paper rolls to protect one's face during Covid, or whenever, but the pads where everyone put the palms of their hands (and this during high Victorian Covid crisis) were not protected so that everyone touched the previous persons hand bacteria. The chiropractic centre was, perhaps, a 'new age' comfort centre, with much focus on natural therapies and written on the wall was the idea that standard medical practices would be almost unnecessary in the future. Certainly not what 21st Century doctors would agree with.

During my time there, people came from all ages, even children, and all it seems were quite happy with the treatment. The atmosphere was almost electric, with laughs and happy stories told. But what amazed me was that it seemed like a conveyor belt process — with clients on the couch — each for no much more than five minutes therapy. That didn't correspond to my experience of chiro of old where the treatment went on for approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

The happiness that exuded within the practice was real (though now and then there were some loud yells or screams due to manipulation) the enthusiasm for some was real as well, but for me the healing was not forthcoming, though perhaps my spine is somewhat looser now. Who knows? My back feels no different. No doubt there would be those who had responded to the chiro treatments that are given and may go on to live healthier lives. But one major item about my various treatments stood out: my doctor then called for an ultrasound of my left hip which revealed that it was **not** the sciatica nerve that was causing the major problem. The pain which had prevented me from walking properly for months at a time was caused by *gluteus medius* and *minimus tendons* having been torn away from the bone. The only apparent option — surgery. Chiro, with all its checks, had not diagnosed that, so is it any wonder that from the manipulations I almost screamed my head off?

Prior to my chiro treatment, my doctor said "No neck manipulations." I mentioned this to the chiropractor. At the last treatment the chiropractor gave my neck a crack and guess what? For weeks afterward I have a crick and light stab of pain in the right side of my neck when moving my head on a pillow. Nothing deadly serious. But, who can cure that? A chiropractor, perhaps? Ho hum! 😊

Interested in chiropractic? Talk to your doctor first.

The origin of chiropractic and some more

The origins of chiropractic are strange, perhaps weird to some folk. David Daniel 'DD' Palmer was a spiritualist, and during a spiritualist camp claimed he received advice from a dead doctor, some 50 years prior: Dr. Jim Atkinson, who Palmer stated had given him the philosophy of spinal adjustments. Previously he had been using what he called magnetic healing. Utilising this new found knowledge, Palmer adjusted the spine of a janitor in his office building. Harvey had lost the use of his left hearing and Palmer made an adjustment to the spine which is said to have resulted in Harvey gaining his hearing again.

Palmer considered that his book *The Chiropractor's Adjuster* was written under spiritual guidance. His one success in restoring hearing was never repeated with other patients. Palmer continued with his practice and was the forerunner of today's chiropractic studies which are taught at Australian universities, such as RMIT, MacQuarie, Murdoch, and CQU. It may be of some interest to note that it is not taught at Melbourne University, Monash, or La Trobe. The earlier mentioned universities are sort of Johnny-come-lately campuses.

William Lauretti, an associate professor at New York Chiropractic College who serves as an association spokesman, admitted that "D.D. Palmer was an eccentric." Eccentric or not, it is a fact that he received his chiropractic instructions through a belief in spiritualism.

But spinal manipulation did not simply appear during 1895 when Palmer was carrying out his adjustments. From the middle ages there were persons known as bone brokers, who manipulated spines. Early writings reveal similar spinal adjustments taking place in ancient China and Greece. Even Hippocrates, 460-370 BC, that eminent Greek physician, is said to have written: "Get knowledge of the spine, for this is the requisite of many diseases." •



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- *To facilitate the provision of care and accommodation to genuinely homeless animals, by providing enriching foster homes when available, whilst finding them suitable permanent homes.
- *To provide veterinary care for homeless animals, prior to placement in a suitable permanent home. All animals are desexed prior to rehoming, to curb the exponential growth of unwanted animals in Victoria. When necessary, smaller vet expenses such as desexing and vaccinations are covered by the new owner, but larger vet fees are paid for via fundraising.
- *To provide ongoing support and advice to those adopting through our service, as well as training and nutritional help, for the life of their pet.

<http://www.tars.org.au/>

Does your dog pull on lead?

Many dogs end up with behavioural problems because they're not walked enough and become bored. Bored dogs play up. If your dog is pulling on lead, lunging at other dogs and making your walks unpleasant, we recommend this 'leash wrap' method. A collar and lead is all you need. Once the leash is in place, just start walking. You should see an instant improvement.

https://youtu.be/E_oJoyaHr4

Pet medical crisis



Pet Medical Crisis

A not for profit fund to save pets whose owners cannot afford their emergency care.

www.petmedicalcrisis.com.au

Email: petmedicalcrisis@gmail.com

PMC is now on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PetMedicalCrisis/>

Also, a walking harness — 'Dog-A-Long' — is available to assist your dog to become more mobile — supports dogs with hind leg problems associated with ageing, arthritis, hip & spinal problems. For suitability check with your Vet.



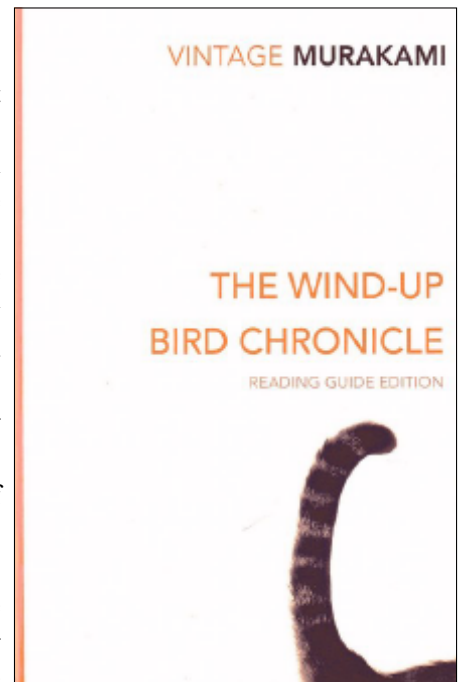
Review: The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle

Japanese author Haruki Murakami is well known for his previous novels *Kafka on the Shore*, *After Dark*, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, and others. He is a translator of English novels such as *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Raymond Carver, Truman Capote and John Irving.

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle was first published in 1994 and has been recently released by Penguin/Vintage. The book is a whopping 607 pages of intense mystical drama. The main character's cat has gone missing. Toru Okada's wife will also go missing. After that, and perhaps because of that, strange things occur in the Okada household. The character Toru writes his story in the first person, not only about his daily life, but about the strange dreams that envelop him, which are as vivid as normal life.

The novel winds and darts through various happenings, taking the reader into avenues of almost unbelief. Okada is besieged by invisible persons wanting to convey curious information to him. The struggle with his thoughts, the sadness of the missing cat and the missing wife, lead him into strange and serious deliberations, which in effect have startling revelations for his future.

The author, Murakami, weaves a spellbinding Japanese tale that holds the reader to the very end. Some criticism though, is that the telling of tales by other characters goes on far too long, page after page, so I found myself skipping multiple paragraphs on certain pages, which left me with no less diminishing knowledge of the plot. Such burdening information seems to have been not necessary, and the novel could well have been cut by almost one quarter. But even so, it still grips you until the final page. Murakami's honest appraisal of the brutal Japanese invasion of Manchuria — the war in Nonoham, and Russian harsh aggression, is well documented. Something that perhaps Japanese school-children are still not aware of from their selective history books. •



The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle
Penguin/Vintage
Dymocks \$AUD14.99

Review: The Lovely Bones

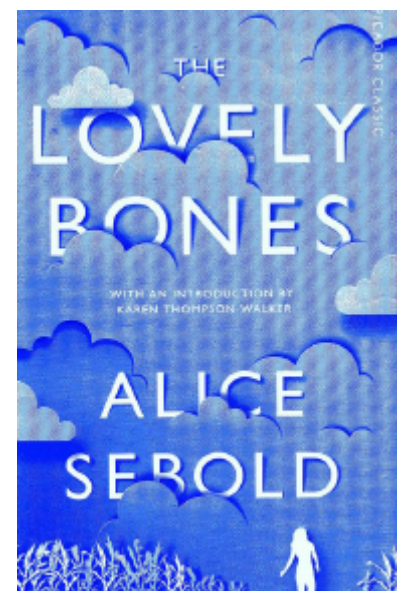
A light thriller, cached in gentle terms for those who don't like the dark ones. *The Lovely Bones* brings to 'life' a young 14-year-old girl who, having been murdered, follows the drama on earth from her view in Heaven.

This is a compelling book, which is saturated with the meaning of love within a small family which has been disrupted by the death of one of them. Alice Sebold brings out the subtle innocence of teenage lives, yearning for maturity against the background of a murderer who is so close and is often named but not charged.

Susie, watching from Heaven, cannot change what occurs in the town, but she can feel the emotions that are going through those she has left behind; she can nuzzle up to them, smell their body odour, their perfume, and wish them well. She knows she cannot change events that are to come, but that doesn't stop her from trying. It also doesn't prevent her from attempting to manifest herself to those she loves.

While she can see what is occurring on earth, she can also explore Heaven and its occupants, making friends — some who are wiser than herself. She can find pleasant places in which to sit and muse. *The Lovely Bones* lifts us up, brings us to a feeling of luminosity. The book is very special. •

The Lovely Bones
Picador paperback
Dymocks \$AUD17.99





A 21st Century Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens's Ebenezer Scrooge who featured in *A Christmas Carol*, was entitled — he had almost everything that the 19th Century could give him. But still he was not satisfied. He continuously complained and was filled with much bitterness. It seems there are folk living in the 21st Century in this country who have similar views. They have almost everything that today's lifestyle can bring them, yet still they are not content.

They moan about their situations when others in various countries are struggling to ward off starvation for their families. Some folk will stop reading this now, but please read on if you may. The entitled people in our midst sometimes have

designer dogs or cats, designer clothes, designer watches, holidays whenever they can, Covid restrictions albeit — they always have a roof over their head. Their children have always been fed and clothed. They have access to an abundance of more or less unnecessary goods in our bright and vastly over-stocked supermarkets and other super convenience stores and cannot live without their coffee fix. They are possibly computer or iPhone/Smartphone superbly skilled and shudder to think they could be separated from these 20th Century inventions for even one day. 24 hours to them is a fast and sometimes painful experience.

They have instant access to heating on cold days and cool air-conditioning during summer months and think little of it, except to turn a switch or fiddle with a remote. They consider they are much entitled to that. Their swift ease of mobility in superior cars and the luxury these vehicles provide would shock anyone who only drove prior to the 1960s. Today, the entitled do not have to push a pram through unmade muddy or dusty streets, nor carry heavy parcels home by hand from long distances throughout all weathers. There is always enough food to fill their bellies — always, even though during restrictions about one percent of their favourite goods including unnecessary shampoo or body fragrances may be curtailed. Damn that, it is so inconvenient, is it not! Naturally. Once, certain children went to school without shoes, but today's children wear the most comfortable and sometimes the most expensive footwear available.

21st Century entitled people may consider that they are nothing like Ebenezer Scrooge, but deep down the signs are incredibly there if you search below the translucent thin-skinned surface. They may not exhibit some of the nastier attributes of Ebenezer's character, but there are deep similarities. Combined with the increasing ability to complain about their lot in this world, is a certain penetrating narcissism, which they would be shocked to even learn that this might be the underlying force of their thoughts and actions. Just like Ebenezer Scrooge, their personas have somehow taken on a terribly restricted viewpoint of life — nothing is ever, ever good enough. Perhaps they need the ghost of Christmas past to come and visit them? •



Thanks and credit to Canongate for their compilation of *The Complete Peanuts* 2015 America and Great Britain

The Council to Homeless Persons

Established in 1972, the Council to Homeless Persons is the peak Victorian body representing individuals and organisations with a stake or interest in homelessness. Our mission is to work towards ending homelessness through leadership in policy, advocacy and sector development.

<http://www.chp.org.au/>

See our Consumer Participation Resource Kit at:

http://www.chp.org.au/public_library/cpkit/index.shtml



Jane* was 12 years old when she first entered OzChild's specialised foster care program, Treatment Foster Care Oregon (TFCO). She had spent the previous six years in out-of-home care which included 10 different foster care placements.



Before she began the TFCO program, Jane would often refuse to attend school and stayed up all night watching Netflix and playing X-Box. She was living in a serviced apartment with staff and her diet and sleep



were poor. She was often angry and would act out by shouting and having meltdowns.

Due to her placement history and trauma background, she had little trust in adults. Jane would respond to all requests with 'No' and struggled with following instructions and accepting boundaries and limits. Jane had no friends and had lots of fights with peers who rejected her because of her changeable and moody behaviour.

Jane was placed with TFCO carers Louise* and Ross* who had previous experience supporting young people and managing challenging behavior. Louise and Ross had two adolescent children of their own. Jane moved into the home and was unsettled at first. She would refuse to follow instructions, refuse to shower and would swear loudly when given direction. She was often suspended from school.

It was difficult for the foster family to adjust, however with the help of the TFCO Team, the carers were taught how to manage these behaviours and over time, Jane settled into a better routine and the carers used the TFCO Points and Level system to slowly shape her behaviour into a more positive one.

Jane began engaging with the TFCO team which meant she had weekly sessions with an individual therapist, skills coach, and teacher. The team members met regularly with Jane individually and engaged her in techniques based on behavioural therapy and activities to help her manage and improve her behavior and social skills.

With the stability of having a caring home and the support of the TFCO model and team, Jane began to show signs of improved behaviour both at home and school. As she continued to progress through the program, her schoolteachers and carers began to see sustained positive change. Jane was starting to enjoy going to school, she joined the local softball team, and discovered a love of music which gave her a new creative outlet.

Meanwhile, Jane's mother Gwen had been working weekly with the TFCO Family Therapist on how to best support Jane. Gwen learnt improved parenting and supports were put in place for her to manage better. Jane started to spend days and then weekends with Gwen, with support and coaching from the TFCO team.

After 10 months in the Treatment Foster Care Oregon program, Jane was restored to her mother and a transition to her new home began. TFCO provided 3 months of aftercare visits to ensure stability and then slowly withdrew.

Jane thrived back in her mother's care, and Gwen and Jane both used their new skills learnt in TFCO to continue to grow their positive relationship.

A party was held to celebrate her graduation from the program. The TFCO team, her teachers, school aids, carers, and the carers' families were all there to celebrate with her. Jane chose the food and the music for the party and gave a speech in front of everyone.

Although it has not been an easy journey, Jane's progress has been remarkable since being placed in the TFCO program and she continues to show positive signs with her new carers.

**names have been changed to protect identities*

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Essential reading: **Facts *and other Lies**

publication date February 2022

400 pages of essential knowledge for the 21st Century. 400 pages that inform concerning disinformation and radicalisation. 400 pages bringing a wake-up call about TV and radio news shockjocks, activist rioters, politicians, fake accounts, fake articles, fake news, how minds are changed by disinformation.

How does one distinguish between factual news and distorted information? *Facts *and other lies* covers a wide range of disinformation in the online world, with chapters on types of disinformation, the strangeness of U.S. elections, the psychology of why we fall for fake news, and an attempt to defeat disinformation.

By itself, the section on the QAnon movement is worth gold within the publication, showing how the movement began and what continues to stimulate its rise. There is a reference between video games and QAnon, that shows quite an affinity, in that being a supporter of the cult releases enjoyment whilst viewing conspiracy theories, much the same as what occurs within the brain during video games. QAnon supporters “actively seek out these sorts of ‘crumbs’ or imagine them when they aren’t there, to reinforce their beliefs.” An interesting comparison is made: “The journey to radicalisation to Al Qaeda can take years; to ISIS could take mere days; QAnon can take just minutes to draw otherwise sane people in.”

So, sane people can be drawn to certain activist groups without otherwise showing any obvious outward signs of derangement; simply drawn there by misinformation. Which is how fringe political groups begin. *Facts * and other lies* mentions some of the Australian political parties which have grasped upon emotional misinformation. Push a brain over the edge with tons of emotional disinformation and what have you? You have an individual who believes the unbelief; a person who believes that certain aspects of social media are the truth, when in fact they are based upon misinformation, fake news, fake ideas, fake facts. And given enough supporters of this, a certain political party may rise into dominance, and then the big question is, how do you stop it before it damages democracy?

It begins early in life. *Facts * and other lies* probes honesty in childhood. “Researchers placed hidden cameras in a room to test young kids’ truthfulness, and found the percentage of kids who took a peek at a toy and then lied about it increased with age. 30 per cent of the two-year-olds lied. 50 per cent of the three-year-olds. By age eight, a full 80 per cent of kids lied about it”

“Truth is important to humans, but only to a certain extent. We are social creatures before we are truthful creatures, and that means an understanding of lying will only get us so far in understanding disinformation. To do that, we need to instead examine the forces that compel us to lie more so than focus on the lying itself. In fact, Hannah Arendt took a look at all the major religions and wondered why throughout history nobody really cared that much about lying . . .” Until the rise of the puritans, of course. But who in the 20th or 21st Century ever subscribes to that philosophy!

No, lies are a fact of life, in particular political life. But also the spreading of conspiracy theories within groups such as Qanon thrive. An interesting spread of disinformation occurred during the 1950s polio epidemic. Jonas Salk’s vaccine trial had been successful and people throughout the world celebrated. But one organisation spread disinformation — the American National Chiropractic Association. This organisation waged a campaign against the new polio vaccination and published its own alternatives with false treatments. (*Get the patient to bed, isolate him, begin the application of hot packs to the spine, if you understand their application. In any case, apply heat.*). *Facts * and other lies* pp144-146. “In 1999, a chiropractic magazine surveyed readers and found 42 per cent had given their children no vaccinations and 22 per cent only some vaccinations. A 2004 study in Canada found 27 per cent of chiropractors still advising their patients against vaccinations and 70 per cent stressing the freedom of choice. In 2016 our own health authorities ordered the Chiropractic Board of Australia to instruct all their members to stop giving anti-vaccination advice and stick to cracking backs.”

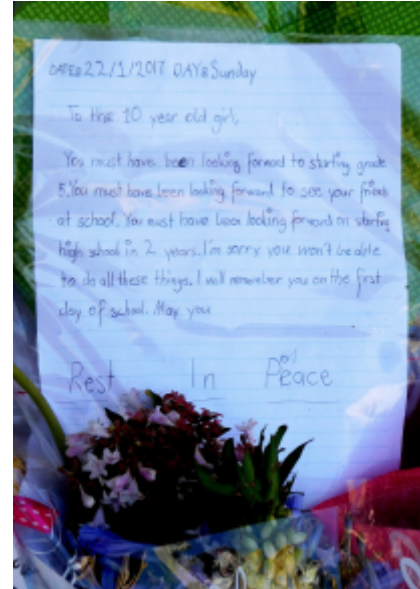


***Facts * and other lies*, by Ed Coper**
Allen & Unwin large paperback 375pp
Release date February 2022



Bourke Street massacre January 2017:

Remembering the tragic slaughter of six people, including a three-month old boy, Zachary Matthew Bryant, who was hurled 58 metres from his pram by the car driven by Dimitrious Gargasoulas. 27 people were injured. Hundreds of tributes were left at the steps of the old GPO, including one to 10-year-old Thalia Harin, from another child: *"You must have been looking forward to starting Grade 5. You must have been looking forward to seeing your friends at school. You must have been looking forward to starting High School in 2 years. I'm sorry you won't be able to do all these things. I will remember you on the first day of school. May you Rest In Peace."*



The rice broker's daughter

A short story by Graham Price

Makato and his wife Aki, lived in the town of Uji near Kyoto, Japan. Makato was a minor Japanese rice broker with three children — the boy Yamato thirteen years old, followed by two daughters Mai 10 years and Suki 9. It was the year 1934 and the troops in Manchuria, combined with the world-wide depression, had drawn upon provisions so vast that there was a profound shortage of rice.

It was winter and early snows had fallen. Makato had grieved long over his lessening fortune; things were very difficult; how was he to feed his own family with shortages as bad as this? He had come to a hard decision. The girls had to be sent away from the family to a better life for them, otherwise they would all starve. He would contact the assessor, Furuta, to see what could be done.

The bulky man came to the house within three days, smiling and nodding with supposed graciousness. He tipped his hat to Makato and Aki and looked steadily at the girls.

"The two of them is it? And what about the boy?"

Makato said "No, the boy is strong. He can help. He will stay to work in the sheds."

The assessor grinned, "And there is no problem with the girls? You are certain about this?"

"Give me the papers, I will sign," said Makato. Aki opened her mouth to say something, but then shrank back as her husband raised his fist. Her face filled with tears.

"The papers!"

He signed the two sheets somewhat hesitatingly, clutched the small bag of notes and coins from Furuta, then turned his back and walked inside the house. Aki stood there in the fallen snow, watching helpless as Furuta called his male assistant who grasped the girls by their arms.

"Time to go, little ones, your new life begins."

They were bundled into a cart, protesting and crying as the two horses pulled away with a jerk, nostrils sending plumes of vapours into the early morning air. Above the girls sat the man they had now come to know as Furuta, an assessor or as it turned out, a man who was to change their lives.

Upon arrival in Kyoto, the cart with its children huddled together on the floor, turned into a narrow lane. The sun had almost set and darkening shadows embraced the houses and inns. People were beginning to settle for the night and those with the financial means still at their disposal were entering the tea houses for a night of pleasant amusement. The horses stomped and whinnied and Furuta jumped down. "Come along, my little darlings. Your future awaits."



The girls sat huddled together, barely moving. Furuta rapped on the side of the cart with a heavy cane. “Come along, little princesses. Time to move. Get out.”

They entered the steps of the brown timber building with rooms divided by rice-paper walls. “When the lady comes, you will bow down on the floor, is that clear?” He tapped each child lightly on the shoulders with his cane.

Mai turned to look at him. “Why are we here? What is happening?”

“You will not speak until asked. That is final. No questions.”

“But . . .” She could not express the rest of her sentence as the cane came down heavily on her head.”

“You will not speak . . . understand that!”

The sliding door in front of them opened with a sudden rush and warm air coiled into the entrance parlour. Two women stepped down and into the room. Several candles cast a low light with flickering shadows on the thin rice-paper walls and Suki felt her heart racing as she looked at the two women. One, a short older person with grey hair fashioned into a bun and dressed in robes of a tawny colour, the other a younger sharp faced, dark-haired woman dressed in a black robe with flecks of gold and green woven into the fabric. She held a short painted bamboo cane, which she twirled around and finally let rest at her side.

“Down!” said Furuta. “Bow down!”

The girls flattened themselves on the floor, noses scenting the teak timber boards; eyes penetrating the grain in the wood and hearts pumping wildly. There was a silence that they could not bear. They heard nothing, except the rustling of stockinged feet in front of them.

“You may kneel,” said the younger of the two women.

“Obey!” said Furuta, tapping the girls lightly on their backs with his cane. “And be respectful.”

“I am mother Ayana,” said the dark-haired one, “You are welcome to my home, but there is only one of you who will live here, who will be instructed into a wonderful new life after a time of apprenticeship. So then, which one of you would I choose? Stand up, let me look at you.”

She moved closer to the girls, raising each chin with her cane.” Lift your robes.” The children obeyed. Ayana tapped their legs lightly. “Turn around, walk in a circle. Walk back and forth.” The children obeyed.

“Back on your knees.”

Ayana stood in silence for a time longer than seemed necessary. She brought the cane slowly to her lips, then looked at the elder woman, Kanoko, who nodded slowly towards Mai.

“This one,” said Ayana, pointing to Mai, “will stay. The other will go back with you Furuta.”

Furuta seemed to hesitate. “I . . . I thought the two of them . . . for the price, which is low enough . . . surely there is room for both? You are so generous Ayana. You have always been generous.”

Ayana snapped “My generosity is of times past when there was much rice, when there was much yen. Now, today, it is difficult. The other girl has to go. You are a man of great means, you will find a way.”

Kanoko moved forward and grasped Mai, while Furuta took hold of Suki. The girls screamed and struggled but it was no use. Soon they were parted — Mai bundled into an inner room and Suki out into the darkness of the evening mist. The cold enveloped her as Furuta pushed her into the cart. The driver snapped the reins, and horses and cart with its three occupants, turned out of the dark winding lane into a muddy thoroughfare leading out of Kyoto. A light rain fell and Suki, lying in the back of the cart, shivered. There was no cover and she was thankful when at last the rain had stopped after what had seemed a long journey in the dark. Somehow, she had fallen asleep, despite the lurching and bumping of the cart as it wound its way out of Kyoto, heading north. When she awoke she found that the cart was stationery.

They had arrived at an inn where they would spend the night. Furuta and his driver had taken a room; Furuta wondered what to do about the girl.

“She could sleep in the cart,” ventured the driver.

“I wouldn’t trust her to try and find her way back to Kyoto. No, I’ll make arrangements with the madam to have her locked in with the servants.”

The morning broke with wind and sleet whipping at the buildings. Suki woke with the rattling of the shutters. For a moment she did not know where she was. Then she realised — she was lying on a tatami mat in an outhouse connected to the inn by a raised timber walk-way. There were three female servants in the room and they were moving about, rolling up their mats and





preparing themselves for another work day. The younger one, who was about sixteen turned to Suki. “Come on little one. There’s work to be done . . . you can help.”

Suki was put to work scrubbing floors. She was on her hands and knees when Furuta found her. He tugged at her robe. “Leave that. It’s time to go.”

“Where are you taking me? I have to see my sister and you need to take me there.”

Furuta heaved her to her feet. She could smell his bad breath. He shook her roughly. “You’re a fiery little one, aren’t you? Well, there is a change of plan. I have remembered someone who may be in need of a servant girl as strong as you. It’s back to Kyoto and I shall be very glad to be rid of you.”

Suki slipped on her clogs. “I don’t like you. You’re a bad man, and you smell.”

He laughed. “Ha, before you’re much older you’ll meet men much worse than me. Suck it up, little one.”

The cart moved off the cobblestones into a muddy road; Suki sheltered under a piece of canvas that Furuta had thrown to her. It barely covered her, but was some protection from the sleet that was falling. Furuta’s driver was cursing and slapping the horses backs with a long whip — the cart’s wheels straining in the mud. The dark sky promised an uneasy journey. Suki fell into an uneasy sleep and dreamt she was walking in a wood where sunlight pieced through the trees and birds sang. She saw a Nightingale pecking at it’s feathers. It turned it’s eyes on her and began to sing and as it’s notes reached the highest pitch, it called “Mai . . . Mai!” The bird flew off, down between the trees, and Suki followed, knowing that the bird would lead her to her sister. The cart hit a large pothole and she jerked awake. The sleet had stopped and the horses had turned into a driveway enclosed by a high wall with strong iron gates. Beyond sat a castle of four storeys with traditional curved upturned roofs. What was this? Furuta dismounted and talked to the gatekeeper. The man swung open the gates and the horses and cart entered. Suki sat up. It certainly wasn’t a workhouse, that’s for sure. Too grand.

A grey-haired male servant met them at the front and ushered them to a side door. Suki was guided through a dark passage into a room of light. The furnishings were rich. Golden tapestries hung from the walls and scenes of ancient Japan were encased in gilded frames.

“Let’s look at you,” said Furuta. “He began to brush her down and made an attempt to tidy her hair. “When the lady comes, you will bow so low as you have never bowed before, understand? And you will not speak, unless asked. Do you understand!”

Suki nodded. Perhaps things might work out after all. If she was a servant in this illustrious house, she could discover a way, given time, to find her sister Mai. She would be silent this time, but only for a little time. They waited, Suki admiring the gilded seats and couches and the shiny black piano in one corner. Whoever owned this place, she thought, would be immensely rich. They had been waiting well over ten minutes and Suki was becoming restless.

“Be still!” said Furuta, “If the lady employs you, you will be eternally grateful.”

Suki considered retorting *and you will be well paid, won’t you, you filthy old man*, but thought better of it.

A noise! Something from the depths of the castle . . . the sound of footsteps. A door slid open and a woman entered, followed by a thin elderly maid. The first woman’s robes shone like silver . . she was wearing pure white socks, the sleeves of her robes were of gold and emerald and Suki saw what she thought was a gold watch on the lady’s left wrist. Suki flattened herself to the floor, while Furuta bowed steeply, further down than he was used to bowing. He was on his best behaviour.

The lady sat on one of the gilded sofas. The servant remained standing, staring at the head of Suki with her hair hanging on the floor. “You may stand,” said the lady, crossing her legs and leaning forward. “What is your name?”

“Her name is Suki, Countess, she is nine years old.”

The Countess sighed. “I didn’t ask you, Furuta, I asked the girl. Now, be quiet while I talk with her.”

Furuta blushed and fidgeted with his coat. “Thank you Highness.

“So, what is your name, girl?”

“Suki, ma’am. Are you a real live Countess? I have not met one before and thank you for receiving me, but I must find my sister. Please help me find my sister. She is all I have.”

The woman laughed. “I see you have spirit. Where are you from?”

“I don’t know . . . a village where my father and mother and elder brother live. I know I shall never see them again and now my sister has been taken away from me, at a house somewhere in this town. I have to find her. I must find her.”



The Countess raised her eyebrows slightly. “I see . . . we shall talk about that shortly. She turned her gaze to Furuta, “So, here you are again, and what is it you are proposing this time?”

Furuta hesitated. He bit his lower lip. “She is strong . . . very strong, your Highness . . . “

“Don’t call me that! I am a Countess, not a Princess. Mind your manners Furuta or I will have you thrown out. So, what is it you are proposing?”

The man struggled to speak. He was sure that she had changed somewhat since the death of her husband, Count Fushima, who had been killed in the Manchurian war. The last time Furuta had brought a young girl to her, she had accepted without haranguing him. He knew that the girl had died several months ago of tubercles and had not been replaced. This was his opportunity to unload this smart ass of a girl onto the Countess. He’d better be careful with his answer.

“Apologies, Countess, apologies. I was only . . . well, only stating the obvious. You are so, so regent.”

“Enough of your contrary words, get on with it.”

“Well, for a servant girl these days, and with this one’s looks and alertness — a clever one . . . say one thousand yen? The okiya where her sister is, would not take her. I don’t know why, because not only is she pretty but she is intelligent, as you can see.”

“So, the other girl is in a Geisha training house, eh? How clever of you, assessor. How many is that now, twenty . . . thirty? Surely, you have enough funds to set yourself up for life! What if I offer you a price you cannot refuse?”

“And that would be?”

“Nothing!”

“But . . . but . . . !

“Come here, girl. Come and sit beside me.”

Furuta spluttered. “I don’t think . . .”

The Countess stared at him. “I didn’t ask for your opinion. Come here, Suki.”

Suki stepped forward and when she reached the sofa she hesitated, but Countess Fushima took her by the hand and helped lift the girl close beside her. Suki looked up at the lady — she did not know much about age but thought the woman was not quite middle-aged. She had very fine features, small rosy lips, tiny ears pierced with golden ear-rings. She smelt of lilac; she was not like Ayana back at the other house. She was like a younger version of Suki’s mother.

The Countess smiled at Suki. “We are living in troubled times, hard times indeed. You know that, don’t you? There is a war up north where many men are being killed, my husband the Count, included. There is famine in many parts of the country, food is short, but we manage. We will always manage if we have strength, Suki. I see that you have considerable strength and character. I see that you are a determined person, so my dear, how would you like to be . . . my daughter?”

It hit Furuta like a thunderbolt. He staggered slightly and found it difficult to hold his balance.

“Ah . . . ah, Countess! Are you certain of this? She is a servant girl, nothing else.”

The Countess laughed. “But you yourself, Furuta, have told me of her most serene qualities, and I am sure these qualities are far higher than that of being a servant in this house, or with you for that matter. For your troubles I will give you four hundred yen for I would not wish to see you out of pocket, but that, with what you no doubt received for this girl’s sister, will suit you very nicely. You are to know that this is not a payment and I do not ask for a receipt. It is simply a gift to you from me to help you on your way. The girl can now go back to her home — which, considering the present economic situation, may not be prudent — or she may stay with me as my daughter.” She turned to Suki. “What is your wish, my dear?”

Suki thought for a moment, her eyes beginning to glisten, then she looked up at the lady. “If it pleases you, I will stay as your daughter, but only if you will help me find my sister, Mai.”

The Countess hugged her tightly, ran her hand over Suki’s hair and wiped a smudge from her face. “Agreed, my little one. We will bring her here, but a nice warm bath for you and some new clothes to begin with, and . . . you must be hungry, my daughter.”

Furuta knew he was beaten. He bowed to the Countess who looked up and said: “I think that concludes your visit, Furuta. If you will wait out by the gate I will have someone hand you the money. You will bring the papers tomorrow without fail and you will leave me the address of the okiya house where the girl’s sister is. I shall visit as soon as possible with my dear friend, the Superintendent of Police.” Suki looked up at the Countess and smiled. •

Motoring Memoirs

1956 Buick Roadmaster Convertible



Owner, Alexander Brand, Victoria: The Roadmaster was the top-of-the-line offering for Buick in 1956. It was powered by Buick's 322 cubic-inch V8 developing 245 horsepower. It was good for 0-60 mph in 11.7 seconds and was capable of a top speed of 110 mph.

The Roadmaster name first appeared on Buick automobiles in 1936 as a celebration of their engineering improvements and advances in design. They were built on the longest wheelbase Buick had to offer and from 1946 through 1957 they were said to be the most elegant and prestigious automobiles that Buick sold. This particular example is original and comes complete with the factory option of the Philips 45 rpm record player. •

