

SAMPLER

In the final year of my 40s

Also by Simon Perril

Poetry

Hearing is Itself Suddenly a Kind of Singing
A Clutch of Odes
Nitrate
Newton's Splinter
Archilochus on the Moon *
Beneath *

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The Salt Companion to John James
Tending the Vortex: The Works of Brian Catling

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Cover image by the author, plate from *Under Austerity Rubble*,
Ancestral Bird-folk Lay Future Eggs.

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In the final year of my 40s
I shall abdicate responsibility
for all my poems say, do, or be
so they might get a life
away from me.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall dial up the sea, knowing
it doesn't like to talk
and I will court ridicule
from lesser folk.

In the final year of my 40s
all these creatures I love : teals
and tapirs, claude toads, capybara,
binturong, will still have no place in my poems
and I won't know why

In the final year of my 40s
my poems, oh my poems!
Where will you be hiding, how
will you tease me so
always pointing beyond my reach.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall have no truck with tables, charts
strike no truce with numbers
yet forge a tryst
with the sexual favours of sunlight.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall mislay myself,
fumble for an alternative, miss
that other and rediscover
the stranger inside and own him.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall accommodate my disappointments
in an outhouse. There
they will be free to live
a full, frank and unfettered life.

In the final year of my 40s
I may, just may, transcribe
the folksongs of kitchen implements,
gravel and pockets – just as it's
rarely done well.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall inquire. Not of the opening
of evenings past spring. Nor
the drawing of shadows before
and behind standing things. I shall
just inquire, head slightly decanted.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall spend longer in bed seeking the channel
between curtain and wall, left of my head,
that squeezes the prospect
of tree and hill adjacent to Brooke Hill.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall spend less time
fretting in my poems
like an awkward barre chord
my straining finger cannot hold.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall write to today
perpetually, and by appointment
and shun the lack of attention
due to me.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall install a parliament of sighs
with the express purpose of documenting
and hearing the expressed purposelessness
of the wage-slaved.

In the final year of my 40s
I shall successfully burn said parliament
liberate the sighs,
and apologise to those left outside
the relative warmth of work.

In the final year of my 40s
I'll take off. Really, momentarily
I'll leave the ground. You've not seen my wings,
my shoulders itch with them. They're
nondescript in colour. Who am I to boast.