

Cry Dotterel

By James Whineray-Kelly

Save Easter

We have to save Easter,
you think with conviction.
(Having only had about nine thoughts,
you think everything with conviction.)

Polly, the teacher-aid, smiles at you
and says something about your initiative.
But though you flash your gappy smile,
your hard heart won't be won.

Polly doesn't know a thing about this world,
you conclude, never mind honour and duty.
How then could she begin to understand
the catastrophic predicament in which Easter finds itself?

It would be like explaining subtraction to an earthworm,
which, as you know, aerate the ground.

You let Polly live her fantasy.
After all, she lets you go to the playground
before you've finished your yogurt.
And in a world as fragile as this,

that's gotta count for something.

War Song

Whilst I've a beak to thrust, your safety's never crossable,
wherefore your plumage shall forever be thus beauteous;
Fear not, dear chick; at beasts I doth cry 'Dotterel!'

I've valour in my feath's, I chirp at the impossible
and *aves* plenty have my honour thought most duteous;
Whilst I've a beak to thrust, your safety's never crossable!

If beasts onslaughts shall wage, I'll counter-wage indocable,
though strike they hard, their triumph's ne'er but dubious!
Fear not, dear chick; at beasts I doth cry 'Dotterel!'

While I this beach do rule, no beast's with me compossible,
I've beak and claw to show whose blood's most rubious!
Whilst I've a beak to thrust, your safety's never crossable!

Though threaten they how doth they will, it shall but be ephomeral;
one strike from I shall prove most unsalubrious!
Fear not, dear chick; at beasts I doth cry 'Dotterel!'

I'll e'er protect you, darling chick, from all those beasts most horrible,
compared to my quick gait they doth trod most lugubrious!
Whilst I've a beak to thrust, your safety's never crossable!
Fear not, dear chick; at beasts I doth cry 'Dotterel!'

Orange Peel

After Akida of Wellington Zoo

At first everything astonishes you,
you who are all ears and eyebrows,
anchored hard to tufts of hair
on mum's back.

And then everything entices you,
you who are all mouth –
try the celery, try the berries, try the capsicum, try the keeper's shirt;
good, good, good, bad –

Now everything troubles you,
you whose once raised eyebrows now purse,
or is it something in particular?
Ah, I see – the orange peel!

It's unlike anything you've ever seen,
you whose hoots and whimpers ask
Who sent it? From where and why?

Slowly now, tooth the rind,
you whose mum's out of answers,
whose keeper's out of town,
who've nothing left to do but scream.

The Playwright

Way up in the gods
you can see the whole picture,
or at least the part that's breached.
(But there's more than that of course.)

There's a woman, between those lines,
wandering around with her top off —
the first breasts I ever saw —
But you won't find *that* in the programme.

I come in by those stage directions,
crawling now beneath the rhymes,
just a line away from bliss!

But no dice; you can see by the lighting
I've been thwarted somehow.
Now hear how that trumpet wails!
(I've just discovered masturbation!)

No, my good man,
it's not creepy, it's theatre!