

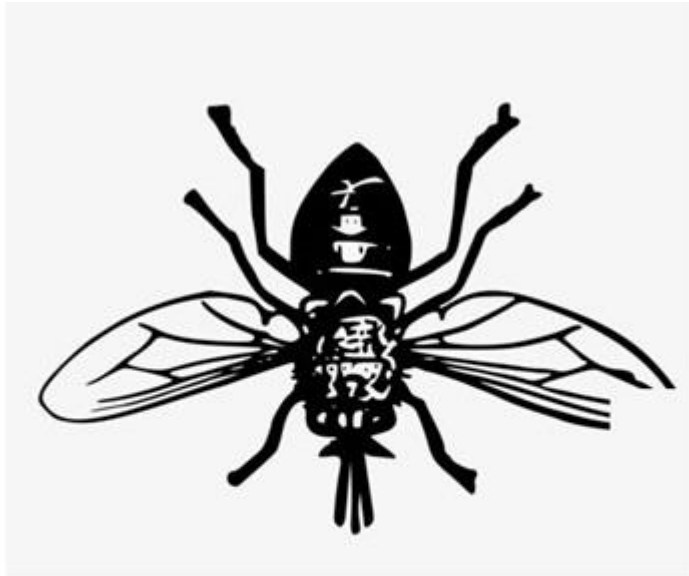
Inkslingers Blended Session

7th October 2023

The Prompt from The Bag Was:

“Where do the flies go in the Winter time ”

And the Visual



Ise Ise Fly

What do you do

Matthew Tubridy

What do you do? He is asked,
I drive a fork lift!
I'm nearly late for my writing group,
I was moving a few pallets,
He had to work on Saturday
because he drank much tea on Friday,
He was messing with Chuck in the staff room,
His Boss came in, she's called Audrey,
She says 'You must work tomorrow morning!'
Terry can't say anything because he looking for a pay rises,
He has to start today at 7am,
From then on he won't drink a lot of tea with Chuck,
When Terry gets to the Writing Group he's 5 minutes late,
He writes about his mean boss Audrey.

Flying

Imelda Dyass

If I was a fly I would fly somewhere hot
It's not fruit flies we are talking about ? It's not ?
Annoying flies -blue bottles etc
And yet writing about them
There's a sense of fragility
Vulnerability
A long way - for a fly
To travel to Florida -for Winter
Do they do it ?
Or do they die ?
A good quiz question
About a fly
What's the answer
Like many other mysteries
No one knows or is that just I
I
Don't know

Luas

Matthew Tubridy

Man wants to get on Luas,
But he's too grumpy,
The grumpy police are there,
Sorry sir! Can you smile?
Feck off! Says Grumpy man,
Sorry sir, we must detain you,
They bring Grumpy man to a secure detention centre,
But every second Irish man is there!
The mutter to each other about how their wives treat them badly,
Now there's no woman about.

Tse Tse Fly

Max McCoubrey

'There's so much to learn about his culture' our African Guide was welcoming me and the film crew to our destination, with warm greetings and wise warnings.

'Remember working women are unusual so get used to being stared at.' He went on to explain that females are rarely seen, definitely not in the workforce and most definitely not wearing a flak jacket a cat suit and carrying a microphone. 'Prepare to stop the traffic such as it is', he told me. I thought about the challenge of that , I needed to get this report in by midnight, I needed to present it and I needed to know what I was talking about, so maybe , to get past the culture shock , I should get the men to ask the questions and then overdub with my voice for transmission.

'I will make the snowballs and they will fire them' I said out loud. The guide looked sullen 'They don't know what snow is so you better get your head around that too '

I settled back to think, and that's when Dee Dawson the camera man surprised us 'Be wary of the tse tse fly' he said quietly '. 'How will we know it' I wondered out loud 'they sleep with their wings over their abdomen' he said 'and they have a bulbous head' he said smiling 'they look like my ex-wife'

Rory

Matthew Tubridy

Rory in writing group goes
I'll read!
I'll keep going! I'm 80!
I have my car,
I'll drive it to Wexford!
Get the ferry to Roscoff,
And on to La Rochelle,
And Biarritz,
I want to experience Morocco!
And when they say it's time for your grave,
I drive even more!
To Cape Town, South Africa,
He wants to dance with Shakira,
But he's 80,
He goes to her house and dances outside,
They say 'Time for your grave!'
He taps the grave, then runs away,
He becomes a roadie for Shakira,
He drives the bus,
He drives to Niagara falls,
He says, 'Finally my time is up!'
He jumps off the waterfall,
As he falls in the water he remembers his life,
His first motorbike,
His first girlfriend,
He remembers his trip to Cape Town,
His body impacts the rocks at the bottom of the waterfall,
It's swept away,
And just because they said he can't keep reading.

The Flies

Miguel A. Rivera, Jr.

Miriam Peterson glanced at the screen for the millionth time, it seemed. Wondering, yet again, just how they'd been able to get away with this for so long. But she knew exactly how. Her ingenious husband had long ago devised a path that no one believed in. The calculations and speculative science that had cost him his tenured position at M.I.T. and a permanent barring from academic circles. He'd been fired two days before Christmas. Doctor Fredrick Peterson, a.k.a. "Dead-head-Fred", was the infamous moniker that had stuck. It had been the cause of much humiliation and ridicule along with a sea of uninvited memes, declaring him the "Father" of junk science. It nearly drove the man she loved to suicide, nearly.

Now, he was doing the laughing along with his small band of cohorts. She had to admit that there was something very intoxicating and wonderful about it all. Something inexplicably liberating about flipping off "the man" and living as they pleased.

Every Christmas season for the last five years, they had selected a bank somewhere in America, casually walking in and announcing a "robbery". Like trained monkeys, the bank staff went through their usual procedures with the dye packs, marked money, and silent alarms as eight masked adults entered the bank's vault. After a few words with the bank's manager, their band would strangely enough, lock themselves inside it, never to be seen again along with millions of bank-dollars.

During his time at M.I.T., her husband had tried to convince the faculty, the Dean, and anyone who'd listen that his theories were both sound and revolutionary. None would have it. So, after cleansing the school's computers of his work, he quietly went away into educational obscurity. Now they lived in a plush, million-dollar home somewhere in the Caribbean. It was one of many. Miriam wondered if the F.B.I., C.I.A., and other government-goons wearied of searching for "The Flies", as they were known after having baffled every investigative mind and technique that could be thrown at them.

In Langley, Virginia, Susan Miller and her staff of agents stared closely at the footage of the many robberies committed by the Flies. Their weights, height, clothing origin, anything that could trace back to them and help identify who they were, but endless hours yielded nothing save one scrap of footage.

One of the “Flies” always laced his boots in a very specific, basket-weave, way. As luck would have it, a vacationing agent spotted just such a detail on a pair of boots at a pub in Dublin, not twenty minutes after one of the Christmas-time robberies had taken place in Boston. To any logical mind it was an impossible feat of travel as the distance across the Atlantic was in the neighbourhood of three thousand miles.

In his drunkenness the agent took note of the wearer of those boots being a stocky, large framed, ginger fellow, somewhere in his late thirties, ordering pints with a pronounced “Yank” accent. It was all that the very drunk, vacationing agent, could put together, and after following the fellow into the men’s room, discovered the oddest of clues. A U.S. one-hundred-dollar bill, neatly laid on one of the toilet bowls, but no suspect. Like their many other mysterious escapes this fellow had disappeared into nothingness.

Back in Langley, Susan knew that Homeland Security and many other Washington entities could give a shit about the money stolen thus far, but the implications of an American civilian being able to move through time and space were a situation that had raised many an eyebrow and represented a gross threat to national security.

She vowed to find this group of teleporting bandits. She looked at the frozen frame of “The Flies” in the lobby of one of the banks and thought to herself, “Why always during Christmas? Why always in winter? Where do the ‘Flies’ go in wintertime?”

Where do the flies go in wintertime

Bernadette O'Reilly

In the heat of summer
Flies buzz around
Kitchens
Sittings rooms
Bedrooms
Crawling up windows
Fighting to get in
Fighting to get out
Sometimes dead on
Many a window sill
Trapped in
Spiders webs
Fly paper
Even sprayed to death
What a horrible life for
The fly
I wonder
Where do the flies go in wintertime
While we breathe a sigh of relief.

Fjord

Matthew Tubridy

I'm ploughing through the waves in my fishing boat,
I was in a calm fjord in Norway,
But then I drove to the open sea,
The waves get bigger and bigger,
I wanted to catch some maceral,
Head back to the Fjord?
I ask myself,
No! I'll go all the way to Iceland!
I plough through the sea,
I see dolphins after the maceral,
I see other fishing boats,
Eventually I get to Reykjavik.

The Coast of Spain

Greg Fields

The breeze brushed up like a whisper, warm and intimate, and as it did so it cooled the skin that had languished against the late-day sun. Off shore there were boats in the distance, but none too close – liners with their passengers, a yacht going from here to there, a low and lumbering tanker. All around was calm – Conor Finnegan had been on the Costa del Sol for a week, and he had seen nothing that even resembled a wave. The ocean was as still as a swimming pool. A single fly flew lazily close to the ground, an anomaly and completely out of place. Finnegan had always thought flies disappeared from such climates.

To his right a man skewered sardines and placed them over an open-fire grill. Delicacies, they were, but Finnegan had no notion to try them, small fish to be eaten in their entirety. Even so, the aroma of the grill, the sardines being fired along with the other fish – snapper and shellfish and squid – filled him with a robust, earthy sense. He was close to the earth here, and welcomed it.

On his other side Adrienne propped herself high enough in her chair to regard the ocean. She squinted behind her sunglasses, and a small bead of perspiration ran down her forehead to nestle near an eyebrow. Conor surreptitiously eyed her, as he often did. After so many years, he never tired of looking at her, still light and thin, still able to turn heads when she entered a room. But it was not the line and curve of her body or the glow of her innate beauty that he savoured. When Conor Finnegan looked at Adrienne he saw something much deeper. He saw the line of her soul, remarkable in its strength, in its wisdom, in its commitment to the things that nurtured her, and those around her. He had been so lucky, and not a day passed by when he did not consider that good fortune, and what it meant to a life previously adrift and without purpose.

She turned to him and smiled. "We should be getting back."

"We have time. I don't know if you've noticed, but there don't seem to be any clocks here. No one ever knows what time it is. And no one ever cares." He reached across and grabbed her hand. "Whatever you want."

She paused a bit, then cocked her head. "You know, I think what I want is to stay here a little longer. And maybe a sangria."

Conor smiled, and squeezed her hand. "A splendid notion. I'll be right back, and not emptyhanded." He rose and headed off to the beachfront bar. As he made his way, he passed the grill and breathed deeply the scent of the firing fish.

She was someone to do things for, someone to protect, someone you never wanted to hurt, or disappoint. And, as he waited for two glasses of sangria to appear from behind the bar, he recognized that he had done both, and more. He had hurt, and he had disappointed, and he had played loosely with the fabric that kept them together. It seemed he could never stop himself, or stifle those selfish, egocentric inclinations that could not help but cause pain. No more of that, and never again, he told himself. Finnegan was wiser now, older and cognizant at last of who he was. Of what he had. Of Adrienne.

He gathered the drinks and crossed the short distance across the even sand to where she sat. Before he reached her, he stopped. The lowering sun, the scent of good food, a sea breeze wafting in across an immaculate shoreline. The hills rising high above the city behind him. Spain. He was here, and this was now, and Conor Finnegan thought to himself that at last he was wise enough to know it.

He walked to Adrienne's chair and handed her the sangria. He said nothing behind his smile.

“What are you grinning at?” she asked coyly as her hand grabbed the stem of the sangria glass.

Finnegan looked up, then out to sea. He took a deep breath. “Nothing,” he said. “And everything.” He sat back down, close to the earth, perhaps closer to the core of Conor Finnegan than he had ever been.

Pilot Peter

Matthew Tubridy

Men Tour Pilot Peter is flying from New York to Los Angeles,
He's on final approach into LAX,
He says to his copilot flaps up,
Suddenly they see a Bull on the runway,
He had no chance to avoid,
The front of the plane ploughs into the Bull,
The airport fire service race to the plane,
They survey the Bull,
One of them say
'You could make a good few beef burgers with that!'

I know where the flies go in the Wintertime

Gerard Byrne

John and Brian fumbled their way through the overgrown field as they attempted to reach the entrance to the cave. They were both ten years of age and highly adventurous when it came to their expeditions into the countryside. But today was something much more special.

Brian had been left alone the previous day with his grandfather Mickey. Mickey had been close to death for many weeks now. Even Brian's mother temper had boiled over the previous week, when she roared at her husband, "when is your bleedin nightmare of a father gonna bloody die?", there was no love lost between the two of them.

Brian had been on his phone that day. Sitting next to Mickey as he wheezed heavily like there was someone sitting on his chest. His eyes lost in some unknown wonder hidden between the cracks on the ceiling. Brian had come across an old horror film on Netflix and had been avidly watching it. It was the remake of the fly, starring that tall dude from Thor and someone who drove her car off a cliff. Mickey had caught sight of Jeff Goldblum in all his gory makeup and turned to his grandson with a new found determination in his eyes, "I know where they go?", he mumbled quietly.

Brian paused the film on his phone, "you know where who goes?", the last thing he wanted to do was to try and make conversation with a delirious old man, but he still felt compelled to do so.

"I know where the flies go in winter", Mickey wheezed loudly as he spoke.

"Nobody knows where they go", Brian went back to his phone.

But before he could hit play, Mickey grabbed his wrist roughly and held on, "I know. I've seen it. Up in the hills above my sister's house. There's a cave. You have to go right to the back, where there's a big fall. Ten feet below is another cavern. It filled to the brim in winter with flies. The bodies of their fallen comrades lying on the ground in little piles. They guard a treasure of immense importance"

Brian's ears suddenly pricked up, "what treasure?"

“The box”, cried out Mickey to no one in particular, “it’s in the box”, his eyes suddenly shut and his poorly heart stopped for the last time.

Poor Brian had gotten a good smack off his mother for watching films while he was supposed to be minding his grandad, but that didn’t faze the young boy. He had a new adventure to go on and a reluctant friend to enlist into his daring mission.

Back in the field, John fell over another poorly constructed fence and collapsed in a heap on the other side, “think it’s time to go back. There’s no cave up here”

Brian clambered over his friend. He had a rolled up length of rope draped over one shoulder, “it’s not much further. My dad said he seen the cave himself”

“Did you mention the story about the flies?”

“No chance”, replied Brian, “he’d just say that my grandad was talking out of his arse again”

The two boys came to a sudden six foot high rise in the ground in front of them. John boosted Brian up and then Brian helped his friend. When they finally got their breath back, they found themselves in front of the cave. It was five feet wide and six foot high. Nothing could be seen past three feet in. They hadn’t brought any torches so feeling along the edge of the cave seemed like the best option.

Ten feet in and John was starting to panic, “we have to go back. This place is too dark. Let’s go home and get my dad’s torch”

“No, we’re nearly there”, Brian was still feeling his way along the jagged wall, “just a few more feet”, it was then that he remembered the lighter that he used to burn stuff with, was still in his pocket. He pulled it out and flicked it on. Suddenly he found himself at the edge of the long drop. Unfortunately John panicked as well and accidentally pushed his friend into the darkness.

Brian fell down for what felt like ages. He hit the moist ground hard, hurting his face and knees in the process. He turned onto his back and looked up at the drop he had just endured. He couldn’t even see John anymore.

“Are you okay?”, shouted John.

Brian was about to answer him, but then the buzzing noise seemed to grow louder in his ears. He felt around the ground for his lighter. Thankfully it wasn't too far away and he flicked it on to reveal that he was now lying on heaps and heaps of dead flies. All around him flew their living cohorts. He tried to scream, but his mouth filled with their tiny bodies to the point that breathing became difficult. It was at that moment that Brian was starting to appreciate how difficult it must have been for his grandfather to take a breath in his last few days.

Mont Blanc

Matthew Tubridy

Climbing up Mont Blanc,
But I have my cereal bars,
I see the Billy goats,
It's all snow and rock here, I get into a pickle
at the top,
Soma helicopter is tasked
To save me,
The problem was I didn't have any cereal bars,
I tried to catch a billy goat,
But they ran away,
Helicopter comes and winches me away,
In the chopper the paramedic goes
What happened to you?
Broken leg, or ankle?
I go I ran out of cereal bars,
And I couldn't catch a goat to eat!
Paramedic gets mortally offended and pushes me out of the helicopter,
I land on soft snow,
I make my own way down the mountain,
At the bottom I get a beer,
And a goat roll.

Where do flies go in winter?

Deirdre Murphy

The queue was long and slow moving. It was a cold wet night which made the wait even longer. The length of the queue was not surprising. Anna was well known as was her family. Few entered, even fewer exited. Finally, her turn came.

Susan entered the building to join yet another queue. At least it was dry and relatively warm inside. At last, Susan's opportunity came to pay her respects to Anna.

"You look great!" Susan remarked to herself. "You look better now than you did when you were alive. Your skin is no longer blotchy but has an even tone. It makes you look younger. The morticians did a great job, you would have loved it." Such was the un-customary prayer Susan said while looking down at Anna. Susan did not realize that Anna's new found skin tone had less to do with the mortician's skill but due to lividity, a natural process.

Susan sat on the bench and waited for the Rosary to start. Then she saw it, a fly hovering over Anna.

"OMG, I hope it is not going to land on her!" It was surprising that there was a fly in such a posh funeral home. "I hope the staff can get rid of it, but how? The room is full of mourners. They were hardly going to chase it with a fly swatter!"

Staff did not intervene. Susan watched the fly as it landed on Anna and lingered. "OMG, don't tell me it is laying eggs on her body!" Susan heard that flies can smell a corpse and lay their eggs on the flesh. The thought of what the eggs will turn into, and what they will do to Anna's body brought tears to Susan's eyes.

The fly, having done what nature intended, completed its own life cycle then flew out of the building and into the cold to die.