

Equinox

Autumn 2020

People think it's on the 21st of September but when I look up the times of sunrise and sunset on the Met Office app, the actual day they're equal is the 25th. I want to go to the coast but we're not to leave our hometowns. I find a vantage point overlooking the city and count the hours myself because I don't trust the Met Office.

The sun comes up at 06:53 and sets exactly twelve hours later, so I have to apologise to the app. *I'm sorry, I should've known all along it's people I can't trust.* It rains the whole day but I don't go home in case the sun sets in the middle of the twelve hour period and I miss it. The sun is another thing I don't trust.

I hide in a bus shelter and Google stuff. The other side of the world is on the cusp of spring. Five hundred pilot whales have run themselves aground on a Tasmanian beach. I watch them in a pop-out player, flapping like fingerlings while rescue teams wade and heave in wetsuits and woolly hats. The globe pivots beneath me – or it's just vertigo from looking at the screen.

Google says the equinox can fall anywhere within a three-day period but then it's still a day late ? I wonder if this means the winter solstice will fall on Christmas day. The first time I shared a bed with another adult I lay stranded on the sheets, my body collapsing under the weight of itself. Even though I'm sure I trust Google anymore, I'm about to look up 'midwinter 2020' but I get distracted by a link to more footage of the whale-liberators.

They save over a hundred but the others all perish. Nearly four hundred rubber-skinned sacks shrivelling like cured meat in the sunshine. Eight bearded men in high-vis are trying to shove one onto its side. Its blowhole keeps opening and closing like a bad relationship.

I go to dictionary.com and search for 'watershed moment'. When I lift my gaze from the phone it's 18:50 and I'm like, *oh wow, it's almost dark already.* What you don't see when I'm little spoon is two empty sockets, blood weeping from gull-pecked eyes.