

aubade

by rob mclennan

September 2006 • Poetry

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aubade is a longer poem built out of long poems, taking a page from Kroetsch's *Completed Field Notes*. From the streets of Montreal and the tantric delay of a rockslide to his version of Barry McKinnon and Brian Fawcett's "Sex at 31," mclennan writes through travels that exist both in the world and on the empty page.

mclennan lives in Ottawa. The author of eleven previous poetry books, including *what's left*, *red earth* and *name*, *an errant* (UK). mclennan is publisher of above/ground press, *STANZAS* magazine, the critical journal *Poetics.ca* and *ottawater*. mclennan edits the Cauldron Books series at Broken Jaw Press. He is also editor of *Evergreen: Six New Poets* and *sidelines: a new canadian poetics*. His online home is www.track0.com/rob_mclennan.

mclennan won the 1999 Canadian Authors' Association/Air Canada Award for "most promising writer (in any genre) in Canada under 30."

Promotion

- www.brokenjaw.com/catalog/pg112.htm
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For more information about this book, the author, the publisher, or to request an author appearance, media interviews, or review copies, please contact us.



BROKEN JAW PRESS INC.

Box 596 Stn A
Fredericton NB E3B 5A6
Canada

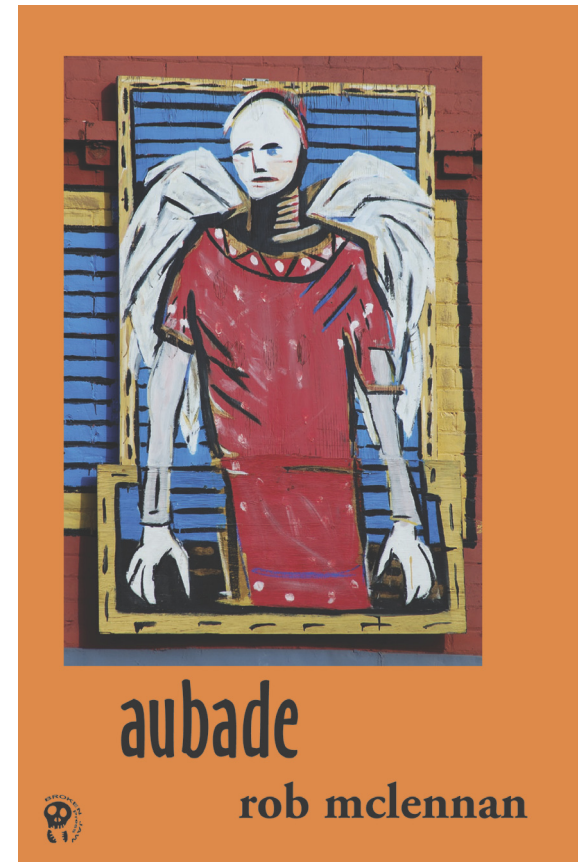
www.brokenjaw.com jblades@brokenjaw.com
tel / fax 506.454.5127

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aubade sampler

*selections from rob mclennan's
forthcoming 12th poetry collection*



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BROKEN JAW PRESS INC.

Box 596 Stn A

Fredericton NB E3B 5A6

Canada

www.brokenjaw.com

jblades@brokenjaw.com

tel / fax 506.454.5127

☛ This *aubade sampler* was published on the last weekend of May 2006 in a paper edition of 300: printed, collated, and bound in-house by Joe Blades in the back office of Broken Jaw Press Inc., in the wild western Maritimes, on a warm, sunny Sunday when he would rather have been bike riding on a woods or riverside trail ☺

Dear reader, you may print your your own copy from this PDF on standard letter-size paper. Enjoy!

from “irregular heartbeats”

(alanas teeth)

one space missing, two, pushes
up to the surface

moves along

drills in, a bargain
at the price

a hole in the day, a hole
in her head, i need
this like

dental surgery, & we
all wait

bite down, or chew
a bit upon

bad magazines, & so
fresh out of date

lily white, or tem-
peramental

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By these fruits
we shall measure our weights & days.
—George Bowering, Desert Elm

rob mclennan



Fredericton • Canada

a book of matches

hits upon the head, a nail

yr assignment, should you choose
to accept

ammonia, dont get it on yr skin
or deer urine, a splash
on an orange jacket

masks yr scent puts out

& chucks the bullet, blind

pushes her opponent to the floor, pushes
her best friend, throws
her clenched fist forward against air

an army of white uniforms, each
knocking bits of my coffee splash

at the end, sees me, holds out
the open palm

from "sex at 31"

sex at 31 competes w/ its own failures

*

& always has a spare key

my daughter haunts the west end

i cant find any books in their yard sales, only
childrens toys from teens, & discarded sets
of golf clubs

campers & boats litter drives

saturday karate class in barrhaven,
stale coffee standing w/ other parents,
in their way, & an hour
local transit

everyone else lives close,
has cars

moby on the radio, steel hours
of an hour, watermain
beneath the street

& her first ten years, &
orange belt

more than keeps her pants up

helps to keep her something,
time spent, confidence

small children running abt the,
what is it, dojo

this is no pat morita dream, how old
do you think i am

*

knows enough
when good is good,
as it gets. is good,

or even great. makes love,
& pushes, envelopes in spades.

the quick surplus, or lack
of teenage fuck,
long gone, by cons.

still seeks
the better position.

*

at 31, fully aware of half-time,
of topics & tropics,

the billow of skin changing shape.
less taut, more

& changing tune. suffers aches & pains.
but still can go the distance.

south keys (he who became lost

this is a poem w/ neither light. time of day
evaporates.

by the teeth of the river, they slept. the tip,
the tongue.

expands across the water. lets lost balls
float slowly past.

the taste of anything this morning. the snow here,
does as snow does.

a candle burns brightest. the box it came in,
even more.

a telephone is not a detection system. beats
the myths of early warning.

tristan took the wrong south bus, & never saw
isolde again. wandered crescents

for hours. who then
became.

the loss becomes him. that is,
turned into.

the steps of an old folk song

(for kate & anna, eh

painted steps, coverd, & yr grandmere
in old quebec

porch wrapped around the house

music from the kitchen, the scent
of an anne hebert poem

oh young girl in the snow,
looking up

good bones & legs, strong arms
for lifting, milking cows

what does that mean, way
that we see

strong lungs

across a landscape of flowers, of
snow, poking thru

& all depends upon,
one hour of each day

constantly singing, even

as the work gets done

suggestions, across the map

a painting, you would begin
to memorize

each small move

chessboards
in electronic fashion

& where he sits in portugal,
long suffering

new ways to win or lose

stephanie sits across from vermeer,
& pays her own homage

in paris

these threads surround us
& thin

further into, electrical fields
& curvature of earth

& small dark circles,
painted

on the sun

whitemans log

a journal is more than an entry. seclusion is
more than hiding away.

hard winters skulk in the imagination. if ever
to write poems neath a californian sun,

or north of sixty.

what is montreal but a straight line. a
dump truck is a victim
you are sure of. a breadbasket.

sugar melts, & snow. when you drive out,
past city bounds, forgetting & remembering,
wondering, who turns out the stars

at night.

from "a translation: stones & ice"

i am unable to translate skin.

whether possible to retain, w/ new eyes. the CD player
is broken, & the studio remains. small, flightless
birds set loose in first floor windows, & thin sheet of ice

over two foot melting snow. white pulp. of florida
oranges & the like. a woman, they say, is a breed apart.
when we arrived, he forbid us having sex in his

bed, so we made quick love on the living room floor. where
the carpet was worn. & my fingers bled slow where
she bit. inch by careful inch. slid smooth.

montreal at night

it takes but a moment to surpass
yr own existence, grey scrapings

flaking off the moon. the snow white
of mistaken weather through hard march.

if i could sleep for twelve hours, i think
that i would, old

hibernation, the positioning
of venus, mars, pinprickt

in the heavens, just above
grey angel spires.

from "voice-over 3: bloodletting"

"a wheel in the ditch improves suspension"

—ryan fitzpatrick

left me w/ nothing, how old
you thot she was.

certain washrooms escalate. drawings
of rockets & pigs, long saved.

photos old become new again, as
someone dies. clean house.

the former bender curves. my mother
calls it a cultural.

consider apples to oranges. consider
issues concentrate.

disbanded aft a time, & had not
what been replaced.

that together we might see more sky

it doesnt matter if you cant go home, you can
go back
to where you lived

four generations of a house set in, & the previous,
nothing left of it in the field

the garden knows a lot abt smoke, burning
matted grass each spring, thick grey

black is not the colour here

but when it is, so soon replaced
by short, green sprouts

underwater

my ears go underwater
as i speak, just one,
& then another

wood floors surround
w/ boxes & sound,
systems of voices
& trajectories

the mouth of the river
& the left coast, montreal
to twelve months
of vancouver

imagine, i said, doing
everything it is you do,
except
in the shower

even thunderstorms erupt
more slowly, & mountains
become more

as everything in yr path
becomes plural

from "letter drop, or songs from a room"

'in almost every'

faceless lands
across the bearing

or bering, strait
of footpath, sure

historical, what
they say abt

an option, claiming
only days

he stands, in
the pothole flash

finds bones, or
the bike wheel

catches, flips
& hits the bus

in melons, or
in perpetuity

an airplane turns over the underbrush

on a bus non-stop to cornwall, knowing full well
what will & wont appear

nearly took the milk route, just to drive
& see what id been missing

twice the travel time, w/ stops in long sault,
morrisburg, upper canada village

trees give the illusion of growth, even still
as remnants of the ice storm wrath

lie flat as dead birds, three years later, hold on
longer to the memory

white metal glints in the sun & turns
slightly, blinks, passenger flight the same colour
as clouds

for a moment & is of, where
it is going, & wherever

it has already been, intersecting thousands
& its tens of thousands