

## CROYDON BOYS

27 November 1976

Most nights after school, I hang around with Andrea and some other girls with the Croydon Boys at the station. Andrea doesn't go to school and only goes home when she feels like it. We go skating and meet lots of people and Sharps from other suburbs. We get along grouse, she toughens me up, and I calm her down.

The boys at school have stopped being smart arses to me now I hang out with the Croydon Boys, especially after LJ's friend Thomas T Tucker (TTT) bashed up that kid at school. One used to walk behind me throwing stones at my bum shouting, 'Jelly arse'. Not any more!

Most of the local boys are pricks. Two of them used to sing to JJ and I, 'The mole patrol is leaving, Rumpole and Iceberg', when they passed us. I have a big nose so they call me Rumpole and they call JJ Iceberg. They say she is frigid as she wouldn't go out with any of them before she met Kent. She isn't frigid. They are ugly.

I have been at war with an older kid since grade six (I started it). His sister is in my form and she is nice. We always talk about the Gypsy Rover as he lives near her, but I hate her brother. I wouldn't piss on him if he was on fire. Last year walking out of school, he spat a big greenie on the back of my dress and I dry retched all the way home whenever I thought about it.

JJ and I wear tight, tight jeans that get stuck in our cracks and some of the boys shout out, 'Hey mumbles'. (The lips are moving, but you can't hear anything). JJ's grey school baggies are tighter than her jeans. The boys call her 'Jaws' and they say that we have no tits and call us 'Flatsy' or yell, 'You're a pirate's treasure, a sunken chest'. They are meanies.

28 November 1976

The cops sprung Andrea out at night and they have put her back in Winlaton as she is uncontrollable.

I went swimming at Croydon pool with the Croydon Boys. Ralphie isn't allowed in, he has been banned from the pool so he stands outside the wire fence and watches us swim. Tom T Tucker kept ducking and chasing me and the boys were bombing me and doing belly flops. I am such a dud swimmer, I couldn't get away from them but I didn't want to get out of the pool. It took me three shots to get my Herald Swimming certificate in primary school. It was so hard; I thought I was going to drown. The school only ever takes us swimming when the water is freezing. They do that on purpose.

Tom lives with Ralphie in Saxon Street. We dawdled along the railway line and then sat talking under a gum tree at Silcock Reserve. I got up to go home and Tom pashed me off. I don't think I will tell anyone; I don't want to get a bad name or nuthin'.

3 December 1976

I went to Ralphie's for a school break up party. Ralphie lives with his brother, Gary, their Mum, TTT, and a border called Fatman. Fatman is old and a bit creepy. His big fat gut looks like a balloon filled with water and hangs over his faded Stubbies.

At the party I went into the bathroom and TTT followed me in and we pashed. He asked me to be his girlfriend. JJ was shocked. I hadn't told her about last Sunday and she hasn't got to know him yet. He is six years older than me and has been in jail heaps of times. He doesn't go to work. He gets money by selling gearboxes he removes from dumped cars at the local tip.

6 December 1976

I stopped at Tom's house on the way to school today. It was funny, before he even opens his eyes, he skulls a can of warm VB he keeps beside the bed and then he lights a smoke with his nicotine stained fingers. It's so funny, he always does crazy things.

11 December 1976

Andrea got out of Winlaton. At the pool we got thrown out after Tom threw his lighter from the top level of the wide concrete steps and made it explode. We went round to JJ's, but her Mum took one look at Andrea and said to JJ, 'No way, you're not going anywhere!'.

We went back to her place and she showed me the new Covergirl makeup Winlaton gave her when she got out and we painted our faces like Skyhooks.



Jack



Me and Andrea

12 December 1976

At the flea market today we ran in a mob with the Croydon Boys. One of them took out his knife and cut a wedge into a drinking straw and made this funny whistle thing that vibrated. We all wanted one so he made them for us and we ran around the market blowing them. One of the old dago stallholders said, 'Stop that noise or I will call the police', so we made the police siren sound with our straws. We laughed so much we spluttered raspberry sounds and had to stop.

I saw Taste at Iceland with Jack and Andrea. They were skating and a Sharpie that I was speaking to turned mean. He grabbed my arm hard to make me pash him. I got away as soon as I could, but another one grabbed me and I had to escape from him too.

13 December 1976

This arvo I sat in the empty stalls at the front of the flea market with Tom and Rocco. Feeling bored I picked the letters 'R', 'Y' and 'D' off the back of Rocco's t-shirt to read 'C O O N' instead of CROYDON. A girl I met last night came over to us and said, 'Is that your boyfriend?' I made eye signals at her not to say anything about the strange Sharpie she saw pashing me off last night. Her name is Missy and she lives near the station. She is little with big brown eyes and long brown wavy hair. She is fourteen, same as Andrea, and doesn't go to school either.

14 December 1976

Whenever we walk past Santiago's salon we make animal noises and bang on his windows. He gets angry and picks up the phone like he is going to call the police. We laugh at him. Everyone is in on it now.

Andrea spray painted 'ROCCO IS A USER' in gold paint at Croydon Station. He used her the other night and then ignored her the next day.

15 December 1976

Yay! Last day of school! We went to Saxon Street then to the station. Me, JJ and Andrea got in the cars with Gary and Rocco and went driving up the back of Yarra Glen. Gary has a black 1962 Plymouth Valiant V-200 station wagon; I like his car it looks mean. It was so funny, we sped side by side faster than 120 clicks, and the boys showed off. Rocco perched on the windowsill of the driver's door with his arms on the roof, one of the other guys must have been steering from the passenger seat. Gary beat that; he unscrewed his racing wheel right off the car and held it out the open window while the car kept going straight. JJ covered her eyes with her hands, peeking through her fingers until it was back on the car.

I was late home and Bev was stroppy with me. I got the boys to drop me off in Smith Avenue and I crossed the railway line to get home. Bev doesn't like me out with 'Boys in cars' and she screeches on and on about it like one of Mad's cockys.

16 December 1976

Missy and I went to Eastland. While waiting for the train we saw a Sharpie girl carving the name 'SKEETA' into the paint on the side of a shed. She said Skeeta is her boyfriend and was surprised we didn't know him. When she told us his real name I realised it was the Sharpie from the golf club. Missy and I have seen him at Iceland.

20 December 1976

Tom went Christmas shoplifting at Arndale Shopping Centre. He stole me an Indian elephant embedded with mirrors and love beads, and a necklace with a blue birthstone for March.

28 December 1976

I stayed at Missy's for the night. Her family calls her 'Pumpkin', as she has to be home by midnight. We went up the creek next to the railway line to have some Christmas drinks with some of the Croydon Boys. We shared a few bottles of Carlton Draught with them and on the way home I fell arse over tit, just as the coppers drove through the roundabout near the station. Missy dragged my arm and warned, 'Get up girl, we will end up in Winlaton', and got me to my feet. They didn't see us and drove straight through the roundabout.

At Missy's, we sat in the kitchen with her mother and her brother's bkie girlfriend. I felt a bit sick so I went to the outside toilet to barf and then wobbled back to the kitchen. Legs buckling, I collapsed into the chrome and vinyl kitchen chair. With no warning, I barfed all over my blue pinstriped skirt and sat stunned, staring at the vomit in my lap.

Missy told her Mum I had too many Christmas drinks and they bundled me to bed on the burgundy vinyl fold down couch in Missy's room with a bucket. In the dark I fumbled for the bucket and called out for them to put the light on, but it was too late, I missed the bucket and barfed all over the unpolished wooden floor. I couldn't help to clean up, as the room was spinning. They told me not to worry about it when I kept saying, 'I'm sorry'.

29 December 1976

Missy and I went to Eastland. My pinstripe skirt had vomit on it so I borrowed one of Missy's dark green velvet surfie skirts with yellow flowers. It didn't go with my blue conny and I felt like such a dag wearing it.

We hung around Ringwood Station with Skeeta and a hard looking Sharpie he just met, and then I took the

other Sharpie to meet Andrea. She doesn't have a boyfriend and I thought she might like him. As we strode across Croydon oval, he got weird and gripped my hand hard in his, making us walk like boyfriend and girlfriend. I tried to move my hand and he got nasty and squeezed it so hard my silver rings cut into my fingers. He seemed nice before that. We got to Andrea's and I left them talking outside.

31 December 1976

We went to the bottlo at the Dorset to get plonk and I got a bottle of Wynn's Hock Lime and Lemon. We drank in the grandstand at Croydon Park, but the cops turned up to check us out. Someone made a report about boys throwing stones at the traffic lights and Ralphie matched the description so they questioned him. They made us leave, so we barged into Andrea's house. Her Mum's boyfriend said we could drink there, but Andrea's Mum rocked up and went berko. She let me stay and a couple of others from school, but she threw everyone else out, so we slept on mattresses on the floor in Andrea's room. I stayed awake all night talking with the drummer from my school, and listening to the rain through the open balcony doors.

1 January 1977

Went home to have roast lunch. Missy is having a party tonight. We have rels visiting tonight and I have to stay home. Bummer.

2 January 1977

Bev came to the market with me and I took her to the station to meet Tom, but he wouldn't look at us. He got bashed last night and had black eyes and grazes all over his face. I saw Missy with a love bite on her neck and she made me guess Tom gave it to her. Bastard.

TTT 4 Julie Mac 4 Eva

Andrea told me that aggro Sharpie turned up at her house with a carload of mates last night and caused shit. A couple of Croydon Boys are renting the house on her corner and when Andrea went there for help, the guys in the car threw beer bottles until they got chased away by the boys.

4 January 1977

The Croydon Boys have been banned from the bottle shop in Main Street on the corner of Centreway Arcade. Today they hid around the corner and sent me in to buy a dozen bottles for them to drink at the grandstand. The guy serving didn't even ask me for ID. I'm thirteen and he thought I was eighteen! I betcha one day I will be sorry I look five years older. We downed the bottles at the oval then went to watch Miss Fanta '77 at the pool. It was crap; all these dags, longhairs and Sherbet fans thinking they are shit hot models.

5 January 1977

Fatman, Gary, and Ralphy woke us up and we drove to Jumping Creek Reserve to swim. They decided to skinny-dip, but me and Andrea took our bathers off in the water so no one could perve. It was funny; Ralphy tucked his dick between his legs to make a hairy fanny and ran tiptoe into the water waving his arms like a girl. We decided to drift through the rapids around the corner, but I winded myself when I hit my hip hard on a pointy rock hidden under the water.

Driving home, we passed Tom heading towards us. He chucked a U-ie and followed us home when we flashed our headlights. He was cut with me for going swimming without him and when he saw the bruise on my hip, he got even madder and said it was a love bite.



10 January 1977

Gary's girlfriend has a ten o'clock curfew and they had to leave their drive-in date early. He picked up me and Missy and we went back to watch the rest of the movie *Sunshine*. The attendant booth was closed so we could drive straight in. The cars watching the movie tooted their horns when our car lights lit up the screen. It's a sad movie about a young Mum with cancer. Missy and I bawled our eyes out at the end. Gary ignored the 'Please replace your speaker to avoid damage to speaker or car' sign on the screen and threw the speaker on the ground. The screen flashed 'Please be considerate of our neighbours as you leave', and he did a big burnout, spraying gravel up the driveway.

It's worse 'not' going to the drive-in with Mad. On the way home from places at night, he stops the car outside of the drive-in on the nature strip and watches the movie with no sound for free. It is so boring. If we can't sleep he still won't let us watch it. We have to lie in the back seat or in the back of the station wagon and keep our heads down. JJ thinks it's hysterical, her folks don't do crazy stuff like that.

11 January 1977

Gary drove me home to get a needle and thread to fix the zip in Tom's dacks. Bev and Mad weren't home so I missed out on the 'Boys in cars' lecture. On the way back to Saxon Street, the cops picked us up and took down our names. I sat in the bed in the back of the wagon and the cops wanted to know whose jeans they were. Strange question from Detective Dickhead.

We picked Tom and the others up and went swimming in the Yarra at Wittons Reserve. The boys took a big box of Swan tinnies. They reckon it's cheaper than Carlton and they put them in a small pool under the roots of a tree in the river to keep them cold

When winter's storms have passed and gone,  
shall a sudden calm succeed.  
I seek to ease my troubled mind;  
sleep is the friend I need.  
With these few words, I write my mind.  
You will in them, a question find.  
My question is simple so seek it out,  
love is a torment when in doubt.

14 January 1977

Tom stayed at Kent's joint; it was the first time they met and they got real pissed together. They said if we didn't sneak out in the night to see them, they would come and bang on my window. JJ and I put the clock under the pillow and set the alarm to go off at 1.30 am. I silently got out of the window, but of course accident-prone JJ crashed through the venetian blinds and made a big thump, causing my dog to go mental barking.

We sat for a minute to make sure Bev or Mad didn't wake up, then ran to Kent's and let ourselves in through the side door. The bastards were fast asleep, passed out snoring, so we quickly ran home. Boy, are we gunna yell at them.

16 January 1977

Saw Choc at the market today, she was shitting bricks. One of the butch lezzos on weekend leave from Winlaton bailed her up informing her, 'You're cute, you're gunna be my girlfriend'. She pinned Choc up against a wall near the station and tried to pash her, but Choc kneed her in the snatch. She thought the lezzo would bash her, but she respected that Choc had the guts to have a go and said, 'You're okay'. Now they are mates.

Tom is away visiting his Mum. I went skating with Missy to see the Redhouse Roll Band. Saw Jack and the other Sharps.

Before we left, the girls had a huge scrag fight at the station and cars were pulling up to watch. Andrea and two of the Croydon girls punched up the three slags that bashed Missy on the oval last week. Missy thought she was pregnant (Toms?) at the time, so Andrea was after them. Andrea fights like a bloke. She sat on one slag and gripped her by the hair and ears, smashing her head into the ground.

Andrea strangled her and the slag's face turned blue until the sister, screaming like a nutcase, attacked Andrea from behind. LJ ran up and snapped the nutcase that hard she split open the skin on her knuckle an inch. The Croydon Boys broke up the fight. Rocco wanted to know why I didn't jump in too and I said, 'Nah, three against three is enough'.

After skating I spray painted 'Sharps' on the wall of the loos near Croydon Station and then spray painted, 'We hate Santiago' on his shop window with green spray paint.

17 January 1977

Went to Monday market. I sang the song 'Cherry Bomb' loudly, but I changed the words to 'Hello world, do you realise its a J-J-J-J-J-J Julie Mac'. Two girls came round the corner to see who was making the noise. We laughed when we saw each other. I met them last night at skating. I found out they are best friends from East Ringwood. Jacquie is my age and Cathy is fourteen. Cathy goes to posh Tintern Girl's School.

I got a post card from JJ; she is at Anglesea.

Geday Mac, like the Sharpie queen Stamp? Ha-ha. I saw two Sharpies (if you could call them that) down across from the beach the other day. What do you think of that, hey, mmm? I'm still white; haven't even got one brown or red patch on me. Love JJ.

PS See you when I come back. Bye.

Julie J was here.

18 January 1977

Tonight me, Missy, and one of the Pembroke girls hitchhiked to Ringwood Bowls. They hitchhike all the time, but I felt a bit scared even though I know not to get into any shaggin wagons or cars with NRNR (No Root No Ride) on the door. We waited for someone to pick us up, and cars tooted as they passed. Someone shouted out 'Nice legs', and we noticed our friend's freshly shaved legs reflected the headlights of the passing cars.

We got a lift with some nice guys to The Bowls, but coming home the next lift turned scary. They sped towards Croydon then turned in a different direction down a dark road. We pleaded, 'Where are we going', and they laughed evilly. 'To a party', they said and then ignored us. We know what that means; it means we are the party. A lot of guys have hitchhiker doors, they take the inside handles off so girls can't get out. Missy checked for handles and she whispered, 'When they stop, we are going to have to make a run for it'. I was packing. I can't run and I didn't know where we could run too. Something must have made them change their minds; they ended up on the right road and took us to Croydon.

19 January 1977

Jan, one of my friends from primary school, came to stay. She is a longhair now and wears hippy clothes. She takes white pills she carries in her canvas bag. She said that you go to the doctors and tell him bullshit symptoms; he puts his finger up your bum and then prescribes them. At the station she took some Blue Curacao from her bag and we tipped it into our cans of Tarax Black Label lemonade saying, 'It's not just for little girls', like Abigail on *Number 96*. We gargled them on the train to Eastland and annoyed the old bags staring at us. At Downyflake we met her friend; he is a Sharpie and lives in a halfway house for wards of the state in Reservoir. He used to go out with Skeeta's ex and he has her initials tattooed on his wrist.

He wanted his hair cut and we decided to catch the train to Reservoir so I could cut it. Every time we went under a bridge I shit myself thinking about the Granville rail disaster yesterday. Bev was listening to the live report on her tranny and I could hear people crying. It was awful.

20 January 1977

Jan and I spent last night in a park near the halfway house. We got bored so we drew a moustache and eyebrows on a statue in someone's front yard with eyeliner and stole milk after the milkman came round. It was freezing. I ended up sleeping face down on the ground and Jan curled up in a ball on my back trying to keep warm. We wished we were home in bed.

We came back to Croydon with Jan's friend and his roommate; he is in for breaking into houses. He told me about the time he broke into a house and saw a note on the bench saying, 'Dinner is in the oven'. He ate the roast and wrote, 'Yum, thanks', on the note.

We left the boys at the station, and Jan and I went to Saxon Street to see Tom. We sat on Ralphy's bed and Tom drunkenly played 'Little Ray of Sunshine' over and over again. He says that the song reminds him of his daughter. She is two.

Jan sat beside him. Right in front of me, he leant over and pashed her. They kept pashing and ignoring me so I got out. I had stomped all the way across Silcock Reserve when Tom ran up barefoot behind me. He told me off for leaving Jan behind, and said that I was a bad friend. I felt sick when Jan followed me home, acting like nothing was wrong. I was glad when her Mum picked her up. I hope Tom got prickles in his feet.

Andrea got sprung by the cops and put back in Winlaton again for being out at all hours.

21 January 1977

This arvo, Tom cornered some of the girls that bashed Missy in the ladies waiting room at the station. He went mental at them and put his fist through four panes of glass on the door, saying that he was punching the windows, as he didn't hit women. The jagged glass cut his hands and wrists, blood was pouring out of the gashes. He took off and I followed. None of us said anything. We were all too scared.

23 January 1977

Last night a group of us slept over at Ralphy's in his room at the back of the house and we put the snibs on both doors to stop his Mum from getting in to catch us. We mucked around all night being stupid and saying, 'Good night, John-Boy'. This morning his Mum woke up early and was going berko, rattling the doors and telling Ralphy and Gary to let her in. We tried to be quiet, but she heard us and threatened, 'Right, you girls, that's it, I am ringing all your parents', but we knew she wouldn't.

When the coast was clear we went to the flea market. Two cute Sharpies got off the train at Croydon Station and one of the Croydon Boys overheard them brag, 'Watch out Croydon, here we come'. TTT and the rest surrounded them. I thought they were going to bash them, but they let them go through to the market. I felt like a Sharpie traitor.

I saw Jacquie at the market; then we went to see Hush at Iceland with the Croydon Boys. It was grouse. I have always wanted to see them and they are the bestest band I have seen live! I saw Jack; he bought razor blade earrings from the market to give to some of the older Melbourne Sharp girls.

I stayed at Jacquie's for the night and at midnight we heard a knock on her bedroom window, it was two longhairs – her old boyfriend, Alex, and his friend, Will. We went outside and they took us for a spin in Alex's glittery blue HQ panel van up to the Sky High Observatory at Kalorama on the top of Mt Dandenong. The van has a beach sunset mural on the tailgate and shag pile on the inside roof. Jacquie and I squealed in the back as we rolled across the mattress when he turned for the sharp corners of the windy mountain road. We sang along to Alice Cooper's *Welcome to my Nightmare*, as it played through the speakers in the back.

4 February 1977

Cathy and I stayed at Jacquie's. We didn't get to see the cannibal movie *Survive* in the city; we missed the train and went to hang around Ringwood Bowls instead. I wore my sky and dark blue conny, my blue pinstriped skirt, and navy pantyhose with my cork platform shoes. Jacquie sprayed Cathy and me with Tabu perfume; she says that guys like it.