

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tim Wells has cultivated a laugh that's more like a caress. He walks properly. He does not slouch, shuffle or stumble about. He knows that wide, floating trousers are only good for wearing on a veranda with a cocktail in your hand.

PRAISE FOR TIM WELLS

'London poetry landmark'
The Times Literary Supplement

'Working class hero'
The Morning Star

'Thug'
NME, 18th July 1984

ALSO BY TIM WELLS

POETRY

A Man Can Be A Drunk Sometimes, But A Drunk Can't Be A Man (Donut Press, 2001)

If You Can Read This You're Too Close (Donut Press, 2003)

Boys' Night Out in the Afternoon (Donut Press, 2005)

Rougher Yet (Donut Press, 2009)

Keep the Faith (Blackheath Books, 2014)

Everything Crash

Tim Wells

Penned in the Margins

LONDON

PUBLISHED BY PENNED IN THE MARGINS
Toynbee Studios, 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6AB
www.pennedinthemargins.co.uk

All rights reserved
© Tim Wells 2015

The right of Tim Wells to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with Section 77 of the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988.

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Penned in the Margins.

First published 2015

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International.

ISBN
978-1-908058-21-8

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements are due to the editors of the following publications in which some of these poems first appeared: *Brogue*, *Broken Wine*, *Clarity*, *Cont*, *Counterfeit Crank*, *The Daily Bugle*, *Dripping*, *Dwang*, *Freedom*, *Inside View*, *In Their Own Words* (Salt Publishing, 2012), *Junior Gazette*, *The London Column*, *Magma Poetry*, *Morning Star*, *The Moth*, *N16*, *New Left Project*, *New Trespass*, *Nutsack*, *Onion*, *Pen Pusher Magazine*, *Poetry* (Chicago), *The Prague Review*, *Push*, *Ration Book*, *Snatch*, *Street Sounds*, *SugarApe*, *The Tally Ho*, *The Weekend On Sunday* and *Yeast*.

Nine of the poems collected here first appeared in the pamphlet *Keep the Faith* (Blackheath Books, 2014).

'The Column Inches' and 'WPC Lucy Sheridan' first appeared in a limited edition pamphlet, *The Column Inches*, published by Sick Fly Publications to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the death of Mary Millington in 2014.

I WOULD LIKE TO RAISE A GLASS TO:

Angela Mao Ying, Ingrid Pitt, Jason King, Andy Ching, Ashna Sarkar, Phill Jupitus, Roxanne Escobales, Squire, Squire, Sarah, Jan, Clare Pollard, Jane Yeh, I Roy, The Sweeney, Cockney Rejects, Phil Silvers, Geraint Hughes, Aileen Cho, Ted Taylor, Adina Edwards, Warren Oates, Bobbie Gentry, Melisser Elliott, Mustang Sally, Lo Lieh, Hasina Begum, Aza Shadenova, Major Lance, Mistah Brown, Tim P, Arms House Champion, Suzi Quatro, Maggie Ryan, Helen Mort, Sleaford Mods, Jan Waclaw Machajski, Ian Duhig, Sir Percy Blakeney, Sugar Pie DeSanto, Todd Moore, Michael Curran, Lucy Parsons, Isaac Bashevis Singer, MiG 21, unruly breasts, the Jones, Harry Champion, Mrs Elswood, Rudolf Rocker, Niall O'Sullivan, the new Number Two, Emma Peel, Sarah Lund, Bang Said the Gun, Rhoda Dakar, the mice on the mouse organ, Adebisi, Hannah Lowe, all the young dudes, Ted Lewis, Laurie Cunningham, James Herbert, Cheryl B, Reiko Ike, Terry Sneed, PP Snatch, girls with price tags on the soles of their shoes, Johnny Alucard, Anna and Nick, Liang Shan Po, Fred Voss, Barry Cryer, George Smiley, Salena Godden, Barry Brown, Cody Jarrett, General Urko, Imogen Salt, Mary Hooligan, Gunter and Lucille Toody, Koko Taylor, Rollerball Rocco, pie and mash, Serious Drinking, Isaac Babel, Nick Tesco, Ogami Itto, Vimto, Miki Berenyi, Hard As Nails, Tog, Snuff, Nigel Benn, Junjo Lawes, Destiny, Melody, Harmony, Symphony and Rhapsody, Mouldy Old Dough, Castle of Owls, UK Bubbblers, Jack Underpants, Angel Delight, Arthur Morrison, the Hoxton Creeper, lager top, Karen Black, Ring Lardner, Ranking Slackness, Delinquent Girl Boss, Junior Soul, Cesar Romero, Penlingtons all, Flannery O'Connor, Jenni Fagan, Asta, June Millington, Nina Baden-Semper, The Gymslips, Doug and Dinsdale, Joel Loya, Victor Serge, Jennifer Wong, Barrington Levy, Scratch the Upsetter, Cesca, Johnny Reggae, The Mighty Two, Charles Middleton, Sven Hassel, and the grave next to Arch Stanton.

CONTENTS

Hoxton Market Forces	15
The Early Throes	16
Together Again	18
My Sad Hooligans	19
In Praise of Chimène Suleyman	20
R. Dean Taylor	21
The Middle Class in the Launderette as Pandas at the Zoo	22
Kuu	24
Baby Workout	25
Ryoko Naitoh Writes a Song	26
Born to Rule	27
Out of the Blue	28
Version	31
Stoic Youth	33
Bidaaye	34
Small Axe	35
Red Cavalry	36
A Little Less Conversation	37
The Monkey Time	38
Mudies Mood	40
The Winger	42

A Quitter Never Wins	43
The Column Inches	44
There But For the Grace of Bauhaus	45
WPC Lucy Sheridan	47
Black Echoes	49
The Story of Dalston	50
New Boots and Panties	51
My Nietzschean Overcoming of Culture	52
Moshiach is Coming and He Doesn't Like My Kitchen	53
Cooling the Scene	54
The Horror of Your Daughter's New Boyfriend Turning up Wearing Green Suede Cuban Heels	55
The Woman She Was Supposed to Be	56
Surviving	57
Epsolutely	58
Red Sky at Night	60
Kosher Village	61
The Daily Grind	62
I Don't <3 the Walk of Shame	63
The Bird Cage	65
Effingham	67
The Coriolanus Effect	68
Fight For This Love	70

We'll Take a Cup o' Kindness Yet	71
The Wells	72
Steiner	73
My Friends, the Poets	75
NOTES	77

For Beatrice Pons

Everything Crash

Hoxton Market Forces

A piano teeters on the edge
of the top floor, Balfron Tower.
The seconds before it plummets,
the electricity of coming rent-rises
runs through the assembled tenants.

Gone are the aerosoled (classic)
cock and balls, paintbrushed football teams.
'Artists' are the rats that herald the plague.

A stabbed local lad's claret
is Tweeted, selfied and playlisted;
the Jobcentre now a bar
where trust funds flaunt their edge:
irony is when they don't have the balls
to flick two fingers to our face,
yet they're two fingers still.

The piano powers down
as our rents soar up.
The crash is a certain music:
a cacophony of notes. Bank notes.

The Early Throes

You realise, the fifth time she uses it,
it's the pet name she's given you.
You're walking along Oxford Street.

She takes your hand
and you have to hold the book you're carrying
in front of your groin
to mask the rising tightness in your stride.

The book is Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*
and you march it from Topshop to American Apparel.
The title and your gait make a Swedish tourist laugh.

You name the shade on her lips, dress size and shoe.
You walk past shops and picture her
in outfits that catch your eye.
This new found attention to women's fashion worries you.

You start to eat differently – wasabi peas, rocket –
and become aware of soya milk.
You wake up in the morning singing 'Can I Get a Witness'.

You think less about the swish of her thighs
and the give of her breast,
but more of the splash of her laugh

and how her smile breaks like a sunrise
from the black of her hair
and the dark of your day.