

## En route

*Lisa Collyer*

“There’s just that feeling that this isn’t a proper life, and so there is that feeling that the quicker it’s all over, the better it is for everybody.”

- *Ms Merle Mitchell AM, an 84-year-old woman living in residential aged care*  
*Quoted from the 2018 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety*

A single suitcase. What will ~~you~~ I pack?  
~~You~~ My home? A 2x1, brick & tile,  
boutique villa ~~I’ve~~ you’ve since spent.  
Nobody wants to hear ~~you~~ my flesh  
groan. ~~You~~ I will not burden ~~me~~ you  
with keepsakes destined for the charity  
box. ~~You~~ I can’t strip away wallpaper,  
the mural is dry paint, a memory stick  
is a placeable face, the music on shuffle  
like contact ~~I~~ you divvy between visiting  
hours. Perhaps ~~You’ll~~ I’ll leave the suitcase  
empty and when ~~you~~ I find ~~yourself~~ myself  
a routine round, ~~You’ll~~ I’ll pocket nosegays  
from the garden ~~I~~ you dug and climb in.

**Lisa Collyer** is a poet and educator living and working in Boorloo (Perth) who lived in Kaurna (Adelaide) as a child. She writes poetry like the jagged edge of a can opened-up with a lens on women’s bodies. She has been published in *Westerly*, *Cordite*, *Rabbit*, and *Australian Poetry Anthology*. She was an Inspire writer-in-residence with The National Trust of W.A. and was short-listed for The Dorothy Hewett Award. Her debut collection, *How to Order Eggs Sunny Side Up*, will be published with Life Before Man, the poetry imprint of Gazebo Books, in September 2023.