

Dawn Walk in Port Fairy

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I am unsure that Brian Cox is absolutely right when on his program Universe he says that we take the sun for granted. If we did, why do so many of us take photos of the sun's rise and its set? Surely it is an action of some primeval celebration and an indication of our awe of its glory and its mystery; an acknowledgement that without it we could not exist. I agree with him that it is truly amazing to think that just by chance through the right combination of elements at the right distance from the sun that life in all its myriads of forms exists on Earth. The sun is a god and central to all religions, whether explicit or not. The ancients knew this and named it. It is these thoughts that accompany me whenever I rise from bed early enough to wonder at the dawn or marvel at that moment when the sun disappears painting the sky red and crimson and the clouds iridescent golds and blues.

I planned to bid the short-tailed shearwaters or mutton birds farewell from Griffith Island when they departed for their daily forage to feed their chicks hiding quietly with only an occasional cheep to tell a passer-by of their presence. I forgot to get out of bed at four. I remembered at 5.30 so decided to walk along the East beach of Port Fairy and contemplate the dawn.

The dawn had arrived peacefully after storms had lashed the countryside over several hours.



The grey-blue sea was flat and the waves lapped lazily while the sun slowly climbed over the horizon. No rosy-fingered dawn this but rather a flat pastel rose blending with the grey sky.



The calm after a storm is surprising and almost unbelievable after demented waves and winds crashed into anything in their way only hours previously.



It is a reminder that things are transitory and that Nature continues to do what it

Sitting with Psyche

does regardless of us and that we are powerless to control it. We are desecrating Earth and we will change it as we have done for centuries, although at a more leisurely rate, but it will continue to survive without us until our sun implodes and dies, enveloping the planets that orbit it in a shroud of darkness. We will be long gone.

Change is constant. Port Fairy is now a holiday town, its only links to its whaling history are the charming whalers' cottages and the many hotels, the banks and a post office. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Fairy Oh, and the short-tailed shearwaters. There has been some concern for them over the last couple of years because they have been arriving on Griffiths Island later than usual and in poor condition. Apparently, they are recovering although their numbers are still down. It is thought that they are adapting to changed weather conditions and its effect on food supply as they travel southwards from the northern hemisphere.

Waves have lapped and people have fished in this area from time immemorial; first by the Pyipkil gundjit clan who constructed stone and timber weirs or yereroc to harvest fish and eel. They were dispossessed by the whalers, resulting in the Eumeralla wars in the early 1840s. [Finding Compass](#) Now a small fishing fleet operates from its picturesque wharf overlooked by expensive houses reflected in the slow-moving



water of the Moyne River.

The lighthouse built on Griffith Island in 1859 emerges in the lightening sky, warning of low-lying rocks characteristic of this dangerous coastline where many ships have floundered and lives lost.



The boats bumped gently against the wharf timbers their colours carried into the depths of the water.





The water birds are readying themselves for the day as I wander off for breakfast. On the drained swamps



up-river golfers hit balls and cattle graze.

