

Aussie, Aussie, Aussie
Oi, Oi, Oi Aue

Dehydrated landscapes in tones of brown
like hay—
barely cling on to life,
adorn Blacktown's streets
No sight of the Dominion Road roundabout
or Golden takeaways
where I used to order
fritters and Maori fried bread burgers
I roll the car window up,
AC cutting through green pasture flashbacks

The heat knows I don't belong here
—just yet.
My airways suffocate under the
Aussie summer season(ing),
dirt-packed gravel roads,
and bogan accents

We stop at Woolies, A.K.A. Countdown, back home
My cousin has her TNs,
a lavalava around her waist
and a bogan-Samoan mouth
She squints at my words
with the way it tumbles out of my mouth
"Fush and chups,"
she cackles
Even my tongue knows it doesn't belong here

"Oi aue!"

Her lingo gets caught on my tonsils
and trapped in my teeth,
unable to solidify a single line;
too virulent to settle
on my taste buds
"It's pronounced su-ba-ru,
not sa-ba-ru"

She keeps probing my tongue
for how funny it's shaped
We trade word-for-word in the shopping aisles
out of sheer amusement
Each testing our words,
like we're at the RSL buffet
tasting different dishes

My chilly bin for her esky
My vivid for her texter
My jandals for her thongs
My Kiwi-Samoan palate for her bogan-Samoan mouth