



YOU DON'T KNOW

Episode 8: Sorry for the Mistakes

Lizzy Turner: **LT**
David Turner: **DT**
Vanessa Onwuemezi: **VO**

Transcript by Lizzy and David Turner.

Intro:

[The sound of various birds singing in a park fades in, and continues as background sound through the following conversation section, before crossfading with the beginning of the main track.]

DT: Hello. Welcome to episode 8 of You Don't Know. I'm David Turner.

LT: And I'm Lizzy Turner.

DT: This episode is called... what's it called?

LT: Sorry for the Mistakes.

DT: Sorry for the Mistakes. That wasn't an attempt at a joke, we only decided on a title about half an hour ago and I'd already forgotten it. We're sitting in the blazing hot sun in Lloyd Park in Walthamstow, it's Easter Friday and it's beautiful.

This episode is a collaborative piece of writing between myself and Lizzy. We'll be back after the piece as usual to explain a bit more about it. But just briefly, it's a piece that Lizzy wrote in two voices and I added to it, so it's now three voices. For the first time on this series we've

invited a 'real-life' person to join us and the third voice you'll hear is the absolutely amazing Vanessa Onwuemezi, who kindly agreed to read the third voice for us.

We'll tell you a bit more about her afterwards but if you want you can pause this episode and go and buy her book online, which is a collection of short stories called Dark Neighbourhood, out through Fitzcarraldo Editions. It's really brilliant. Like everything else she writes.

This episode is accompanied by a handwritten and typed letter, which is available from our website for £6 plus packing and postage; link in the episode description. Otherwise, manually go over to youdontknow.uk where you'll find our online shop and also, you'll find the full episode transcript for this episode and all other episodes.

10% of [income from] everything we sell goes to the Eat or Heat foodbank in Walthamstow. It's pretty sad that over the course of this project, their work has become even more important, but I suppose it's just become even more important to support them.

Do us a massive favour and tell your friends about us, and maybe even people you don't like so much. It really helps. We have no advertising budget and it's really hard to spread the word about odd little independent podcasts like this, so any favours in that respect are massively appreciated.

We'll be back in 24 minutes. Approximately.

Sorry for the Mistakes:

[00:03:10]

[The sound of running and cascading water fades in. It has a resonant, 'sparkling' quality, as if falling onto something metallic. It continues beneath the next section of speech before fading out.]

VO:

A set for othering and stints. To unreveal, speak dreadful bend. To different eat, live out non-physic, performing answers the long way round. Some cut out for this, others edgescraps, dropped here anyway. Try one, get ten free. Some heady place.

[The water sound crossfades with the sound of someone writing with a pen on paper. It has a scratchy quality, at a fast speed, and continues beneath the next two sections of speech. Occasional thumps of the hand and pen hitting the paper can be heard. The sounds described so far follow the same format for the rest of the track, unless otherwise indicated. Lizzy and David's speech has a tinny, echoing quality throughout the track.]

LT:

We preempt somatic when we come here because the head commotion is bloody sharp. Tart-headed, we are, when we come here. We haven't found each other yet but I know we're either side of a filmy partition, clingy wet shower curtain, makes it a bit difficult. Sounds as if it's the same for us both: it's not. Mutable. The behind leading the behind. Listy and half hungry – the me half – we try and pin down *something* immediate, knowing we wouldn't mobilise it given choice. We're dreammates after all. But these are some mercury butterflies, friend. Have a go if you need; I'll dig my fluke in.

DT:

If it truly was as simple as on-a-scale-of-one-to-ten, with one being the lowest, then surely we wouldn't be wading through this here treacle. And we wouldn't all be making the other feel so guilty about doing the natural thing which is to keep using our inside voice. You know the one... But then some joker announces that aces are high and the whole system turns on its head. Flip-the-script... like face down so you can't engage? Like, title-page obscured and held in place by the weight of the story? This, yes this sounds good to me but I know you can't mean that because you're wearing your 2" 'how can I help?' badge and, of course, your eyes.

[The handwriting sound crossfades with the sparkling water sound.]

VO:

Everything seems to be hanging, with a thick damp rhythm. Whoomph—Whoomph—Whoomph—Whoomph. Is what's shiny just wet, is what's topography just bumpy. The wind in our brains is each our own, our own scintillating scotoma. A clearing always just around that bend.

[The sparkling water sound crossfades with the sound of a low, rumbling vibration through wood, which continues beneath the next two sections of speech, with varying degrees of intensity. It has a slightly muffled distortion to it.]

LT:

It's not clear we've journeyed until we're turned up, nor whether it can be handled apiece. There's a cut of time where it's simply waver, reel a moment in the pampas plumes. Arrhythmia assessment. Calamity run-through. Eyes not sticking on contact. We'll just keep checking the backs of our hands until we feel assimilated (yes, every time – it's as if I forget everything). Sky switching slides, sh-shnk sh-shnk, to sickly-cordial cellophane. Shuttering the liquid into our ear canals. We thought we liked sound. Just sit with it and it won't see you move. When's kick-off? This minute is simmering.

DT:

And it isn't a case of lying. Things can be both okay and, you know, not. You can be both clinically depressed AND many aspects of your life be demonstrably and oppressively shit. It's all about how we measure these things. Jackpot! You stop and take stock one day and it just seems so very very far to have come for so very very little. Then it's Saturday, the first morning of spring, and Roland the 12-week-old-Spaniel-puppy stops time. Through a combination of it being his first day out in public, his brand-new green fleece and the fact that no one has ever worn that haircut so well; it/he lifts and dusts off so much. But it doesn't make anything any better, but it does make you realise that the heavier, dustier stuff doesn't make it any worse. (Perhaps.) And of course, your eyes.

[The vibration sound crossfades with the sparkling water sound.]

VO:

Nearly everything kaleids. Scratch at the rind, or hard infiltrate. You can plunge bright, game-quick and cloisterminded, or be clad penumbral, wetwithstanding. The rules are, there ain't no tools, you make your own, using...

[The sparkling water sound crossfades with the vibration sound.]

LT:

Dead Rockstar is thundering beyond the exosphere, striding punchy, and you groaning no trust – I assure you, though I don't really know what dying is like. I'm singing screwy and not really getting it, you've gone quiet so as not to hear. You fathom better and it sends you deep. I'm skimming giddy. I'm hell-o-friend-ing you, you're tramping molasses on the lowest. Thank alchemy for all these misfirings though, fancy if one of them hit! It'd be no good for a Family Pass. You get in if you know what a two-tail spike is, you get in if you know what a glue-top man is, you get in if you know co-morb-co-hab, baby, you get in if you know how heavy's a cup of Holy Fuck – I think I let myself in using my dirty button knuckle, demi-serious rioter. You happened through a covert, I expect, all branches drooping at a jangle.

DT:

And if we lift that delicate sheet up in front of us like those rumours we heard about those people we made no attempt to engage with, then what? Exhibitionism is just a form of dominance. A power move in which you control the scene. But this veil doesn't hide you in the way you hoped and now you're all on show. Pepper's Ghost. Or rather, large fleshy shadow puppet whose arms will only ever bend inward. Moving in the only way you ever learned how. Painfully aware of your limitations. Everyone came for the show (not necessarily for the entertainment), and you've slowed it to a crawl. Self-aware and self-obsessed. And perhaps the only trick left to us is to play with perspective; it's that or achieve the impossible and disengage, but you know exactly how that one plays out and it's all pretend. And it may be as simple as not wanting to

let anyone down because you know all they ever wanted was a smile and an answer that made them feel better. But... But... But... But... But... But... But... Your eyes.

[The vibration sound crossfades with the sparkling water sound.]

[00:14:02]

VO:

Setting multiplies high-freed, calibrates peculiar. True homonymous, true skew. Lowers the ceiling behind our eyes, and makes the walls push off. We see the closed doors blowing in and out, the carpet humped, or writhing. But blood no longer scares us. Let the wind take it, like a big open centrifuge, add an Unquiet pattern to the analysis.

[The sparkling water sound crossfades with the handwriting sound.]

LT:

I wish you lissom, slip, safe tippings. I have my dippy buoyancy. God forgive us our undulations. Our sleuth-shapes tandem about like so many separates, picking glyphs from each other's mouths, they're still so sexy if nothing else. There's a lot of Me about this We. May we each keep an I on something. I guess black feathers interrupt your eyelids. I watched the elmcrowns tremor when your hands disturbed the earth. If we greeted each other would I say 'how do you do it', and would you say 'how do you do it' in return? You're the Arkansas Toothpick to my Louisville Slugger, the *Rhythm 0* to my *Rest Energy*. Perhaps you are prepared to fail, and this will be our fear-remover. Prepared to drop off the plate-rim. Opposite points (but there's only one side).

DT:

OMG, I'm like, obsessed with this constant hiss on recordings of classical piano. Like a mist-coat over pink primer. But weightier, ja? And it sounds like Roland Pöntinen is having to flick the notes of Erik Satie's *Gymnopédies No.2* up through soup. And at about 50 seconds in, one of those little, bladed numbers down on the far right-hand-end of the keyboard cuts free and springs higher than the rest. But instead of taking advantage of this sudden break in surface tension, Old Roland takes a breath and allows the soup to congeal; presses its weight back down all over the place. Settles back into where he can feel exactly what he's fighting against. And that picture of your eyes? I still think about that every day.

[The handwriting sound crossfades with the sparkling water sound.]

VO:

Cast in every way you find, billow-dashed, unnumbered, finer. Take where you will, what geometry, what shapeshift. Majesty isn't in question. Everyone else should be like water, malleable at worst. Facets craning. Levels giving way to space.

[The sparkling water sound crossfades with the handwriting sound.]

LT:

You don't see the moon flame off your scapulae. You don't see the burnished back of your head. The threadmetals. Them limbal rings. The tiny beam through the hole in your lobe. The freckles through the ages. Brave radiance, silly warmth. The symmetry despite the tilt. You may recognise me from camping out under your zygomatic arches, it's a temporal process. Complete, downright and uttered.

[The vibration sound fades in and continues alongside the handwriting sound, beneath the next section of speech, until the handwriting sound fades out.]

DT:

Something to push against. Like an inescapable Zorb, but this is no stag-stag-stag-activity-weekend-and-bants-with-the-lads. It's just pushing and trying to find the balance between maintaining momentum and not just running away from yourself. And your eyes!

[The vibration sound crossfades with the sparkling water sound.]

VO:

What's it called when your body knows something's coming before you do? Is it fair of your body to advertise it? Stickyweed all over your back, grassdarts catching in your hair, and other schoolfield armaments. Isn't shame more stickybomb than burning? Be not a-frayed, they say - just stuff this stickybun into your mouth.

[The sparkling water sound crossfades with the vibration sound.]

LT:

No little flake of coterie, no overlight sensation. Just wait the jaunt, talk amongst yourself; if anyone could learn it, we wouldn't attend. We absorb these impressions and chuck some sputterings – why not take down some tasting notes while we're at it, Flavour Boy! There are piece-mixtures of whatsoever, anyplace we peek, so mash a load of it into a montage. I'm not being waggish, but I am clumsy. Fingers and toes too long for delicates, but happy to thump the Joanna. Come on, stumpy kitten, we'll do it together. March ink right into their manuscripts. It'll be fine.

DT:

Something to push against - Like tiny hands pushing outward from inside your ribcage. And inside them? Hands... tinier still. And yep, you guessed it, it's ever decreasing hands all the way in. Only, the tinier they get, the louder the shrieking. (Oh, those eyes!)

[The vibration sound continues on its own for a short time before the sparkling water sound fades in and continues alongside it beneath the next section of speech.]

VO:

Seceding, underbuttoned brother, drench and drown in essence. Chatter away in soggy consonants, won't you, it's good to keep a grip on these pidgins. Distant doesn't cover. Until you see the fabric is shifted at least. And there's the bell again. This round will feel quicker, I promise.

[The sparkling water and vibration sounds continue for a short time, before the handwriting sound fades in alongside. They all continue beneath the next two sections of speech.]

LT:

We'll realise treasure at some stage and until then strike a footstep, said. No damage in division whilst we're sensing. Fancy what we want while the mirrors are clattering, the faults are uncoupling. Hurdling through what we've forgotten we wanted to say, and diamonds are clinking in the ground. We'll wake up in a room where the gold is spilling in, so until then, watching over our own muscles like they were each other's, don't forget to track those bloodpumps son. Sharpen those shoes. Hold onto your bones, for me.

DT:

The biggest head-fuck is the simple, 'I'm not here, I'm over *there*'. Nothing worse than thinking that everything you're trying to hold onto isn't really as you thought. You spend so many years accepting yet attempting to ignore the fact that you can't ever know what another person actually sees. And now there's this question about whether any of this is real. This illusion of depth. And it's sharp, this veneer (and under your skin, turning septic). But the more you conceive of this all being an AI simulation the more likely that it actually is. And some of us don't mind that (or have more pressing concerns). And to think that all this might just be some old-time-y projector, whirring away and spraying light onto a lank shower curtain, spilling off the edges across grimy ceramic tiles... and your eyes.

[The handwriting sound fades out, and the sparkling water and vibration sounds continue.]

VO:

I miss the yous from all the times, while the blocks are plummeting, and the dust the dust. I'll find you again I know it, Opalseam. No way to know where we'll have come

up until we're up, and looking about the surface - two shiny beads on the bending earth and level with forever.

[The sparkling water and vibration sounds continue together for a short time. The vibration sound fades out, and the sparkling water sound continues on its own for a short time before fading out at the end of the track.]

Outro:

[00:27:27]

[The background sound of singing birds fades back in, and continues through the entirety of this conversation section.]

DT: Welcome back, thank you for sticking around. I hope you enjoyed it. And I really hope you enjoyed the addition of Vanessa Onwuemezi's voice. Pretty good, isn't it?

LT: She's very good.

DT: It made me very self-conscious really. One of the reasons not to invite anyone any good on is that it makes you look really bad, doesn't it! It makes you sound awful!

LT: She showed us right up!

DT: If you're listening Vanessa, thank you again for taking part, you did an amazing job. It was really great to hear her interpretation of your work, wasn't it? I suppose you'd better tell us a bit about the writing?

LT: This writing began a little while ago actually, I had started a few pieces of writing, short story-type pieces of writing and this was one of them. I was working on them, bit by bit, during one of the lockdowns. Leaving it and coming back to it, adding bits to it, without any real idea as to what I would do with it, it was just keeping my creativity alive I suppose.

I began writing it in the format it is in now, which is in distinct paragraphs, or sections; although there is a loose narrative to it, it's individual paragraphs, alternated with the smaller sections of text which Vanessa read, which I was thinking of as a sort of narration and a bit more abstract compared with the main sections. It's all very imagery and description-heavy, so I've used a lot of made-up words, homophones and skewed phrasing.

I really enjoy that kind of writing so I tried to pack it out with as much of that as possible, and as much imagery as possible. And with those narration sections, I kept taking them out and putting them back in [as] I couldn't decide whether it was working. Then I started to think of it... as you've already mentioned... as another voice. Which is something, I've realised, I've done quite a lot with my contributions to this project. I've used multiple voices which are all from me, or from one person, but with a slightly different lens I suppose.

I don't want to go too much into what I think it's about because I think it's a nice one for interpretation because there is all that abstract imagery in there. But, in very basic terms, it's about two people who both think and feel that they're coming to and going from an alternate place but they're not necessarily there. And their interpretations of the landscape and responses to each other through their different mental lenses.

Then when we were thinking at the beginning of the year about the rest of the series for this year and what ideas we might like to use, I showed this piece of writing to you, didn't I? Then you decided, or you felt, that you could write something in response.

DT: Yeah... Actually, I didn't want to write all over this one, but I had something to say in response to the first couple of sections. Well not something to say but something to add. Once I showed it to you and you indicated you didn't mind it and it didn't feel like I was ruining what you'd put effort into, then it felt more natural to go on and write responses throughout.

LT: I think that also made sense because I'd already started it as two interwoven streams, so yours fit into that structure.

DT: Yeah, maybe if it had been written just in a single voice it would have felt a bit like I was stamping on... I mean it is the point of the project, is that we collaborate and interpret each other's work. I had just intended to do the sound and have this and maybe another short story form the episode and it just be your writing. But it felt like there was enough of me in the writing already as it was that I didn't feel like I was being too... what's the word? Too much of an arse, by stamping all over it.

LT: Yeah, we didn't have any conversation at all about the meaning did we? You just took it and what you wrote, when I read it, was completely appropriate to what I'd written.

DT: I think it's taken you a little while to get your head around the fact that the meaning of your writing doesn't matter to me in this project, and it doesn't mean that I don't care. It's more about the response or feelings that it elicits in me and how it makes me want to work afterwards. Because if I sat around trying to decide what it meant; 1. I would probably get it wrong anyway, 2. it's not that important, and 3. If I was going to write a response and I'd already decided what your work was about then I probably would have already planned what my response was to be. And that's not very organic.

LT: Yeah, I think what I've recognised is if someone takes something straight away and just writes loads on top of, or in response to it then that's all you need to know, that it's appreciated or it's working. So that's what actually matters, isn't it?

DT: I suppose all I really did was pick up on a couple of themes which was the films and the grime and the flimsy partitions between people.

LT: There's a lot of wetness and liquid (**DT:** It's disgusting!). It's gross. I didn't even realise until we started to make the sound, but we'll come onto that. (**DT:** It's just pure filth!) It's pretty grimy!

DT: When the writing was done I started having a think about what the sound was going to be like. I decided that I wanted to keep it all really simple because previous episodes had been really heavily produced, particularly the Welcome to the Workplace and Unnecessary Roughness episodes. They are both really over the top with the samples and sound effects etc. So I thought I'd keep this really simple as we've both been really busy so I thought it would also be useful to not have to dedicate more time than was necessary.

But of course, we still haven't learned that if you try and keep an idea simple it takes even more work because, the slightest problem with the recording or the slightest issue and you can't bury it under anything. So, trying to get the sound levels right is a nightmare. (**LT:** When it's pared back it's more exposed.) I just want to say now to anyone that's new to these episodes and you've stuck around to listen to this bit, I do know how to record our voices properly. The sound quality is deliberately not very good, we were in the washing machine when we recorded.

LT: I wanted to make this point too actually. If it sounds tinny, that's why.

DT: Yes, it was deliberate. We were head-first in the washing machine, which is harder than you might imagine, it's not a comfortable place to be.

LT: No, I think that was the most difficult reading we've done for this [series].

DT: Then in terms of the print publication... keeping to the theme of keeping things simple, we wanted to do some more handwritten publications. I think, because this felt like it could have been an abstract letter between the two of us, we decided to hand-write it, which again was a ridiculous idea! Because we're talking about it now and we still haven't finished it and it's been a real pain.

LT: Well, yeah... I like it, but yes, it is exhausting. Mainly on your eyes, looking at the same bits of text, twenty times over, for however many paragraphs there are.

DT: Part of this project being an experiment... we decided early on that we wouldn't over-edit stuff and even if we were unsure about whether things were finished, we'd still put it out. It's been quite a good exercise, handwriting the letter out, because I don't really like my own handwriting. Plus I have a tremor in my hand that comes and goes and I can't always make a very good go of writing stuff out by hand and we physically don't have the time or space to wait until my hand isn't trembling. So it's quite a good exercise in just doing it and letting it go. So, if you do buy one of our letters then I'm sorry for the mistakes. Although, I'm not really.

LT: If anyone is interested in a bit more detail about the foley for this episode and how we made the sound effects, aside from doing our readings inside the washing machine; we also created the sound of wetness by pouring water from a watering can into a baking tray, and we recorded the sound of me actually doing some of this handwriting. It surprised me to realise that it is very frantic, we haven't sped that up. That's how madly I write, apparently. Then you wanted to create a low rumbling sound for one of the sound beds, didn't you?

DT: Yeah, I wanted something simple to tie it together. I can't remember the person's name but I saw a documentary when I was younger about the person that did the scores for [Alfred] Hitchcock films. I don't know very much about music and will probably do a very bad job of explaining it but, the use of single notes and open chords attached to characters... and throughout the film you get used to the sounds of the notes and the chords, and even without them being present on screen you know they're watching [or present].

This is particularly strong in Psycho but it happened in other Hitchcock films and I think it's a pretty widely used technique now. But, I quite like the idea that throughout the recording you get used to the sound beds that are attached to the different voices, and you sort of know what's coming but you don't know exactly what's coming. There's a rumbling, vibrating noise, produced by one of those large 'massagers' that you plug into the wall, just [placed] on the table.

All the sounds have been really heavily processed; I've gone really over the top with the EQ-ing. Especially with the [cascading] water, I just wanted to bring out that 'sparkle' out in the noise. I didn't just want to record rain, or just water, there's a metallic sound [or quality] throughout, except for the vibration which is vibrating through wood. So there's a deeper resonance to that and I suppose I wanted that to match the sound of the pen on paper.

LT: I was interested that you had picked up on that, because the way I was visualising the writing as I did it, particularly the liquid imagery, I was imagining a sparkling dampness, like a glistening wetness. So, your interpretation really did make sense to me. Also, another thing that just popped into my head was, you told me a while ago about something you'd watched years ago and you can't remember what it is. But there's a man who's wandering in an Arctic desert or a snowy landscape and it turns out he's actually having a psychotic episode, and he's climbed into the freezer.

DT: Oh yeah! If anyone can tell me what this is... he was wandering across the Arctic, constantly, throughout this programme, and then at the end you find out he's in the attic and he's been getting into the freezer. It upset me at the time because there are very strong links to my own mental health and things I've felt in the past... that worry of just wandering off and losing touch with reality is really worrying. Mainly because the soundscape and the landscape, even though they look dangerous, are really attractive. You can find yourself wandering into a lot of trouble if there's a sparkling light somewhere.

LT: Yeah, that's definitely at the core of what this writing is about. It made me think of that again when we had our heads in the washing machine; we think we're in this place but we're actually just in the washing machine, which is kind of a disturbing thought.

DT: For the stationery-philes out there, the letter is written on my favourite, fairly commercially available, writing paper made by Rhodia. I don't know how to describe it in an audio format but I just love writing on it. (**LT:** It's silky.) Yes, it's silky. Which is surprising, that it sounded so scratchy when we recorded the [hand] writing. But that might have been your pen action, scoring the words into the table.

I don't want to say too much because we haven't finished making them, but the idea is to have them wrapped in a tracing paper sleeve, so when they arrive... Oh, we also got these really beautiful little paperclips. Omega, foil paperclips which crimp the corner over. You should buy one, they're going to look really beautiful I'm sure.

One final thank-you to Vanessa Onwuemezi for taking part in this and being the first guest voice on the podcast. I don't know whether we're going to have anyone else on again, it's dependent on the project.

LT: It's always fun to have someone else read your own writing to you, isn't it?

DT: Yep. Go out and buy Vanessa's book *Dark Neighbourhood* from Fitzcarraldo Editions. I've completely forgotten to bring a bio for Vanessa but knowing her so well, I'm convinced she doesn't really have one because she's quite shy at promoting herself, but she has previously won the White Review short story prize and we'll link to that in the episode description because it's really good.

LT: At the Heart of Things, it's called.

DT: At the Heart of Things. Your memory is so good, I can't remember nothing. I was reading her book this morning and I can't remember the title of it.

LT: We just remember different things.

DT: Yes, we learned and remembered different things. Go to the episode description and I will endeavour to link to as much stuff of Vanessa's as possible. It will be well worth going to the effort of finding some of her writing, she really is fantastic.

Is that enough from us? (**LT:** Yeah, I think so.) And the Bluetits in the bushes. We'll be back for the next episode, whatever that is, I've got a feeling that it's going to be a bonus episode but don't hold me to that. I'm notoriously flaky.

End of transcript.

