

Yaseen Kader

Three Pieces of Advice

1. Heat always travels from hot to cold.
2. Never eat at an empty sushi restaurant.
3. Always wash blood off in cold water.

1, given to me for the first time while helping me with GCSE Physics, and repeated
On a weekly basis,

Almost as often as him trying to teach me to change the laces in my shoes,
Increasing in frustration exponentially (I think that's the one),
Every time I thought a pot was getting hot instead of a flame losing heat.
So what does that say about us?

That we're always going to give our heat away?

That passion never gains, we just lose it to our loves?

That there's no such thing as cold, just an absence of warmth?

That can't be right.

Let me check the textbook again.

2, said half-jokingly on holiday in Singapore, but actually just very sound advice.
Nothing to argue with here.

3, told over the phone last week, with me complaining about a getting a nosebleed on
A crisp white formal shirt,

And me realising that the method of erasing blood was stated with experience,

And me realising that his blood would have come from bared fists against jaws,

From tumbling to the concrete, eyes screaming from tear gas

Thrown by Apartheid police.

And me realising that he was three years older than me when his mother died,

That there's still so much that I can't do,

That I don't have a funeral suit,

And only one pair of black shoes,

And who's going to help me put new laces in,

Because you can't wear quirky May Ball maroon-laced shoes

To bury your mother.

And me realising there's still a street brawler inside him.

And there are some scars a business suit can't hide.

And I still faint from nosebleeds.

