

Dexy The Fiery De-Extinguisher

Dexy was a fiery de-extinguisher. Dexy de-extinguished lost linguistic things. Dexy TIñquish was not the Italian archaeologist Paolo Matthiae who had re-discovered the Syrian language Eblaite in the 1970s. (pp.77 – 79) Nor was Dexy TIñquish Swedish Kai Donner who had re-discovered Kamassian in Siberia in 1913. (p. 135) It may appear that Dexy was no different to Paolo Matthiae or Kai Donner, but Oh No. Dexy TIñquish practiced an anti-colonialist approach to ‘discovery’. Dexy did not ‘discover’ the ‘LOSINGS’. The ‘LOSINGS’ ‘discovered’ Dexy. Dexy’s was a fair(y) form of discovery and a collaborative undertaking. Together, Dexy and the ‘LOSINGS’ took ‘discovery’ to a whole new level. They turned ‘discovery’ into fiery de-extinction.

According to the *National Geographic*, de-extinction is a scientific reality in 2015. “De-extinction, resurrection biology, or species revivalism is the process of creating an organism, which

resembles an extinct species.” (Wiki) Put in this way, de-extinction resembles a Paolo-Matthiae-type of discovery: Someone – Paolo, Kai, a *National Geographer* – goes out and does it. But Wiki’s de-extinction was not Dexy’s de-extinction. This was not the *National Geographic*. Nor was this *Jurassic Park*. Dexy TIñquish was not Jeff Goldblum. In reality, Dexy TIñquish was dyeing hair in a salon on Harpur Street, WC1N. It wasn’t her fault alone that the whole extended set-up worked like a re-animation machine. That *CURL UP & DYE* (that was the name of Dexy’s salon) functioned like a fiery de-extinction engine.

At *CURL UP & DYE*, Dexy TIñquish transformed ‘LOSt LINGuistic things’ into ‘Fluent LINGuistic things’. Which is another way of saying that Dexy transformed ‘LOSINGS’ into ‘FLINGS’. ‘LOSING’ is jargon for ‘LOSt LINGuistic thing’. And ‘FLING’ is jargon for ‘Fluent LINGuistic thing’. Fifi was one such FLING. Hello, Fifi. Fifi, hello.

Fifi was living proof of Dexy's professionalism. It may appear that Fifi was a 'Flaunty LIVing thing', rather than a 'Fluent LINGuistic thing'. Fine head of hair on her, too. Flaunt it, why not. But Fifi was not a FLIV ('Flaunty LIVing thing'). She was simply a FLING. There was no such thing as a FLIV since Dexy TIñquish did not distinguish between linguistic and living things. To Dexy's mind, linguistic things were living things. This, too, evidenced her professionalism.

Dexy ran *CURL UP & DYE* from her 10th floor council flat on Harpur Street, WC1N. Dexy's work at the salon had taught her, if nothing else, the queer efficacy of *CURLing UP & DYing*. *CURLing UP & DYing* made you look like something from 20 years ago. It made you look like an extra in a '90s British soap. Or an extra on *Gaytime TV* (1995). Who *CURLed UP & DYEd* in 2015?! You would be surprised. All the LOST living thINGS (LOSINGs) were at it. All the LOSINGs *CURLed*

UP & DYEd like there was no tomorrow. On Saturdays, the queue went out of the door and onto the landing. The promise of becoming a FLING (FLaunty LivING thing) brought them in. The promise of a fling kept them coming. But Dexy's work at the salon had taught her, if nothing else, that *CURLing UP & DYing* was rarely, if ever, a good thing. *CURLing UP & DYing* was not pain-free. Most people looked worse once they had *CURLed UP & DYEd*. Take Fifi. Fifi wore her permanent wave gelled back to largely detrimental effect.

However, at Dexy's, *CURLing UP & DYing* constituted not a terminus but a beginning. At Dexy's, uniquely, *CURLing UP & DYing* triggered a lengthy de-extinction process. The type of *CURLing UP & DYing* that Dexy offered was unique in the sense that it kick-started the fiery de-extinction engine, so to speak. It sparked the desire to flaunt it. Take Fifi again. In 2010, Fifi had come to Harpur Street

to *CURL UP & DYE*. She had arrived a stereotypical LOSING (LOSt livING thing). A tortured little thing. Frizzy hair. No élan. Zero panache. That day in 2010, Dexy had recommended a demi-permanent wave. Fifi, have a demi-permanent wave. Go on. The demi-perm had not worked in 2010, but the subsequent dip-dye had. A lot of love had gone into the dip-dye. A lot of hydrogen peroxide, and a lot of love.

Most LOSINGs (LOSt livING things and LOSt linguistic thINGs) did not CURL UP AND DYE in Dexy's salon. Nor did most FLINGs (FLaunty livING things/ Fluent LINGuistic things) *CURL UP AND DYE* in *CURL UP & DYE*. They curled up and died elsewhere in the world. They were constantly incinerated, annihilated, eradicated, drowned, shot, blown-up, neglected, exiled and extinguished in Somalia, Syria, Siberia, Sudan, Cameroon, Afghanistan, Mexico, Yemen, Palestine, Libya, Ukraine, Iraq, Lebanon, the U.S.A., France, Italy,

Germany, the U.K. and Cambridge. Neither Paolo Matthiae's nor Kai Donner's re-discoveries did relieve this predicament. Nor were these extinctions in any way de-extinguishable. Dexy the fiery de-extinguisher, for one, could not de-extinguish beyond the *CURL UP & DYE* hair salon on Harpur Street. That was the heart-breaker.

– Isabel Waidner

Flinders Island

The Flinders Island language was called Yalgawarra. It is an extinct Australian Aboriginal language spoken off the coast of Queensland. It is an island language – not close to any other. One of the last known speakers of the language was Mr. Johnny Flinders.

Found words

Sue Law grew up in Littleport.

On the next page are words that she grew up with but which she'd forgotten and only remembered

when she returned home.

Spifflicated

‘Surprised’, ‘astonished’

Ding

‘A smack or blow’

Lug

‘Ear’

Blare

‘To cry’

Foisty

‘Mouldy smelling, musty’

Wooden hill

‘Stairs’

What for

‘A threat of what will come if you don’t behave’ – *I’ll give you ‘what for’* (something to cry for)

Frankish

Frankish was the West Germanic language spoken by the Franks.

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