

Cletis Carr

"Talking St. Kilda Blues"

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I first met Louie in 1986 he was hanging around St.
Kilda, down by the pier
We got to talking about politics and injustice
Louie said let's go across to the Esplanade and have a
beer
The barmaid was Annie, at least I think that was her
name
I ordered a VB stubby, Louie ordered the same
Then he turned to me with a crazy grin
And said, man, I'm gonna tell you something I ain't told
nobody

Louie gazed around the bar, slowly, like he was looking
for someone he knew
And then lowered his voice and spoke without moving
his mouth much
The way Humphrey Bogart used to do
He said, everybody got a secret, they got something to
hide
But me, I'm a little different, you see, I just killed this
guy
And then our eyes met for just a second, and I knew he
was serious
I knew I was a little scared

I whispered, so why'd you kill him anyway
And then I looked around to see if anyone had heard
Louie said, it was over this gambling debt thing, he got
all my money
And all I got was his word
Cause they'll always rip you off, it's just a matter of
when
Some do it with a gun, man, some do it with a pen
Louie put down his beer and smiled
And said, you shoulda seen the look on that guy's face,
I was glad I hadn't

I finished my beer and said, look, I gotta run
Louie said, hey, can I get a lift, there's some people I
gotta meet
So we walked out and got in my old Falcon
Started it up and headed up Fitzroy Street

Louie pulled out a matchbook, on the back someone
drew
A map and an address, somewhere out in Kew
And Louie said, I'll bet we can get there in ten minutes
I said, no thanks, I don't bet, not anymore anyway

So we pulled up to this house, there were no lights on,
it was all black
And Louie opened the car door and said come on in for
a minute
You gotta see this talking dog they got out back
And I said, what? He said, they got a talking dog out
back
So I forgot about that other thing and got out of the car
And followed Louie up to the house

Louie knocked on the heavy old door, slowly creaked
open like it wasn't latched
We went inside a couple of steps, it was pitch black,
Louie said, you got a match
And I gave him one
Then he lit it up, I could see the back door
Just getting a look at that dog was all that I came for
So I left Louie in the hallway and went out to check out
the back yard

Then I stepped out in the grass
It looked like it hadn't been mowed in at least a year
And out in the middle sat this old spotted mongrel
With three legs and one ear
I knew right then I'd been taken for a fool
Why this dog couldn't talk, it just sat there and drooled
Just then I heard a couple voices coming from inside
the house
And one of them was Louie's

So I listened closely, trying to hear what was being said
But all I could make out was something about not really
being dead
And then I heard a shot, something hit the floor
Man, I ain't ever been this scared before
Then a deep voice behind me said, come on, there's a
gate around the side
Let's get out of here – and I ran like hell

Then I jumped in my old Falcon, fired it up and put the
pedal straight to the floor
Man, I did a hundred and ten through Hawthorn,
through Caulfield
Hit the Princes Highway, I didn't stop til I got to the
ocean shore

Then I let out a sigh, sat back in the seat
Almost jumped through the roof when I saw that dog at
my feet
And that dog just looked at me with a funny look on it's
face and said nothing
I wasn't surprised

Anyway, I eventually moved back to Sydney and got a
job selling newspapers
Down at Central Station
I read them everyday but I never read anything about
Louie
I guess he never got a mention
So the moral of the story is, never be too sure
Check out all the facts and don't be too premature
And remember what Louie said about secrets, and
about pens

By the way, the dog's name is Freddie
And he really does talk

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