

The After Death Pub

A guide

Parkes tells the following story to The Monk so he will come and calm the politicians down:

As the first of the Australian politicians reached the end of their lives, they found themselves in a kind of limbo – a space within the Dreaming, but since they had no totems, they could not be absorbed back into the Dreaming. Being both arrogant and territorial, they were of the belief that any space they came across belonged to them. When Henry Parkes died, he found these ex-people in a sorry state, wandering around trying to find high ground to occupy and fighting each other over ‘their’ parcels of Dreaming-space.

Parkes decided to bring them all together, as he had done in life. On reflection, he decided that if he kept everyone drunk enough, they would forget about factional fighting. He realized that one only had to concentrate hard enough to create things in this space: it required focus and imagination. As the others were too busy fighting, they had missed this incredible truth. So he dreamed into being a gentleman’s pub with an endless supply of beer and infinitely long tables. Over the years, as more politicians died, they added new features and decorations from their idea of what a pub should be. Hence the After Death Pub now contains TVs, betting tables, poker machines, foos-ball sets, dart boards etc.

Because Henry Parkes created the After Death Pub, his grave became a permanent link between the physical and spiritual worlds. The entrance to the Pub is hence in Faulconbridge, at the Corridor of Oaks where Sir Henry is buried and where the Prime Ministers all have memorial trees planted.

Metaphysically, the Pub functions as a doorway to the Dreaming; however, the politicians do not realize this, and hardly even know that they are dead.

The barman at the pub, dreamed into being along with the pub by Henry Parkes, was an aborigine. None of the politicians notice him, until today. He surprises everyone by revealing himself as Biami’s personal representative, who as our story begins, steps out from behind the bar.

His apron and tea-towel rematerialize into an Armani suit and a briefcase. He steps over to Henry Parkes’ table, opens the briefcase, takes out some perfectly neat A4 paper and addresses the politicians.

“The rent is due.”

“What rent?” asks Parkes.

“Did you think you could use our world forever? For free?”

“I thought it was ours for the taking,” says Parkes, “We didn’t see anyone.”

“That’s because you saw what you wanted to see. You see what you want to see but not what’s really there. “Do you remember a child looking for her mother? Do you remember a woman looking for food? Do you remember the homeless man? I gave you all these opportunities to show your respect and you did not see what was really there. It was the way to pay your rent.

“So now here I am in the only form that you will listen to, dressed as you. I once again say, and this is final: The Rent is Due. If it is not paid by midnight, this entire Afterdeath Pub will be reabsorbed back into the Dreaming.”

The politicians erupt into chaos.

