

Abide With Me

13th

18th

someone asks. You twist carefully on the ladder to see a young man staring up at you, smartly dressed and squinting through a pair of gold-rimmed glasses. Bloody students.

You show him the bucket of mortar.

terrible . Shuddering then, theatrics.

rid of them, sir,

Lunchtime eucharist , and checks his wristwatch.

answers. Y -fingered

hands are, clutching a stack of books as he hurries through First Court to class.

luring you into something. You slide down the ladder with nervous anticipation lodged in the back of your throat like a hook.

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between you and me, they give him the creeps.

dark. I see him swinging his lantern about him like a mad thing. To ward off the bats, and-

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The young man laughs to please you. His teeth, though crooked, are unstained. He stands in the centre of one of the Cloister Court archways like a saint in a stained-glass window, head tilted slightly to one side. He knows what you are thinking. Your hands are shaking with fear.

His hand is clasped to his chest as though clutching an
invisible book. they leave the door to the
at night

There it is, the hope of a moment and suddenly you are lost to a greedy
to nods sharply, eyes darting into smiles, and
takes the bucket of mortar from your slack hand before walking off as if you had never
spoken.

21st

She sits with her back against one of the arches, looking up. To the east, the sky is the liminal grey of four-in-the-morning, but the stars are still out. There are six or seven bats circling between the four walls of Cloister Court. The moon is almost full tonight and too pale, as though the bats have bitten into it and drained the colour out. The only other real light

flame is already lapping at her knuckles. She leans forwards, pouts her lips as if for a kiss, and blows it out. A torch beam catches her eye from the top of the chapel tower, so she stands and stretches.

Snaking up the tower, the scaffolding is

another. Books on a shelf. We are silent together, listening to the falling song of night-birds
in the trees.