

# Travellers' TIMES

AUTUMN 2014 | ISSUE 56 | FREE  
WWW.TRAVELLERSTIMES.ORG.UK

THE ONLY MAGAZINE  
FOR GYPSIES, ROMA  
AND TRAVELLERS

## THOMAS McCARTHY: NEW ALBUM BY TRAVELLER SINGING SENSATION

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TT ONLINE – YOUR VOICE ON THE INTERNET



## FROM THE EDITOR

By *Damian Le Bas*

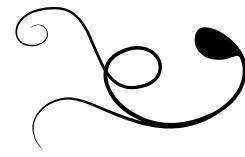


PHOTO: Damian Le Bas by Deliane Le Bas



### IT'S BEEN A LOVELY SUMMER, BUT THINGS ARE RARELY SIMPLE IN THE GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER WORLD

The forecasters said this year's Appleby Fair would be a washout, and some of you did have a hard time getting out of the mud. But the sun still shone on the Friday and there was a record turnout on the day. Up and down the country, the drives and trots and fairs were still going strong, and plenty of Travellers took to the road from the first buds of spring until the leaves started to turn. Travellers' Times has been on the road, too. It was good to see plenty of our readers braving the mud at Stow Fair.

Our new Your Voice project is well underway, and we've been making films with young Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people from the Kent coast to the fringes of the Fens. You can see their work and much, much more on the internet, at [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk).

THE WEBSITE'S GETTING A FLASH NEW REBUILD, TOO. IN NOVEMBER, IT'LL BE FULLY RE-LAUNCHED WITH A SPRUCED UP DESIGN AND BAGS OF NEW CONTENT, STORIES AND FILMS FROM YOUR WORLD.

The website's getting a flash new rebuild, too. In November, it'll be fully re-launched with a spruced up design and bags of new content, stories and films from your world. We're also making our past work easier to search and access, so whether you're looking for painted wagons or planning advice, [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk) is the place to pull on to.

Then there's the rough that goes with the smooth. Government changes to legal aid and judicial review could seriously affect access to justice for many Gypsy and Traveller people, and the No Mad Laws campaign has been launched to try and turn the tide. As Travellers' Times went to press, the children's charity Barnardo's told of its undercover investigation which alleged that the care system is failing young Travellers. So we've still got a lot on our plate.

And as time goes on, more of us need to talk to people from the papers, TV and radio. If you've got a story you want to tell the world, if you're fighting a planning case and you're concerned about the media, or if you just want to ring up and give us a piece of your mind, we're listening, and we'll do our best to lend a hand.

*On the Cover: Thomas McCarthy*

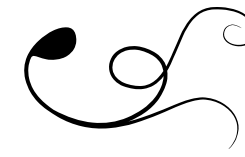
You can read a full-length interview with Thomas, with more photographs. Visit our website:

[www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk)

Travellers' Times is published by The Rural Media Company  
EDITOR: Damian Le Bas | CO-ORDINATOR: Julie Colman | ASSISTANT: Lucy Murtagh  
Travellers' Times is the national magazine for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, and people and organisations who work with them. We are guided by our editorial group and strive for accuracy and fairness.  
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COVER PHOTO: Philip Wolmuth | PHOTO PAGE 3: Damian Le Bas



## INSIDE TRACK

News from your world – in brief



THE TRAVELLER Movement has criticised the government's new proposals to change the planning policy for Traveller sites, and says that they will increase the numbers of Travellers forced to live by the roadside.

"By changing the definition of who is a Traveller or Gypsy and the proposed changes to the way that councils are required to assess the need for land use in their area, the government's announcement could also potentially halt authorised public and private Gypsy and Traveller site provision in its tracks," said a Traveller Movement spokesperson.

"If passed, the proposals would mean that the majority of Romany Gypsies and Travellers living on existing authorised private and public Traveller sites will potentially be in danger of becoming no longer eligible to continue living on a Traveller site. There is even a bigger question mark over their children," they added.

A PETITION has been launched calling on the government to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers still get proper access to justice.

"We the undersigned call upon the government to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers who need advice and assistance under the legal aid scheme are able to receive it," says the No Mad Laws petition. You can read it in full – and add your name to it – at [you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-mad-laws](http://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-mad-laws)

VICTIM Support services in Wales urged Gypsies, Roma and Travellers who may have been victims of hate crime to come forward.

"If you think that you have been targeted because you are Gypsy, Roma or Traveller then you can speak with Victim Support who will believe you, help you, and work on your behalf (advocate) so that issues of discrimination and Hate can be challenged and addressed," they say.

Anyone affected can email [hatecrimewales@victimsupport.org.uk](mailto:hatecrimewales@victimsupport.org.uk) or call 08456 121 900, and lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

FUNDED by the Heritage Lottery, the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison groups have produced a DVD of 12 short films and digital stories. 'A Gypsy's Tale' records and preserves first-hand information about the trades of yesteryear, and documents their adaptation for the world of today. A 2015 calendar will accompany the project and the DVD will be completed Winter 2014. Call NFLGLG on 01629 732744 for info.



## TRAVELLERS ADVICE TEAM AT COMMUNITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

*Provides advice, assistance and representation to Gypsies and Travellers throughout England and Wales in the following areas:*

- EVICTIONS
- PLANNING MATTERS
- MATTERS INVOLVING RENTED SITES
- HOMELESSNESS
- OTHER RELATED MATTERS
- CASES INVOLVING BOAT-DWELLERS

Gypsies and Travellers on local authority sites are now also able to properly defend against eviction proceedings brought against them, after the Mobile Homes Act 1983 was brought into force on these sites.

**IF ANY OF THESE ISSUES AFFECT YOU, YOU CAN CALL THE GYPSY AND TRAVELLER HELPLINE**

**0121 685 8677**

Lines are open 9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday



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FAX: 0121 236 5121

ADDRESS: 4th Floor Ruskin Chambers  
191 Corporation Street  
Birmingham B4 6RP

EMAIL: [office@communitylawpartnership.co.uk](mailto:office@communitylawpartnership.co.uk)



**A NEW CALENDAR** launched as part of Ireland's Traveller Pride Week aims to challenge stereotypes of Traveller and Gypsy men by showing the positive contributions Travellers make to society.

The calendar, entitled **THE ORIGINALS: A NEW ERA FOR TRAVELLER MEN**, will feature 11 Traveller men from various backgrounds and professions.

"The idea behind the project is to challenge the stereotypes and misconceptions commonly associated with Traveller men," say its creators at website [involve.ie](http://involve.ie).

"Stereotypes of all Traveller men being involved in illegal trades, association with bare knuckle boxing and feuding which discourage a younger generation from reaching their potential.

"We are offering a profile of guys that aren't highlighted in mainstream media or Sunday tabloids.

"These men include youth workers, community development workers, a reporter, an actor and community support workers. They feel they have to hide their identity to get on in employment, education or society," say [Involve](http://involve.ie).

All proceeds from the sale of the calendar will be split between the Leah Quinn volunteer fund for the Mellon Educate Programme and Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin (formerly Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children).

For further information contact Michael Power at Voice of the Traveller magazine at 090 6498017 or email [michael.power@involve.ie](mailto:michael.power@involve.ie)



## MURDER VICTIM'S FAMILY AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS LEAD CALL FOR JUSTICE FOR BARRY SMITH

*Katharine Quarmby*



PHOTO: Barry Smith. Image used courtesy of the family of Mr Smith

was attacked except racism. He was attacked because he was a Traveller and it's been pushed under the carpet because he is a Traveller as well. If you had seen the hurt on his children's faces, at the verdict and the lack of recognition of the race hate element – you would never have forgotten it."

The former Director of Public Prosecutions, Lord Ken Macdonald, also has concerns about the case: "It seems the criminal justice system is still not recognising hate crime, even where the facts seem plain. But where it fails to do so, it fails in its most basic duty to protect people from violence and abuse."

The family of murdered English Gypsy Barry Smith is leading calls for his case – and other Gypsy and Traveller attacks – to be treated with greater seriousness by the criminal justice system.

This follows the sentencing on June 15 of two men and one woman found guilty of the murder of Mr Smith in Kilburn, near Derby, in October last year. Vincent Aitken, 44, must serve a minimum of 22 years and 118 days; Nathan Doherty was sentenced to a minimum of 18 years 118 days and Emma Aitken, 19, will serve a minimum of 12 years.

The body of 48-year-old Mr Smith was discovered outside Kilburn Welfare Social Club, Chapel Street, on the morning of October 6th last year by local dog walkers. He had been beaten to death using pool cues and a fence post and his body had been set alight. Police from Derbyshire Constabulary described it as a particularly horrific crime scene.

The sentences were not enhanced for race hate as the judge decided that the crime was not racially motivated. But the family believe that there was a racial motive and are devastated by the light sentences – which would have been far higher if the race hate element had been recognised.

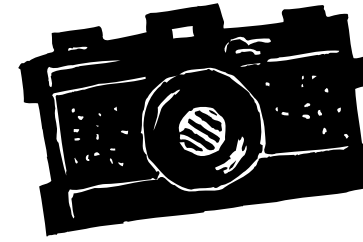
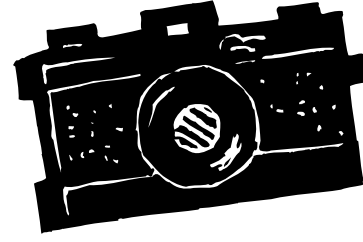
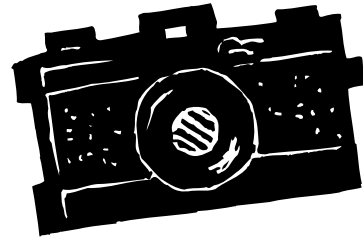
The force investigating the murder, Derbyshire Constabulary, did consider that there might have been a race hate element and flagged it as such to the trial judge. The judge agreed that comments made by Pamela Aitken, wife of Vincent Aitken, to Mr Smith, and for which she was sacked from her job, were racist; however, he said that the attack itself was not motivated by racism towards Barry Smith 'as a Gypsy'. Pamela Aitken was charged with assisting an offender, but was not convicted.

Barry Smith's former wife, Dawn Smith, who still counted her former husband as a close friend, told *Travellers' Times*: "We got treated badly as a family. There was no other reason why Barry

The new Attorney General, Jeremy Wright QC MP, wrote to the family on 29th July 2014 to let them know that he had decided not to refer the sentence received by Emma Aitken to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentencing Procedure. Jeremy Wright wrote that because of Emma Aitken's youth and the fact she had spent almost a year remanded in custody, the sentence of 12 years was not unduly lenient.

The family do not agree. Nor do many Traveller representatives, feeling that she has got a very light sentence for taking a life – and that all three murderers have got away with a race hate crime – which would have seen their sentences doubled. This case and the manslaughter of Johnny Delaney, a teenager from an Irish Traveller background 11 years ago, Traveller representatives believe, demonstrate that race hate legislation is not being used to protect Travellers.

# YOUR SUMMER IN PICTURES



## PHOTOS

01: The London Gypsy Orchestra playing in London's Brockwell Park. Photo: Damian Le Bas

02: Enjoying the sun at Danny Cooper's New Forest Drive. Photo: Damian Le Bas

03: Sunny day with students on 'Your Voice' course, The Malling School, Kent

04: Students at Carlton Bolling College, Bradford, get to grips with camera work on a 'Travellers' Times Your Voice' course.


05: A brolly good day at Stow Fair. Photo: Natasha Quarmby

06: Browsing the stalls at Stow. Photo: Natasha Quarmby

07: Rain doesn't dampen smiles at Stow. Photo: Natasha Quarmby

08: The men of Stow Fair around the fire. Photo: Natasha Quarmby





# TRAVELLERS' TIMES – YOUR VOICE ON THE INTERNET

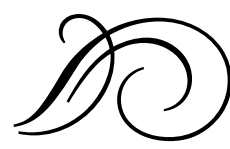



PHOTO: Students at Carleton Bolling College

**A**HEAD of the launch of our brand-new website this autumn, Travellers' Times has been on the road across the country as a new crop of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller filmmakers tell us how they see their culture, whilst sharpening up their camera skills in the process.

Pupils from schools from Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Bradford, Peterborough and Kent made a range of great short films exploring their interests and Gypsy Roma Traveller identity, while students at Hartsdown Academy in Margate turned their hand to making a zombie film!

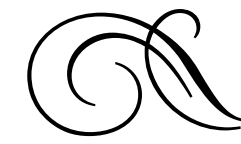
"I liked that all of us got together to talk about our culture, we played our music, danced and filming was fun," said Areta, who goes to St John Fisher Catholic High School in Peterborough. "Pupils were relaxed and engaged; knowledge of Media Skills can open possibilities for children's jobs and lives," added a teacher from St John Fisher.

"I loved understanding about our culture; it builds your confidence," said Logan, who studies at Baxter College in Kidderminster.

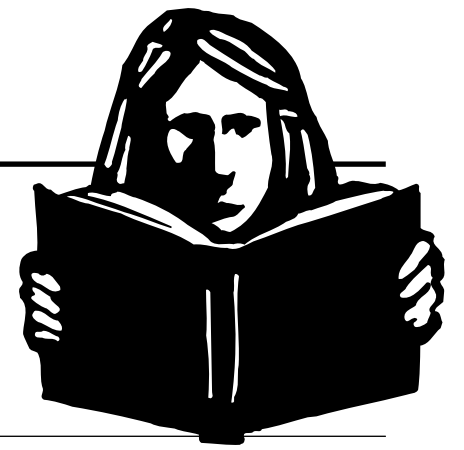
Teachers at Baxter College in Kidderminster, said: "It allowed the children to openly discuss prejudice and racism they had experienced in school and use it in a positive way to create better understanding."

"The workshops made them feel comfortable within their culture in today's world. They have learned they can portray GRT in a positive light in the future using all types of media," said one teacher from the The Malling School in Kent.

To see what our budding filmmakers have been up to, and much more besides, visit [TravellersTimes.org.uk](http://TravellersTimes.org.uk), where you can also get in touch with us if you're interested in doing one of our FREE Your Voice media skills courses. Email: [info@ruralmedia.co.uk](mailto:info@ruralmedia.co.uk) or call **The Rural Media Company 01432 344 039** for details



## BOOK REVIEWS



*Wagtail Tale:  
Gypsy Life of Bygone Days*

By Peter Ingram  
Paperback, 330 pages, 2014  
Limes End Yard Publishing

Renowned wagon restorer Peter Ingram's *Wagtail Tale* tells the tale of old John and Genty, whom we meet in the autumn of their life. In Ingram's hands, their bittersweet story becomes the canvas for a complete picture of how the last of the old wagon-dwelling Travellers lived in the middle of the last century.

The old Romany words for kettles and catapults, meals and magpies, whistles, wagons and work can be found throughout the book and the accompanying CD. Ingram was rokkering Romanes while the wagons still rolled along the lanes of the Welsh Borders, so his ear for the language is as spot-on as you'll find anywhere in the land.

To order a copy of *Wagtail Tale*, priced at £12.00 plus £3.00 postage and packing, email [limesendyard@outlook.com](mailto:limesendyard@outlook.com), or call 01420 511486, or write to Limes End Yard Publishing, Selborne, Hampshire, GU34 3LD.

A CD that complements the book is also available by contacting the publisher (at the above address). CDs are £6.00 including postage. Price for the book and CD together is £20.00 including postage.

*The Long Road Home*

By Tracey Bull-Kirkby  
Paperback, 132 pages, 2014  
Buy from: [maggiesmithbendell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maggiesmithbendell@hotmail.co.uk)

This is a well-written tale of what the author calls "her wonderful old fashioned Romany family", and their names – the Bulls, the Blacks, the Kempsters and others – will be familiar to anyone from that part of the world. It charts the old circuits from Salisbury to East Sussex via Southampton and the New Forest. The characters leap from the page via Tracey Bull-Kirkby's true-to-life dialogue.

This is a world of hawking and flower making, the smell of old sweet shops and the old-time Romany language. There are plenty of wonderful pictures reproduced in black and white, and the author's tracing of her family history back to the 17th century has clearly been a labour of love. It's a fine read indeed.

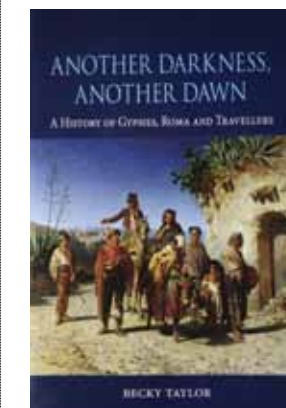
*Fieldtrip to Mars:  
A Traveller Tale*

By Rosali Webb  
Paperback, 268 pages, 2014  
CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

REVIEW BY LUCY MURTAGH  
This is a dark and twisted tale which unravels and evolves with the turn of each page. Clever and complicated, its parallel perspectives allow family secrets to surface following the disappearance of a small boy.

The mother is left to face an abusive husband and his unborn daughter. The unwanted and neglected newborn, Boniface, must try to make sense of a world where she does not belong. Years later, she returns to her Traveller roots: as events becoming unnerving and almost supernatural, you begin to question what really makes us human and where human morality lies.

This truly is a fantastic and thrilling read – the author has perfectly captured the essence of the Traveller culture as a family tragedy escalates and finally self-destructs.

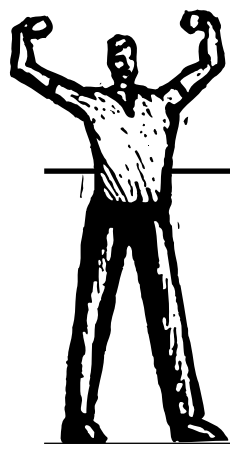


*Another Darkness, Another Dawn:  
A History of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers*

By Becky Taylor  
Hardback, 272 pages, 2014  
Reaktion Books

In this ambitious book, Becky Taylor follows Romany people from their roots in the East to show how they became established in the West and beyond. She also looks at Europe's other ethnic Travellers, and weaves a gripping story of their part in the continent's history.

What sets Taylor's work apart is that wherever possible, she names the individual Gypsy and Traveller people in history, and quotes them whenever she can. In August 1736, John Boswell and his family were evicted from Ailsbury. In the 1960s, Irish Traveller Jimmy Connors tells of how he once had to produce his insurance and driving licence 28 times in a single day. Much of this book comes from the mouths of the people themselves, rather than just being another historian's view. It's essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the history behind how Gypsies and Travellers live today.



## GYPSY AND TRAVELLER HEALTH – WHO PAYS?



A study undertaken by Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange and commended by the Department of Health has suggested that Gypsy and Traveller health could be vastly improved – and would cost the NHS far less than it currently does – if there was better contact with doctors in the early stages of illness.

The study, called “Gypsy and Traveller Health – Who Pays?”, was based on two real examples of patients, one suffering from dementia and carer-related stress, the other from bowel cancer. Early treatment for these conditions – which can also be more likely to succeed – would also reduce costs by over half, and in the case of bowel cancer, over 75%.

“Gypsy and Traveller patients can be seen as ‘non-compliant’ with medication regimes and reasons for this are little understood or explored. For example where there is low take-up of immunisations or other preventative screening programmes, sometimes leading to late (and therefore costly) presentation of serious conditions,” say Leeds GATE.

“As this report shows, the experience of accessing primary care can be troubling and unsatisfactory for Gypsy and Traveller people. Their needs and experiences are often misunderstood.

“Small changes in practice and ‘whole family’ approaches to health improvement have a vital role to play in improving Gypsy and Traveller people’s health outcomes, and in securing savings on costly late or ineffective treatments.”

The full report is available online at [LeedsGate.co.uk](http://LeedsGate.co.uk)

## WIN ‘ROMANCE’ SERIES FIGURINES – FULL SET OF 4!



The series is modelled by Valerie Annand, whose work is highly collectable, and brought to life through Dan’s outstanding painting skills. Each figurine features Mother of Pearl lustre and 37 Swarovski crystals! Every piece is hand-made, hand-painted and comes in a beautiful gift box with a certificate of authenticity.

For the chance to win all you need to do is send us a photo of yourself holding your favourite figurine OR tell us why you want to win in 50 words or less.

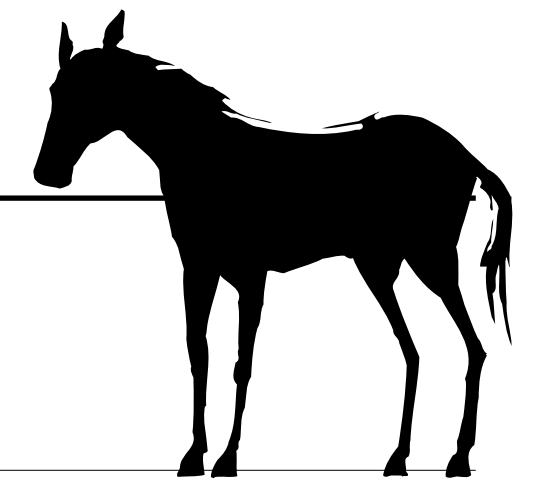
The English Ladies Co. will choose their favourite entry and we will arrange to present you with your prize.

Send your name, address and phone number with your photo /or 50 words to Travellers’ Times or email [travellerstimes@ruralmedia.co.uk](mailto:travellerstimes@ruralmedia.co.uk) by 31.1.2015. See page 2 for our address.

Terms and conditions apply visit [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk)

To celebrate the launch of their new collectables, The English Ladies Co. are giving away the full ‘Romance’ series set to one lucky winner!

Worth over £500, the set includes ‘Midnight Romance’, ‘Sweet Romance’, ‘Sunset Romance’ and the Premium Stock list EXCLUSIVE figurine ‘Eternal Romance’. The winner’s set will be signed by the master painter Dan Smith!



## INTERVIEW SPECIAL: DANNY COOPER’S NEW FOREST DRIVE



“I was the first one to do the New Forest Drive. I started it with just a few friends and family, and I think the first year there was 27 people. The following year there was 40-odd, and last year there was 216. So that’s how big it’s got. I can’t get any more in. It’s a lot of work, a lot of time, a lot of effort to keep everybody happy, you know what I mean? It’s a lot of horses to keep under control.

“It’s all been organised properly. We work with the Forestry Commission. We don’t do any racing or anything like that. This is a family drive. We’ve got women, kids, we’ve even had newborn babies on the drive. I’ve had my mother here, she was 87 year old, she only passed away last year. So we don’t go up the road doing 30 miles an hour, we just walk and trot. It’s a family outing.

“We’re trying to keep the Traveller tradition going. The reason why Travellers love the coloured horses is because when the war was on, the government used to take all the bays, and they would leave all the coloured horses or sell ‘em cheap. And you know what a Travelling man is, he wants something cheap. But to be fair, even the Queen’s got coloured horses now. So the coloured horse now has taken over the bays and the blacks, really. And it looks colourful, doesn’t it?”

“My father had horses, and I took over from him, so I’ve had ‘em all my life. I used to have a lot of cobs but the way it’s going now, for driving, is half-breds and three-quarter-breds. They’ve got that little bit of “get up and go” when you want ‘em to go. It’s not all about speed, it’s about driving, and enjoying it.

“A lot of people love to come and see it. When we get to the Beaulieu Road, there’s people watching us come in: not just Travelling people, gorpje people love to come and see it. And when you get 200 horses in a long line, that is some sight to see, isn’t it?”

“With a horse, it’s what takes your eye. Some people like black and whites, others like red and whites. A lot of people have got horses, but if they haven’t got any horse sense they shouldn’t have ‘em. A horse doesn’t know his own strength. He’s one very powerful animal, if he takes off. So really, you’ve got to know your horses. You’ve got to have a little bit of horse sense, and a little bit of common sense. That’s all you need.”

PHOTO: Damian Le Bas



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