Estuaries

“A fanatic is one who can’t change his mind and won’t change the subject.”

—Winston Churchill

Two paper jams later, you are finally done photocopying. With impeccable timing, Van Rjien magically appears behind you and signals for you to follow him to the far end of the filing room. You are astonished to find yourself in yet another surreal-looking space, with walls so completely covered by blueprints that you are unable to discern their original colour—this must be where they store the blueprints for all the major pipelines in Melbourne.

Taking no notice of your current train of thought, Van Rjien starts explaining that recently, Melbourne’s water supply has been diminishing at an impossibly high rate, which is why he was flown in from Holland to try to locate the disappearing water. Like all contractors, his first instinct was to find a suitable sub-contractor, which is where you came in. Lowering his voice, he whispers to you that you’ll start tomorrow, and that you are to meet him on the steps of Flinders Street Station at seven in the morning.

Having told you what you needed to know, he escorts you back to ground level. You hardly remember the trip back, your mind still tracing the lines on one of the largest of the blueprints, which you cannot help but sense hides many connections waiting to be discovered.
1. DOWN      LAG      HAND      BIRTH
   NIGHT      LINER     HOVER     BOOK
   PIT        PLANE     SPACE      HALL
   ROCK       STREAM    WAR        LAND
   SHORT      TIES      WITCH     TRADE

2. FISTED     BOW      COTTER     EVERY
   KNIT       COAT      FRIEND     FAIR
   ROPE       DROP      HOOD       HALF
   WAD        MAKER     SCOUT      RUN
   WIRE       STORM     WONDER     SUB

3. DRAW       BRAIN     BUGS      ENDER
   FEED       HORSE     EVIL       GATE
   PAPER      OVER      ROCK       LIGHT
   QUARTER    SUPER     ROOM       SPIN
   RAZOR      WILL      TIME       WIND

4. BIRD       BASE      BATTLE     COVER
   BOARD      BORDER    CAMP       CUT
   JACK       HEAD      FAIR       MINE
   MAIL       LIFE      FORE       TAKE
   SMITH      OUT       PLAY       WORLD

5. CATCHER    DAY       CON       CAMP
   EARED      HEART     OCEAN      CROSS
   GONE       JAIL      STORE      GUN
   SLED       OUT       UP         SPIT
   WOOD       TIE       WESTERN    WILD

6. GULL       BIBLE     GENTLE     BURNS
   PORT       GRAIL     HUNTS      KICK
   SON        MAN       MAD        SHOW
   WEED       SHIT      OTTO       TRACK
   WORTHY     WAR       POLICE     WAYS

—Corey Plover