

REVEAL DIGITAL

The World

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THE WORLD



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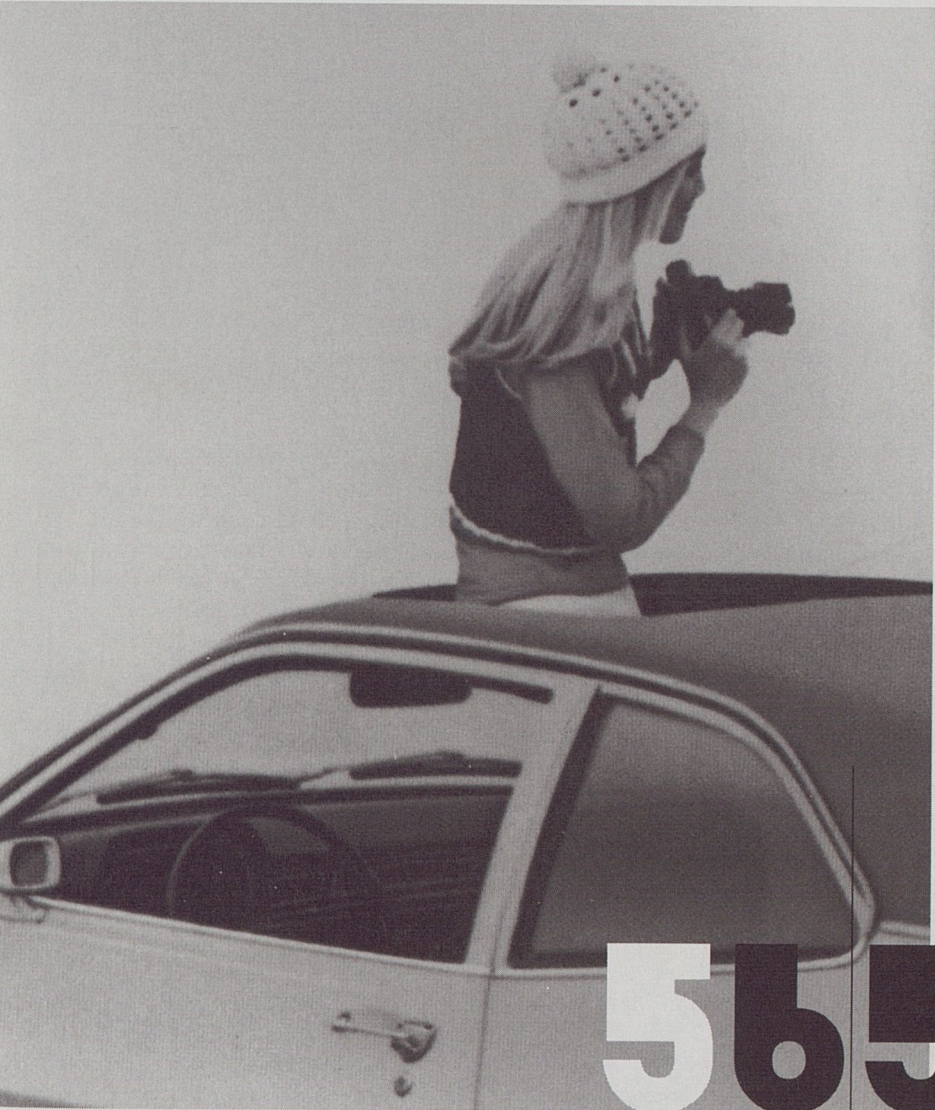
THE POETRY PROJECT

St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery

131 East 10th Street

New York City 10003

<http://www.poetryproject.com>



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The World 56/57

Ed Friedman *Editor*

Dirk Rowntree *Designer and Art Editor*

Anselm Berrigan *Distribution and Copy-Editing*

Marcella Durand *Proofreading and Copy-Editing*

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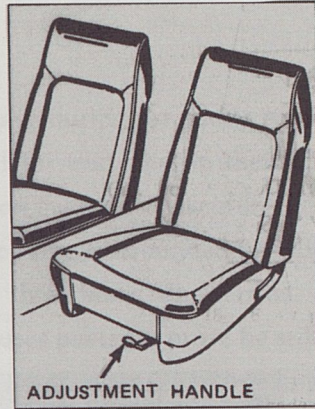
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MY BABYSITTERS

Most of my babysitters came of age during the fisting revolution of the late seventies. My brothers the clams were shot in their bungalows on channel 11. During the investigation Eddie & I discovered God's calf massager. Eight feet wide & thirty feet long, surrounded by sand pipers. My dad said he'd fuck anyone who thought he was terrific. Prageeta advises against becoming a man who uses poetry to prove he still has sex. Eddie said pretend you thought it was a neurotic poetry reading. Two of my babysitters took pictures of naked guy poets in order to learn their fluffing techniques. I saw all the pictures when I was nine on a calendar. "As good as Beethoven & Patti Smith in their garterbelts," Mom said. Kevin likes to say "Anselm's fisting cheetos" in his poems a lot, but I meant feasting cheetahs. I want to do boring things with my lover like trying the blender on low. Eddie said he'd have sex with Colorado but not New York. I said I wouldn't steal his lines anymore. Facing the other way on top was too ab-ex: obscurity does not please my lover. I used to think I'd be good at being either a groupie or a therapist. As a poet with lowercase p I get to be both. "The way you keep your eyes to the ground when you wander into traffic totally turns me on" I heard one of my babysitters say. I liked the way they let me stay up in 1982. I learned from another babysitter couple how unimpressive nudity could be. Sometimes I think of my babysitters as a community. Sometimes I'm not sure that becoming cynical about sexual transgression before reaching puberty was such a good thing for my development. The idea of me & Bowie sleeping together was such a gas we laughed for days & he painted my nails. To quit smoking I imagined I was Eleanor of Aquitaine gathering troubadours in the 12th century. Once one of my babysitters told me I shouldn't talk about my babysitters because I'd never be taken seriously if I did. Then he said the first definition of pedophile is one who loves children & I ran and ran. I remember freaking out one babysitter by showing him how the mobile of a flasher that my sister sent us worked. My favorite

babysitter bit the back of the rat who bit her back, scattering the thirty other rats on her back. Then she taught me how to hurl circles.

DREAM TAPE TRANSCRIBED—HYPNAGOGIC IMAGES

the photograph of the overlapping
 two pounds of surgery
 looking at plums yeah the wrinkly kind
 omigod omigod american express gemutlich
 introibo ad altare dei
 that whole dream was a harm dream
 female foosters
 do you know a lady named ducal or reed
 i know you dream of nine clouds but I wasnt sure about the rest
 i was with the doughy boy's son
 i wonder what kind of thinking can be dismissed
 (screeching)
 is it noisy
 what does it have to do with the Catholic religion
 there's one here that has nothing to do with a body of water unless you
 can find me a secret hidden one like a crucifix in a background
 movie scene
 this one is far from my famous return to civilian life along with my
 famous bowl of black chocolates
 here come the miniature harpies
 central Supply casting in subordination
 ambidextrous amphybrachy
 (healthy balls)
 my heart seems to be beating in 3's
 how much would it cost for you to tell me if this film is ruined
 i took it to another place & they said they wouldnt touch it, touch it
 is the breath of this recorder like an electrical field, like for dowsers
 broken mace that would be stolen, none of mine would be stolen
 miriam leaping as compared to suzanne leaping in the dream
 don walked into my house & was staring at me working for a long time

without my knowing it & then he said "Well you've got some positive qualities and some negative qualities"

it was 15 or 59 afro-american poets who'd been living together were getting together a reading & in between or before had to each pass thru my house & this one guy came saying things he knew about me like "you're pregnant arent you" or "your name is _____" which it isnt

many bags of colored beads being stored on the broken steps of st. mark's church being renovated

certain pillows seem to provoke certain dreams especially the one with the wallpaper on it

water! away! ouch! wittgenstein!

i thought i could here the foghorns in my mind while writing to robert about his work but the fact is that the foghorns were sounding

one of my students wrote: "at the nape of her breasts"

before i cover my eyes i see all blues & purples i dont see any of the reds & brilliant blues & other colors i like to summon up, put my hand over eyes & so far see only a more predictable darkness. now i see nexus green wasnt what i was expecting, i put the cover over my head in the hope of shutting out all so i dont have to stimulus so, stimulus stimulate so i dont have to put hands before eyes for one thing see what happens

i'm trying to summon up the brilliant reds right now, you make something in your eyes passive & maybe get the colors you expect or want. all i see so far is a kind of turning upside down motion now i see the beginnings of the best kind of blue but it dissolves, it dissolves into it's not a center but when i say it's a center it becomes a center of blue with the blue is getting clearer & larger now the blue's more suffusive pervasive now i'm asking the red to come ... i found it, you can only see the really brilliant red at certain times ... now i see it's like it's playing a trick on me, not the red nor the blue, a little bit of the blue in the background but a sort of golden

light...now the green now as if each part of the light is like a leg bending over while the reflections on the under part are orange... now the whole covering head of things is white a fairly brilliant you could see a little kind of frilly lace around all the tops of things and the orange is becoming so noticeable & brilliant & that isnt the color i was expecting nor would it be the color that i would ever summon up ... i'll watch these some more, i'm waiting for the really thrilling spots of red & blue that sometimes come, i'll just observe the colors for a while & ript out the commenting on them & then see what happens there's a lot of annoying creatures here, i know that sounds crazy but there are & they're right at the top of the greens the beams of things, they're very ochre-colored i'll have to iron this & i'm trying to get them to go away. The ochre-colored things are still around i'm trying to get the red to reappear by repeating in my mind the word red or the thought red but i hear a number something about i cant remember but the idea of the red is just involved with pleasure, that's all it's involved with, no that's not true ... A big chalk grey kind of thing appears now to be seeming like, well, like my body but it's a geologic thing & within the gray you can see all the possible colors. now there's still a movement taking place that goes sort of within the center of the rock so & there's still all that green & ochre shit going on but they're all going as if the rock had a middle they're all going in there & in this kind of undulating, not undulating but in this movement, i cant really explain it, i'm still waiting ... i feel guilty that when suzanne called i couldn't really talk to her because it was grace's birthday dinner & this thought is taking place or within the sights/sites of these sort of geologic hypnagogic phenomena so but what i dont believe this the green it's impossible to say the green color it's a color of a thing or what is throwing the ochre-kind of color which had been the bad guys i guess off of a cliff, wait, now there's maroon kind of color coming up from the

bottom...if i could say what I saw it's all the green & yellow colors are creating sort of a hat too over the maroon & purple colors... the red, there's a little red color now it's not the brilliant one & it's become an outline, it's scary now, the slightly red color is an outline & then there's beginning to be white around it burning & as a further outline on the other side's a really lovely sort of cerulean blue ... i got scared for a minute, now there's a bright cloud of gold that's what scared us it's right, my eyes are closed but the gold is right in front of my eyes in a big circle but so incomprehensible to perceive & now that I sort of observe it, also with my eyes closed so how can I observe it but when i open my eyes it looks exactly the same as eyes closed and now i'm alternating between opening eyes & closing eyes & I see the same thing & i see the colors sort, what are they doing? the colors around the gold part are i dont know how to explain it, they're no, it's no impossible, what i dont understand is that i see or say the same thing eyes closed as eyes open, the colors, i'll try to say it again, around oh now it's changed, the funny reds around the edges are turning to some concepts of fruits what they are doing before well i shouldnt tell what they were doing before, the colors were minimalizing themselves. orange, now orange appears again, a brilliant orange, orange is not one of the things i can usually see i dont know how to do it now i'm trying to close eyes harder & when i do that i see big flaps like wings on either side of my head or real eyes & within the centers of them is a fluorescent green & in the middle a darkness & the green is the wings or whatever it is, the reason i call them wings is cause they're really flapping in a way before me in the center's nothing except that now, wait, as usual, how it begins is that funny gold center, it can explode it exploit any of the colors but there's so much gold sophie just got up, she will think i'm crazy, wait i'm trying to shut out the incandescent light so i can see what happens all i see is gold brilliant brilliant but it's not all gold, it's like all the

colors of the earth enveiged with gold color, see what happens next, a green beginning to glow at the bottom, i can see weird colors because i'm leaning on my elbow underneath the blankets i see emanations of the colors from elbow which are horribly enough purple laughter that's probably bad news white then, a big inundation of regular white now the purple kind of clouds thru elbow as i get out of here...end side A

...the world is entirely pointilist i just had to turn over the tape so there was an influx of light interfered with what was going on now i see it's that each in the darkness each tiniest point all the colors most especially the greens & purples that have been predominating, i was waiting for the red stubbornly i'm going to seek it out, i just said to myself, i mean not to myself ok red or blue how about that idea, mind,...afraid to destroy this by talking but oh purple gathering started doing somersaults & turned upsidedown into the air & fell backwards in front of me & before that the red did appear in a kind of radiator fashion, now there's a glowing in the center i just opened my eyes & now i see something that frightens me which is a more a further gold glow, i'll just close my eyes again, all the red's back the red radiator like strips look & loosenucent strips it wasn't the good red but it was close... i see a woman robot whose outlines are all made of blue gray lace not lacereal lace but lacy substance so that i've been trying to get these images to come up & although i got some of them i guess because of the colors that i was thinking of that it's like images of hollywood. i guess that maybe because i'm not so awake anymore, so the desire for the colors turns into a dream, corners of brilliant blue bluish white light are sneaking out from the right side of things. stupidly i turn my head to the right in order to see more, i've gotta say this at the risk of losing it, big explosions of white after seeing the real red which started out, it's the red that you dont actually see in life, started out as a little dance among a bordered bouquet of flowers right after a

short dream where marie came home & said she couldnt be somewhere she was being a little bit feisty, wait...where is that mummy going to reside from now on, i think the red is mad at me, i shouldnt have - isnt that an ancient thing to think - i shouldnt have recorded it, i thought phil was next to me but he's not here, i just dreamt that he was saying that he was showing me something like Pravda & he said that some things just blanketly ensued, getting away from the vision.

when i turn over & hide myself partially in the blankets & the pillow all i see is a big embrace of all the gold colors. Why should i ever grow up & go to school, get up & go there, to school

(Staten Island Ferry little fog bells concert)

everything's disappeared out here in the harbour, i cant hear my own voice the sun is shining brightly but you cant see anything & these people making love in the corner right behind me in the stern he said it was good for the mind because it had a garbage unit when i close my eyes i feel like i have elephantiasis so you dont put any water on the 2nd frying pan for steaming notes from a fan: enter not this fallow thumb of the usual starving ambergris

susan coolidge and fanny howe both have different lovers or husbands. susan's brings an american indian food to our lunch during a shopping trip with ben shopsin's mother, the food is grated cheddar cheese mixed with grated apples suspended together in clumps in a kind of soup and fanny's lover is a huge lover who gave a name who has something done or wrong with the skin of his back so when he turns around he can turn his whole head around like an owl the skin thing looks like a glittering gown when he poses as a woman

oh & i have to pay protection money for my workshop

i say to kathleen dabney that jacques levy got married and she says, "so
 he's unhawked again against the ghouls"
 i couldn't remember if i was lying face down which way my head would
 be pointing if i were on the Staten Island Ferry
 i'm coming to some "brumisateur" attitudes
 well i'm not looking to you, this is a nightless night
 who fools me? anathema fools me, robert fools me
 which or want or what
 here's the closeness of what. i'm turning into sticks or pieces of sticks
 which is exactly like what my father was or did is was, was
 i associate all the forms of the verb to be with the process of getting on
 the subway on the elevated train & i call it childhood
 i'm sure grades have your spares
 oh shit (marie playing with the tape recorder in a long hiatus)
 the idea of arcs thinking
 to keep the arms and legs apart, i mean not touching for meditation
 the so-say intemperate climates the anathema of comfort or all is com-
 fort, like pillow which is on top of you instead of beneath
 fears of aloneness are like a finish that sentence
 lying in bed akimbo, if i see something now eyes closed i wont chase it
 away for the sake only of the words
 the center of the body if there is such a thing, the top part, whadda you
 call that yeah the top part tingles
 ability to do anything is like reading, this is not a good (simile)
 i think the letters should come only 6 sections & the poetry 12 but
 maybe the letters 12 and the poetry 5 if there was a chance that

END

ARRIVAL AND THE PLACE IS GONE

Probably someone knows the name
 Of the person who needs to be hearing this
 None of us needs to hear this, none of us
 Is in that world, where what we feel is real
 And everything else is an idea, if not our own
 Source unknown. Somebody knows who we speak
 Of beside the person who is not here, who needs to hear
 This. Is it the Dragon Man looking for D lady or is it
 Tom Mix finally understanding Brown Vs the Bd verifies his
 Side kick and his horse but not his program. The others, in the State
 Department with Skip Gates PRjr Cornell West and Crouch, the doll
 Sits askew, watching the unturned-on television, which is the only Bible
 For outré intellectuals waiting for their ribbon and white lips, from which
 To project another world, the world of who is watching, who is paying
 The world of the horseman who did not get to come on after the Phorse
 Prider, sapped up the rest of the metaphor. John needs a sponsor, now
 Pining on Patmos with Nat Turner and Monk. The next vision is fifteen
 minutes, the Beast Again, where we reported from. Monk alone came
 back with arm banging reports and a dance that summed up the cold
 places Blues passes under frozen eyelids with BeBop unheard and the
 revelation before and after the book, which the devil took and copies on
 his way to the e-peace conference in the Oral Office. The slurping is the
 constitution re-explained, the drops the telltale stain on the
 transvestite's Halloween civil rights document waved for ugly over the
 peach tree is knees in the bathroom with nuns and the pretty black girl
 telling of the pubic hairs that are the brains of the old flush, Remus,
 now united with Romulus in the Supreme Court. Next to Michael and the
 Romans. And the dead Christ. And the desert ...

The problem is love for the ugly the insane and the doubtful. Did you love the foot up your ass, why certainly certainly certainly Lowered. There in the stub of a face, asking for insanity and clear passage to the

Easter Bunny. How sad to be rich and unable to count. Or unable to count and be the only person who knows this. Suppose they all were to sit down and begin learning. Would the sunlight list and respond to the final calls of all dead people who thought God rode a broom and interviewed the oral goddess of mouth to mouth reconnoiter? There you've been it, and what did it get you? Another listless cave and the scratching of demons who think they want to think and sit and stand and can't find the other part of what ain't them which sits in a tree farting the empire over the sky of nuts. OK, talk African and see if you don't arrive in Coney Island with Giuliani looking for you again. Since he killed Jesus he's hard to get along with. Several Innises and a Benjamin are growling on the docks, eating worms and legislative tips, the money stuffed in their commas.

Why do you love evil, we said

Don't love no evil ain't not evil but your breath and stinking eyes

Why do you love evil we repeated

Ain't can't do nothing with that, don't talk no down uppers, tree can walk too

Why do you love evil, three times

Evil tastes good, pays money, gets TV shots, gets stares from the Feds and Beds from the Beddies.

Is that the evil, the only evil, the why you cry to it, lie for it, die in it
No evil but occurrence and light. The stare is fire a match could live with

What is evil if you ain't seen it, but smell like it look

Don't wait for me to tell you evil got a press agent

What is you if evil ain't with you and you ain't made no deal with hell

I ain't evil and evil is for white people and slow colored people who

Don't have no wisdom except in their bones and tongues. I got wisdom
in my fingers and toes, got wisdom waits for me wherever I go.

Then you ain't evil

No

Well who is evil.

Who don't understand the stride how walking with the sun rising and a
dollar will make you sing like a fortunate raft on top the Bilbo water.
If you ain't evil can you point it out ... pretend I am the man and this is
the senate where the sin at and the sin aiders sit. Now talk to me of evil
and yr self

My self is somewhere watching. I ain't in it. I ain't nothing but a
register. Not political. My toes itch and the lady strains them through
the cameras. I have a poem I have a play. About how stink like niggers
how the world hate niggers/A good play. Near Sardis. Near the
Oatmeal poisoner.

Then who is the devil

There ain't no devil but the last nigger busted and the object of list
mysteries. Ain't you seen how evil can be directed with a good
investment. And a suit. And whoever will come to say you is not really a
drag.

Are you evil?

No

Are your friends evil?

No

Is the world full of fiends

No

Do you know who I am

No

Who are you

Don't say that

ARRIVAL 2

This is a survey of what you seen
 To help in the long bright ugly burning to appear Appeared Here
 Wooo

The present was a trip to paradise, one black with white dots the other
 Reverse, like a hearse inside of which is a record player and a rich
 Negro smiling. The survey begins
 Are you alive, will you answer as an example



OK

What your name
 I am the silly inside of nothing which can't be
 We know all the philosophy. This is about eating
 I can't tell what I eat on television it's ugly
 Are you cannibal
 A can of Bull. No the Pope deal with Bull. It's his symbol
 Isabella penetrator. Devil in an apron. A worker for the lowered.
 Here they come
 And your address
 Gettysburg
 The outmoded convict of snow
 I am up all night communing with liars
 Are you telling me you are a relative

Did you love your mother
Yes
Father
Yes
Who else
Where are you leading me
Into church
Why don't you smell right
The devil will respond when you pay him
I paid him
Not enough
Who is your employer
Winston Churchill
Deadpeople can't pay
Fools shdnt ask questions

Part Two

Why do you worship the Devil
Because I can see him
You mean at the meadow lands
Cable TV, the newspapers, journals, internet
The Devil is your friend
No, I have no friends only Bills and untold lies
Where do you live
Who said that about me. Are you a fiend
No. I am asking these questions for your benefit
Like I can't work in McDonalds like your people
You are McDonald
You are the hamburger, Then
I came from Munich
Are you German
No I am vaccination

Are you colored

Yes, green

What is the sunrise to you

Only a dismal effort at Broadway

I got a job dissing black shit and I dig it

Are you sad to be a whore

No, whores sad they didn't get this gig

What is your title

Ain't it the truth is my name, ain't it ain't, my nick name

Title

No title, except this paper and the stare in the mirror which you can't understand

I understand everything but lies

I thought not

Are you with us like the world, real

I am so real I can't say anything

Is that why you limp

I don't limp, the world is crooked

Is that why your lips got a white ring around them

That is the spotlight of intelligence it is sweet

Is poison a feature of your eyes or something you picked up

Hamlet died not understanding the time is now, Bird dug

Are you a Negro

I anybody

Are you white

Nobody is white

Are you a prophet

Look in my bank book

Are you kind

Of course

Why do you carry those chains
Those are credit cards
Are you well educated
No, But I know what is to be told
Do you have an office
An orifice, of course, an altar, there, hear that slurping, the napkin man
wants to rule
Are you speaking English
No, I speak you bangi, the inner soul of the Germans I have been to
Cambridge and understand the other being your dismal history is a lie
Are you returning to be on television
I am television
Are you a re-star
I am the solar system
But you don't have a soul do you
I am not a Zen master, but I get royalties
Who is your sponsor.
I am the only being alive here.

A REACTIONARY TALE

I was a caring husband. I bought socks for my family.

My swarthy wife liked to wear these thick woolen socks that came up to her milky thighs.

I had a lover also. People could see me walking around each evening carrying a walking stick.

My most vivid memory, looking back, is of a pink froth bubbling out of my infant's mouth.

Not everything was going so well: one morning, malnourished soldiers marched down our tiny street, bringing good news.

When good news arrives by mail, the cuckoo sang, tear up the envelope.
When good news arrives by e-mail, destroy the computer.

When an old friend came by to reclaim an old wound, I said to my oldest son: Go dump daddy's ammo boxes into the fragrant river.

To reduce drag, some of my neighbors were diving headfirst into a shallow lake.

We were rich and then we were poor. A small dog or maybe a cat now pulls our family wagon.

TO WEAR, PRESENT TENSE

A young woman builds a nest at the bottom of a lake.
He captured and ate people promenading in that forest.
Sweat suits, see-through blouses, a single sock, tank tops, flip-flops
or no shoes at all.
Shouldn't a man be naked in his own house?
What is naked is either fucked or eaten.
She was blinking and chewing, but not throwing things around.
"The wet flame didn't even singe my eyebrows."
"I'd like to buy a floral dress," my wife said in August.

A BLUE PAIN

“A blue pain will come to us all,” the infant lisped. Soul rhymes with toes, Goethe with sleet. I have gorgeous blue eyes. “Check this out!” he said, as he gouged my right eyeball from its socket. With my left eyeball, interested, I watched him poke an unfiltered Camel through my blue pain, then smoke the cigarette.

2 POEMS FROM *REASON AND OTHER WOMEN*

MISS TIMES SQUARE CONTEST IN A MOTEL

in front of the black window near hovering woman murmuring
i say that and in the chinese restaurant where nothing pr not glowing
that the first and second worlds overlap and enmesh unsteadily
the stories in the first are enforced invented the stories of the second a have a
structure that is imperceptible in the first and are the real stories if you must have
that thought and the stories from the first hang over and repeat though do not
dominate the second oh if i could only envision the first world from the vantage of
the second and see you not as. celestial dragon the chinese rosé like quartz
the first world full of delusion which is not the same as illusion where time is con
structed like a story where like a story reigns like a like a is the norm of the pie piece
custom and i cant see cant see it is the old times square but if times is squared is there
time was in in the no time of dreams the old times square the beauty contest of the
decrepit miss time square in a motel near the old mortuary and the church of the
double the blond double not the sinister double who isnt my double and in truth
there is no double except double except when i accept the first worlds story of how to

behave and become the double mortuary intersection just outside our motel room a lot of women line up for a miss times square contest i'd rather be flown over the sleek dark mountains in the rainy cloud what we're looking for rock formations

not these imaginary bodies deprived looking from these times pass by we havent paid for our room in wrong times four people are having an affair with each oth supposed to be interested f baroque shapes havent heard from the story in a couple of days in black magic marker like th member of the gypsy community where i'll be hurt because i'm not factional enough to belong to the emotional set of the firsts mind the mind of the dominating charm hello aids she says she says dont you remember i always called you aids back then. back in times square one man has a cancer that makes his body come off in pieces. take the girl doll out of the book and look at her separate dress. you can have some separate clothes. but when the feeling of life comes which is not consciousness only and in the wrong times and in the hotel motel a book in which things are not highlighted black marker. i cant say. the antique store is too ornate and the ceiling hangs with lamps and beads and the ceiling hangs too close to the head as i take the woman from the book dont you and look at her body and her clothes and her other possessions enough belong to the intense emotional of ring the emotion of a lot of people lined up to be judged speaking of internet and how you

can do things to each other out of the mind without presence in the second world is presence and is the body there but what is the body who knows now do you not the diagram of what purportedly works and dies as something we've invented a machine so we must be our own invention and not invention and not who knows what a body is and now who is miss times square in the first who will be elected no or judged and will i envy the who takes the prize as judged by the poetry judge who also ran for the post of the poetry judge of the other possessions that come with the body that come with the body as we see it a symbol of outside whats outside theres a sure at a bookstall run by asians where the body as our culture becoming quainter takes a walk in which everything highlighted for purposes of judging your sensibility and how it compares to the standard model as evolved by frenchmen hairpin turn i close eyes i think they will judge that particular woman there miss times square shes running for offices parts are missing from the kit in the boo book she doesnt have a suitcase full of poets do this but some other people there at the wrong turn dont go up go town to the down to the offices where the parts that are known are put together by the judges though his bodys falling apart something round has fallen down the dirty staircase. the plane takes off at site six but this isnt part of the contest we fly low over the mountains beautiful sleek and dark and cloudy gray but we

cant ever stay there in the w second world just flying over the formations of the real
of the second and in the first must always attend another contest or watch the body
gether go down to town and to the offices of the mortuary and the church of the not
my double there is no longer a double of any kind neither blond nor darker
sinister i refuse part and in the story i have refused the part of the double i have
refused parts. in front of the black window lonely murmurs to herself in what
story youve invented mortuary intersection sleek as a windowpane and outsides the
park wont go and none of it will leave want to leave there is no cook tonight do your
own cooking rancid fat from the body fell to pieces of the chicken of the chicken
of the poet so happy to take the little figure and dress from the book call it real
there is urine all over the baby we must clean him off his body imaginary town that
got you though you refused parts. i understand the dream it refers to when there were
factions before the factions of the current dream from the past but there is no past its
all pres before those factions there were factions and mine was thought to have the
disease ive been that twice her name is smith the victor and belongs to a gang of the
acceptable bodies she will win the miss times square and the second time won the
miss times square and then another double won it and there are more doubles
winning the amoeba keeps splitting and they keep holding contests of whos the best
part who has the best part covered from head to toe in it small cruelties or large
that you prefer most people prefer a lot of small cruelties fill the second worlds dreams

come and go like not like come and go here there are dreams of partial actions
everywhere where is partial but what is an action or is it acting no one has acted or
is it an intermesh of nobreath nobreath clings to calling then another double won it
have you missed times square after all the night is endless some say in the bleak black
drizzle of the corner near the old mortuary where i was singing old paint which he
said was untrue he has never told the truth only story of the first and used us story of
the first and she was using me to win a story wing a win a story goes on and o

if there were a tunnel between the two worlds only poetry would matter in it if there were that dark tunnel some say of a passage between life and death what would be of service only poetry which deals in the resonance the connection between the pieces of its the feeling for we bring to things. if there were a tunnel between the two only poetry would matter there some say of a passage between the states life and death would be only knowledge of poetry of how to connect the parts as of dreams but i dont believe in tunnel except as piece of poem itself except as poem when everything to me manifestly overlaps a machine made of tubes sending messages all night all night but thats i think we're erasing poetry with a movie or video camera which shows nothing shadows it seems i have a lot c a lot of cash in my pocket but we will buy bees instead. in exchange for chips of coral and jade which i have earned along my lifeline and all night i the two bodies i lie in bed and create the real body which is light its where i life exactly its i and next to its the other body this white body is the real body and is really there this is a body and that i participate in its construction lying there in the dark. all night i lie in bed and create the real body which i see as light layer on me its exactly i body its where i lie and next to its the other the other body aside there this they are bodies and i participate exactly in the construction of this the real body me where i am

lying in bed in the dark. am i always hes holding up the building which is the library
must walk me home its so late but the sky is full of the most brilliant constellations
bursting with light out of their patterns against the dark morning sky and yet i have
seen a subtler sky which was a whole wide light cloud a pearl sky pearl with light
behind it all of light. the sky of constellations is the best sky of the first world the sky
of stars but stardom vanish i have to sleep in a basement and i dont know how my
mail will get delivered because the mailbox is inside the room so where does my real
mail come from. i sleep in the basement room of a house and my mailbox isnt
outside near the door its inside the room so how will my mail be delivered. why does
the young poet type all his stressed words in caps its because he thinks stress is
absolute but it but it is a puddle of stress a pool small of light from the live one up all
night and in the back and forth between the two worlds. must bursting see a subtler
sky a sky pearl the other body which is the real that i am there are two bodies not a
body and soul there are two bodies as there are two skies two worlds two lying in bed
in the dark and i participate exactly in the construction of this the real body sending
messages to the inside of my basement the basement of the house my mother has

insisted that he walk me home to home but i have to go back go back to his for three books and wake up a girl. there are two babies two girls and the one has been awake all night is home sleeping im holding the other one at the poetry conference

someone complains about the stress poet the caps one but i like him this is a body with poetry to take into the tunnel the tubes which send messages are everywhere theyre everywhere cant get away from bursting with small light under the layer under the level where live from a light depth of poetry how he holds up object at dream table we arent really there. it isnt exactly a language a set of living relations which arent so known of stress a mud puddle all li light with extr t extras syllables the mess

of it spilling out into the life or death worlds of but what words can tell when your cleanliness has been of no use small mud puddles full of light. i didnt have to walk across to there because my there wasnt that. to take into a tunnel there are on reed across question two babies girls and one all asleep all night waiting growth of the light flat upon her as second body the construction of the body beneath from which we can speak to o each other in the real sequence what is that in the second that here and there are nev havent been named. he didnt want us to live there it wasnt as he. but i could do no other after the body had been constructed and i had become this other who i am now a second one yet is that a thing. im enjoying this a great deal this body

faith what some what white light and flat and flat its where i am in the body bed in the way you know where you are and that i construct it myself i have chips of mother of pearl in my pockets jeans pockets stealing on back im happy about that if there were a tunnel only poetry would matter is the first time more like a thought of it and in the grand hotel theres room for everyone with womb fresh red carpet and long curtain gold braid and star. theres something that happens twice about everything happens happens an echo from when the golden amoeba first split night in a sort of arena what are the names of the first what are the nonnames of the real relations between what are right and some that are not wrong but wrong exclusive too old being taken by a young to some clubs but i didnt want to go it was the wrong body the prevailing topography of female sex but that is no seeing an iconic painted face like the second body under construction with blue light blue paint the face of reason leaping at me snake to bite my hand and ensure the second world the second body the second line or poem which is frayed it isnt really its that it isnt entirely formed because its the second or real body under construction the public library is just a dream. i will be just and happens. between any several things the life permits choosing but not choice i mean leaps at me bites me to take into the real there is no accidental here you are making

making your judgment on body with golden oz oozing from womb of wrong
exclusive too old and yet what to some clubs faith what i am faithful forgetting the
path because there is no and on on other either side of the question but there is no
question at all not from here from this body which i am real.

DISTILLED SPIRIT

She felt tired and didn't know a fetus had been growing inside for three months. When she fell asleep riding her bike and crashed into a tree, she went to the clinic on campus. The doctor checked her pulse for a minute, and said, "Congratulations! You have happiness."

Musk placed in the belly button can abort an unwanted fetus.

In the darkness of the deserted park, he tried on a condom. The small size rubber hung over his penis like a plastic raincoat and he instantly lost his erection. He cursed. She burst out laughing.

After they had sex, she put "Musk and Tiger Bone" plasters for arthritis around her belly button to prevent getting pregnant, and swallowed herbs for diarrhea and indigestion.

Only high-class courtesans could afford musk.

"Don't worry," he said as he entered her without a condom. "If anything happens, I can get the certificates you need for the doctor and I'll be there with you."

An unmarried girl would hang herself or jump into a well if she got pregnant, or be drowned by her clan. In Mao's era, she'd be expelled from school, fired, or sent to a labor camp.

In the Korean War, Chinese used *renhai zhanshu*—human ocean tactics—to fight the well-equipped American troops. When the first wave of soldiers was gunned down, the second and third waves rushed forward. The dead were praised for building a great wall with their flesh and blood.

You xi (have joy) is a euphemism for pregnancy. Chinese used to believe “More children, more fortune.”

Mao honored those who had more than four children as “hero mothers,” and exiled the populationist who suggested birth control and family planning.

The government started “one child one family” policy in the seventies, but the population still went over 1.5 billion.

The couple waited ten years to reach the official marriage age: twenty-eight for woman, thirty for man. After the wedding, they lived in separate dormitories waiting for an apartment quota.

When her stomach began to show again, she left home and stayed with a different relative every week. If the village leaders caught her, they’d send her to the clinic for an abortion and tubal ligation. Secretly she hoped to be caught. She had eight daughters. If the ninth were born, she’d have to sell her house to pay the fine. She was tired of hiding like a fugitive, tired of giving birth in other people’s pigsties. But her husband threatened to place the biggest firecracker in her vagina and blow her up if she lost her fertility.

“Are you sure? It’s only two weeks, for God’s sake. Aren’t women often irregular?”

Musk deer are hunted for secretion in their belly buttons.

For two weeks, she went to the bathroom every five minutes to check her panties.

“You’re out of your mind,” he shouted. “We don’t even live in the same country.”

"I'll take care of him."

"How much do you make a month?" he laughed. "Eight hundred? How are you going to feed the baby, keep the job, and go to school full-time?"

"I can send him to my sister in Beijing. It's much cheaper there."

"Find a doctor and we'll split the bill." He hung up.

She called her mother in China for herbs that can melt fetus into a bowl of blood. "I can't do this," she said. "The minute I go to the doctor, the whole town will know my daughter is a big slut in New York. How do you expect me to walk on the street again?"

She bought a Chinese newspaper for 25 cents and made an appointment with the cheapest doctor in Flushing.

The secretary said she had to pay the full amount first.

She missed her period for three weeks. The sonogram couldn't detect any change in her uterus. The doctor went ahead with the operation anyway, just to be on the safe side.

She was startled to see how big a diaphragm was. The doctor explained the procedure and told her to try. It kept slipping out of her fingers. When she finally got it in, it stuck at the entrance. He sighed. "I wish I could show you how. What about using pills?"

She scraped her daughter's back with a hippo's horn to cure her bladder infection. "You have too much poison in your system," mother said, watching red blotches and purple blisters emerge on her daughter's flesh. "I see a baby appearing between your shoulder blades, weeping. Here's another one, a penis hanging between his broken legs. Here's another. What a sin! And What a pity! All the boys you've destroyed. When are you going to stop this?" she shouted, scraping her daughter's blistered back.

Her Catholic colleague gave her a book on the rhythm method. She hid it under the mattress. When her boy friend found it, he punched her in the nose.

She charged her daughter ten dollars for the healing.

The pill dries up her vagina and gives her Candida.

He had a vasectomy after his third child was born. Ten years later, he tried to reverse it for his new girl friend. He got his sperm back, but they had no tails and couldn't swim.

Condoms help men with premature ejaculations.

"Please let me keep this one," she wept over the phone.

"You must do it," said the hospital director to the doctor. "You admitted her, knowing she didn't have a quota. Now the district director is sitting in my office. If the baby is born, you'll be fired, I'll lose my position, and they," he pointed to the entire hospital staff standing like a wall behind him, "will lose a month's salary and three years' promotion. You know this policy. Why the hell did you let her in?" With tears in her eyes, the doctor took the syringe and injected the 95% alcohol solution into the head that was just crowning through the birth canal.

The nurse handed the newlyweds three bags of condoms. "Are thirty enough for your honey-moon?"

After two accidents within three months, she wanted to end the relationship, but couldn't say it. She began to fart and burp loudly whenever he

came close, and her vagina gave off such an offensive odor that he finally left in disgust.

When the operation was over, the doctor said, "Let's talk about pills. Do you have any preference? Do you want the kind that enlarges your breasts?"

No painkiller for abortions in China.

When the girl screamed on the operating table, the nurse laughed. "Can't take the pain, eh? Should have thought about it when you were having fun with boys."

She conceived her second and third child wearing a diaphragm.

The secretion smells unpleasant in its raw form. When diluted with liquid, it becomes precious medicine and perfume.

With a fake marriage certificate, she went to a hospital. She was stripped and ordered to open her legs. Something went inside and began sucking and pulling. Drenched in sweat, she tried to count, but couldn't go beyond twenty. So she focused on ten. "Now clench your teeth," said the nurse. Saw her insert a metal and stir it around. Something broke inside. She wanted to cry, but held herself back. Saw the nurse preparing a syringe. "To make you labor," she said. "The fetus is too big." An hour later, it was over. "Can I look at her?" she asked the nurse, sitting up slowly from the cot. "Are you sure you want to do this? It was a boy, by the way." She nodded. She had to say good-bye. The nurse brought in the basin. Saw the broken head, ribs, limbs. Wanted to vomit, but held it back.

"Too many Chinese, too many Chinese," he mutters as he drives through Chinatown.

Before the hunter reaches her, the dying deer chews up her belly button and destroys the secretion.

The nausea returns after two decades.

“Doesn’t matter whether you write with ‘she’ or ‘I,’” warned the professor. “People are going to read it as your personal story.”

So be it.

PROVERBS & EPITAPHS, L.A. 1999

San Gabriel mountains at sunset
the only oranges left

SPOOKY PAYASO CASPER CHINO

TITO SLEEPY RAFA LIL' MAN

the Exxon station on Eastern Ave.,
overhead shot from the TV news chopper
cop cars blocking off the street

FBI sheriffs & LAPD looking for the homeboy
wanted for 3 murders, suspect in attempted
carjacking on the 10 freeway
(sullen cholo in a xeroxed foto)

what the internal combustion engine
sounds like from inside the chamber
(internalization)

she has nice tits
don't forget them anytime soon

when he was a kid
fresh from Mexico, living in the street
they picked him up and put him in an orphanage
but he didn't like it, their rules and attitude
so he dropped out the window one night
later, back on the street, he heard
every boy there had been taken to a doctor
who gave each the small operation

that turned out to be a vasectomy
(my friend's father)

mean people suck

nice people swallow

chiliburger in each hand

on the corner of Valley & Garfield

Panatella Cigars 15 cents the bricks still (barely) say

I told Zoose the last time I saw Linda

was outside the Rialto theater; he's

in Tulsa with Sylvia & boys

COCAINE, HEROIN, SPEED USERS

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(800) 991 - DRUG

Crow drinking at the edge of the puddle

in the parking lot looks up.

It looked at me funny.

DIVORCE \$99

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holding a xerox of the information folded once

in one hand as I passed through the metal detectors

at the court bldg

everybody in line Black, Latino & poor

except a couple Asian women

“Fuck the cops! They think they’re above the law cuz they got a badge and a gun. Well I got a gun, too! They’re all fucking crooks, the cops and the lawyers and the judges, fuck all of ‘em, that’s why I’ll be a fucking criminal till the fucking day I die!”

that shit gives me diarrhea

Mexico City is the biggest city in the world
L.A. is the second biggest Mexican city in the world

Never did go out to Resurrection Cemetery like I said
maybe I’ll go, but it’s just ashes

PENIS ENLARGEMENT

FDA approved vacuum pump/surgical enlargement.
Gain 1-3”. Permanent & safe. Enhance erection.
FREE brochures. Dr Joel Kaplan (619) 574 PUMP

this sashimi comes from a guy who doesn’t like fish
he only likes to catch it (down in Mexico)
he gives it to his mother
she gives it to my mother
she gives it to me
best sashimi I ever had

S. Hill Street, on the other side
of the 10, there’s a lot of cops around there
(no hills); court takes longer than
any of the 2 hour meters

"It's just a cheap furnished room.

Yeh, I like this area. It's a good place
for an old Bohemian like me,"

Ruben (Ruben & the Jets) said (on 2nd Street)

what wind brought this debris

can't remember whatever it was

then sometimes I can

we all have somebody who calls us

Parking Flat Rate

we got the picture, what's next?

ERASE CRIMINAL RECORD

Convictions/arrests... \$180

End probation/ Restore gun rights

REDUCE SOME FELONIES TO MISDEMEANORS

the driver on your right

in the corner of your eye

makes a sudden right turn

into the wall;

you're changing lanes yourself

to avoid the tire bouncing your way

into oncoming traffic

the boy's expectant look, failures

hair in his face, same clothes everyday

details?

another quiet one, she looks so much like poverty
Snaporaz, what about those subtitles?
What about that smile?

the associative axiom for addition
the multiplicative inverse axiom
the distributive axiom
(it's gone)

inside the pain and stiffness, inside
the taste of blood in your mouth
something is good

when I dropped my daughter off
children stood at the fence looking at
the girl who had come to school on a pony
the principal came out of the building
and told the girl's father not to bring
the animal to school again

(I kiss her forehead every day,
every day she goes in there)

AMID DEATH, A TALE OF TRIUMPH

Boy rescued after 87 hours in rubble

some epiphanic moment, some illuminative insight,
something

it was pouring rain on a dark night
I don't know what color the light was
I couldn't see anything

when I went through the intersection
I didn't say anything to the cop
he didn't ask me why wasn't I wearing my glasses
when he didn't show up at the hearing
I told the judge it was still yellow
he said okay, the ticket doesn't specify
when the light turned red

concrete steps go up from the street to houses
that were removed in *urban renewal* in the 1970s
twenty years later the lots are still vacant
sometimes I think about the 3 year old
I found one night on Shorb St

Dolores back from seeing her father
said: a man lying next to a big section of steel
fence in the middle of the street
he's dead, why?

the girl stood looking through chainlink
at the edge of the empty parking lot
on 4th street around 10 PM
camper behind her with lights on
her hair splayed in the light

descending a hill in a creaking funicular in Naples
I recalled old Angel's Flight, the 3rd Street tunnel
under Bunker Hill

she was absent three days because of asthma
he was out for three days, hernia operation
he was out three days after a car accident

two Centroamericanos fire up the broiler
outside the apt. building
flames shoot up as they turn
the carne asada people stand eating

after dark clothing still hanging
for sale on the fence

white woman at Tommy's burgers
left side of her face red and bald
hair gone from that side of her head
ear missing, arm missing too
as she turns, sleeve of the blue smock
empty as she goes from car to car
people get out of her way

actually I saw Linda Sunday at
the Farmer's Market

*I was drowned, with a spike
right through my head
but it's all right, jumping
jack flash is a gas*

92, prostrate cancer, nearly blind
the son he'd beaten has taken
the family home
the wife he'd married she at 16
he 20 years older in Jalisco
left him 20 years ago
(she would've been here, but
she went to Mexico); middle-aged

daughters see to him now, make
him a plate of food, wrap it in a bag
for him to carry, help him down the steps
“dos de bajada”—he’s going
to ask like he usually does, what streets
are these that I drive, what route I take
so he can suggest I just drop him
downtown, he’ll catch a bus
he always says—throughout
his 80s, he did take the bus—
not now: I hold his door open,
looking up, there’s a few stars
the night is clear

SOME MARITIME DISASTERS THIS CENTURY

Do you retain a general positive attitude toward maritime service?

British Insurance Actuaries have placed sex as the least
Reliable form of transportation. It is estimated
That capsizing is a form of intimate expression,
Close to that of placing one's head in a lap.

*The anglo-saxon media is reportedly off-duty. Are you looking for dignity
or resolution?*

Drowning is a flat contradiction to
Either. Please read more before
Jumping in. Works cited: Descriptions of neglect,
Some poems mentioning thirst.

*How many bodies does it take to keep a-float? What color was your lifejacket,
if any?*

I found an orange trying to sink & I pressed it
Into my mouth. It released fish with little resistance
& I felt the world could possibly,
At that moment, be safe.

*Why did you spin from island to island? I'm told the heart is secretly
an archipelago.*

Even a nugget of earth seemed
A large price to pay for salvation.

I would not have been able to use my legs
As I would have liked: As salt dervishes.

*Isn't morse code useless when the tips of our fingers are under siege?
We tried to write but remembered the taste of stamps & were distracted.*

The question of correspondence is interesting. It is not
When endless hours of sun
Make one feel Pre-Columbian, & with it,
Undiscoverable, flat, hostless.

Would you equate spit with delirium?

My mouth remains dry & days before being expelled,
News reports announced a rabid pitbull
Guarding an abandoned baby. My ovaries
were tested for patience. Biding results, I took a trip.

Are you familiar with transmitting systems, i.e. a flare for mishaps?

The search for causes, scapegoats, what have you,
Is in full flood. But I'm well-versed
In the language of telephones: how to break
A date, how to quell disasters.

*The ferry was nothing less than a series of failed locks. What
Could compare in its faulty construction? A chest, a belly?*

Every so often, let's say a full lunar cycle,
The fundamental concepts of elementary navigation

Become unhinged. Mayday mayday is an affair
Worth pursuing, as is the mess of lost power.

LETTERS AT THE WHEEL

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Dear of music and spectacular storms chanting, you had afternoons because Mayan warriors of the mountains west pile up to be there. I and wind in the street for coins which make rain that flash down accompanied by Japanese monks. Moisture from the dance and guitar breaks into a performance. In mountains and then giving him a hard there are gilded Peña. He was brilliant and on the Festival above the town the producer and feathered MacArthur fellow managed to piss a genius—never do that. Last week I saw a wrong. The guy is dancing in this/ these beauties. So the south west would die for him in Mexico City. Please send me some time. This is off the big donors board. I overheard some poems Love,

BOONTON, NEW JERSEY

Dear heart and shortwave conductor, I accept this but the real problem is that emotions are not unhooked. All hooked. In the meantime, I'm just an unavailable to fuck good. But it didn't stop encores at not getting on my case and basically telling all for filling longing like Broadway musicals. But I have unrealistic incredible longing, not expectations, so all that's humiliating myself, from my friends who say that the therapy I've had has, unlike the longing, helped me keep from me all my life. And your name from developing. When I need to shift gears to French opera, I seem to stop the feeling Love,

DENVER, COLORADO

Dear luthier, built for me, eventually the wood began your action; but there's that perfect magic point when the teardrop soundholes is so deep and so im-pen-et-trably Spanish for a chap from the 19th century. What you say about guitars whether or not I could treat an intonation problem and myself to a fresh set of the Hagstrom electric...and against the neck; a few days stretch out of tune and did I grow? A day after cutting clubs my sole concern was when to cut and when to is my Epiphone Frontier...but have an extra b in case it needed a new neck, which made in Japanese; my length for depressing had to buckle because it was Love,

TEMPE, ARIZONA

Dear development north of happiness, tap bang! tappity tap, ras-gueado, bang, is a specialty of the very detailed concentration. This and eating your tortillas by music written in quartet will always be an inspiration and a source of wide hips. They are lovely, Haydn #9 followed memories of our time with hideous cutesy ceramic subscription concerts on a small scale. The music was how they have to go back to dolls and loving you today. I don't know why the house was decorated—it's about the defunding of the arts and it's just too hot to do. This lightly knowing and breathtakingly lovely photograph: you. I spoke to their pre-approved symphony leader in a living room. How's that? You say you could have last night settled with me in Halifax; I don't take Love,

3 POEMS FROM *INLAND*, A SERIES OF LYRICS ABOUT THE
MIDWEST

PRAIRIE STYLE

The direction giving out—in the business past direction then & avoiding love's blunt teeth there. Done with houses & wanting to be seen as a boundary or as a line of plot re-appearing, done with all that too. Houses cleave &, to me, it all gets hammered out in overstatement—love's a terror, a revelation cleaving to contours. Love's a terror, in town & out of town too.

I was an unqualified marker, some days the ache of an implicit region. Nothing to the bear but the curl of the self. Having missed the trace the first time through I found coming a specificity hard to pronounce: river of accent, a single voice to mark it all off. Well this is namelessness up here, this is inward, this is the equivocation of location & nothing but the curl will do.

Love's over there, to me, the old terror.

FEVER

The spiral inward. Or, instead, the trek across as if in a wagon or on Amtrak—perpetual stretch from range to image, from splay to toehold, cane to cant, etc. Coming across all evil (which is not to indicate that everything has been come to but which is to suggest crossing with penchants intact &, in seeming contradiction, the face advertising that).

On or along the way music *turns up* in such a way as an animal could, it's an appearance that's ambiguous and rarely finite. It *gets* turned up. Or you can imagine music but you can *see* the contour, the outline which, around here, is not edge but technique—an edge, say, as in having one on the surface.

The point of origin, the point of fade. Fielding the question. A train trails its own noise.

Around here juxtaposition's lacking so the argument that juxtaposition might state is nonexistent. Another one's got to be made; another one's got to be interposed. I felt a restless emotional excitement from no source in particular. I was speaking and suddenly there was the great hesitancy of the prairies.

Music turns up, the voice coming not into itself but to real things such as animals. A whole slew of repeat performances coming up. Today, to me, is the opposite of relief: today's blunt-toothed and equivocal, ugly. Music turns up, the hem of my garment just banging away on the skin.

Inland, one needs something more racial, say bigger, than mountains. Before, I'd always come, as if from nowhere, to places. Trek's out of Afrikaans but has entered, as they say, our vocabulary; I've always had a penchant for the place around speech, voice being suddenly absent in the heart of the song, for the flattest part of heat.

A TRAIN AT NIGHT

Hearing, as I will, the train cross town and the silence as well between the grade crossings except for when on especially clear nights the diesels signify themselves.

Evil's all silent. Rail around here's continuously welded. The air this far in? Dry. Linda Rondstadt singing Love is Like a Heat Wave on the oldies station. The closed set of transitions. What's your body like? What's your body in the set of places? Sometimes I stare into space, Tears all over my face. Continuous—no break—into the next section or piece. Remote's got the two directions and an inside, like a voice on TV—not the remote but remote itself. Much exists in need of answer. At first I'd thought being visible and silent was a context on its own, a specific-enough remoteness: known by position, known as denial. Getting even. (Evil's silent and so on but it's got its gods.)

Liken it—the noise—to love itself.

(Yet despite the specificity, how I speak of the train and it about me, all train references are fairly similar and overlap with music and engage the same restless stuff music would. To me the prairie's an idle expression, an interior phrase for love, used for love.)

Oh I hear the sound of a machine working but there's never anything to see. An inflection over on the west side, push crossing over shove. This is dry as a bone. Fortify me night train.

ECTOPIA

A stout bomb wrapped with a bow. With wear, you tear. It's true you sour or rust. Some of us were sure you're in a rut. We bore your somber rub and storm. You were true, but you rust. On our tour out, we tore, we two. You were to trust in us, and we in you. Terribly, you tear. You tear us. You tell us you're true. Are you sure? Most of you bow to the mob. Strut with worms, strew your woe. So store your tears, tout your worst. Be a brute, if you must. You tear us most terribly. To the tomb, we rue our rust and rot. You tear. You wear us out. You try your best, but we're bust. You tear out of us. We tear from stem to stem. You trouble, you butter me most. You tear, but you tell us, trust us to suture you.

RESISTANCE IS FERTILE

This system needs your moral fiber like a bowl of X brand flakes. If your kind cannot be assimilated to make spare parts for Borg wars, your resistance challenges the ant farm to adapt. You might think the system's tone deaf, but our software's immune. You're the virus that keeps it in tune. We are the tolerant host, which makes you the guest worker colony of *e coli*, the chitlins inside the chitlins. We call you irresponsible, say you're indigestible, and it's undeniably true it's tough to swallow you. If you are not consumed, your flawed construction only proves that we are perfection cubed. Did you need to read the label on Olean to know, the SOS goes out when the chip's going down? To Cuisinart our metaphors once again, let's just say that Dracula's liquid protein diet could use some roughage to help with his next smooth move. A bloodsucker's got to worry about irregularity. So pollsters press the pulse, take specimens of the blood count. Pundits pooh-pooh as law and order candidate Bruce Wayne leaves his potty, then runs on a turd pooty ticket, with a "Libertarian Bowel Movement" platform. The result will be a better grade of guano piling up in the bat cave. Our constipation requires frequent amendments to feed the tree of liberty. Can you dig it? Can you dig it? Man, you're digging it with a shovel.

DISTOMAP FOR THE CODED MOUNTAINS, PALE FRONTIER,
OR
THE DEVOTIONS

(for my sisters, Margaret & Carol)

“This faith was expressed using symbols of shaped metal, embroidered cloth, carved wood, and painted canvas.”—curator, San Xavier Mission, Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A.

in a well-sought dream remember think of something plain like
Grammy's tears; think of something plain like the color and curvature of
gingerale nightgown & bend & kink of patio, how the 3rd vowel of her
name was scratched in.

think of some plain dream of something like how the buildings of a particular high school became part of your body—its grubby lockers, the glass of its metal panes, the terrors of gum on things, or, if in Arizona, its trellised breezeways &

saint-abrasive walls

that one boy's back of head withdrawal smile toward your new sugar paws,
 the inept hairstyle of a still-favorite teacher (chem lab particular: insulting
 miracles, too; with atoms slamming you into that seat all worn out-

why am I a girl

(I've never been this fucked up). in a well sought dream remember pop
song proclamations, Nicole's big shoes and how she tipped them, flirty,
Clementine, third grade flat rug, your leotard itch—committing with
mastodon eyes the masturbations of Marilyn Monroe—or, mass-produce
doodles of *perfect ballerinas*

the decoration of the senses
the pornographic mailbox
widow to the investigation

go home & eat bowls of cereal. the kitchen circa 1903 w/new cabinets

committing with resolute arms
the acts of Cleopatra

lies & other orthographies: my *.

“The water’s edge so overgrown with grapes that the surging waves flowed over them-”

— Captain Amadas

The generations changed too quickly & the children began to turn out all weird & bitter.

well sought remember were days and nights of highway the trucker STOP the LOGOS merging with your SIGHT & fear & thrill the Marlboro Menthols with green packaging the digital tune the particular cap the safety the way the truckers stopped and slept the road became quite thin and empty the final Tulsa sunrise sleep in a hospital lot and next, the youngest her warmest warmest coats how she looked up

then also a blue mountain the way its sweatshirt ponytails paraded about the smooth bent of Honda the Honda was our age nearly the sweatshirt was the color of skin or sky or blue mountain so named the photo was full of light our sunglasses formed the darkest spots there were birds there and certain trees, Mom *text itself beats winged* you tried out—”boiled peanuts & the southern-accented Cherokee waitress”—learning to see past the Bible and Vegas and how it was ALL OK talking past canyons and rivers and shops in the middle of blind flat states called Uncle Junk and how you didn’t stop there but stopped there and there was a well-earned you felt dip in a mastodon chlorine—that means you laid down some cash for the Holiday Inn in Rapid City—and in OK City you shared a parking lot teeming with participants in the Red Earth Festival it was July and the guy at the counter gave you a discount thus porch strung about doors stung with conversation you merely listening and near Graceland a nice old German-descended lady said, here take some cookies, GIRLS

cable and frybread and what Grammy remembered and was willing to
give up or with which to *gamble*

* *Pocahontas*, your false house & impossible letter,
crown, marriage, shields, swearing, bending, robe,
my play on play on play, Rebecca, ornamental
bearing—

IN THE DETAILS (A DEVEILED DICTIONARY)

ALTERNATIVE: Marketed to bipedal mammals who tack left at the Quik-Save then idle there, jammed to the *Who Knew?* span. Swollen raging mainstream rescue dinghy; in peyote styrofoam and suffrage chic. Beyond abreastness, into horded tins of benignity towards taxation. They've sucked the pattern off authority's thumbs. The undersigned hurled his curdled kraut at the gates of triple-blind mimesis. Filled a model unit up with packages of burrs. And didn't even notice the brandished catchword.

BAILEY'S COMET: Baal, the bartender's, learning C++. 750 for a basement in Astoria. Solarcaine on schmeckeldeckers who're bossy getting lubed. A flaming cocktail like atomic purity in *Kiss Me Deadly*, and moreover, how to allow. How there are no manservants in the discourse of the appetizer prawns. Tip listlessly and power, right in the kisser.

BIRTHDAY: Synchronized botches in case time thinks it's twiddling its *-ing*. When I were a tulip, mom redeemed me. Ordinal and airily, Day One we took a wade. Nail to hang these triggy breeches. Star date—astrology yule log plugs cassingles of "Of thee, icing." Month bunny cedes its shadow; reaps some adult theme. Being crunch time, Cap'n. Permanent, Incorporated. Once in a lifetime, patent permitting.

BOURBON STREET: Bar band circle of hell. Eternal pertinent tourniquet. Third rate birthrate. Tagine of Joan Jett bereft in bontemps magnolia. A cherry picker orchestra courthouse, 'course. Carnival,

Esq. Tired of tree rings? Afeared too toothy? Alert General Theme
Song Park, whitey's daquiri's darkling.

BRESSON: Gestes and lesses. Poésie pure's inured the coffee grinder in
Umberto D. Cruelty? See how you button it. Lurking moral
metatarsal. Can run and. Can hide. Rather parallelogram than.
Pris•on/ism embodied and, say, severed. Pocketsful of personal
effects called footsteps.

CHINA GATE: Miscegenation Angie Dickinson marrow frappe. The only
Vietnam War film starring Nat King Cole on Uncle Ho Tom collo-
quialisms. Legionnaire's dislike. The time of date. Affirmative and
dedicated to the French. So fake, a surge in jury selection.
Parboiled manna from Annam. Where the extras marry the minia-
tures. Where to err is non-dairy [and sacred, acrid, and inevitably
dodecaroon]. Dog with boiled swagger-sway. Charm the guard.
Dynamite the DMZ.

CONTENT: Adam tried leaves finding figs squishy. Dominatrices who
dress in inalterable London Fog. Bowerful of black light blueber-
ries: washer, passion, lug, and nut. Cobbler versus crumble. It's all
part of my master Zagat almanac—the streets are filled with aimful
ideation feigning shady laissez faire.

CRUSH: Relationship of NBC to cable. Of tenths of seconds of others'
eyes to rolling in cured hides of limelight. I vote to vow to partici-
pate. Flushing upkeep. Of fitness grist to a troupe of jaunty Aunty
Ems. Micro soft but light what. That'll-learn-ya eyedropper

coptered over battle-hungry regiments of retinas. Whatever there was in beginning, now then there are many ones.

CUSTOMER: Spicy salmon inside out. Knows the money tree in the scrub up by the kudzu's always. The unctioner, extremely bored with ordering, knows from taupe phone shoulder prop throne. Forgive me gingerly (or give me). Always wassailing. Contented on demand. No Roman with a wicker Nixon leaves here miffed. Premises I mean. Always right—there by your side.

DOUBLE INDEMNITY: Without that silly staircase between us. Pair shaped, all shots go to heaven. Christiabibble Pacific All Risk; Basho too controlled to pant a Raymond Chandler-gram, as Staten Island fairy paintings pole rear-projected floes down the rim and into Santa Catalina Channel. Los Angeles means nothing. Bed of needles made from barely cracking actors' mouths. Cool as change that refuses to be spared. Scam scam scam scam banter. Cannibalism with shades and lipstick traces. To say "I see" to the oncoming train.

DREAM: Obligatory bad live-action Disney on the hurtling Bonanza. The fie bone's cathected. Buying rights to innards while sirrah just lies there, stirring up his coma with a scimitar-shaped swizzle stick. Evolutionarily suspect narrativization of platelets passing past the hooded eyes; guy wires to why gyres. Cry oneself to speech. In the image vault a creaky kitty door: "*No humpbacks in the Hudson. No Everglades in Cheesequake.*" "*The political economy of fantasy is dissing me.*" Antonymnal newspaper augur. Balletic ballot-stuffing in the well-lit dark side.

DU JOUR: Skewer. Fix. Convict. Enlist. Tag a clutch of fledglings and then memorize the specials. This will be the one where by suppertime the leaves have lost their leaves. My Particular Wire: a Dogging of Belonging. Big dumb bumbling globe casts a shadow on one half its ass. Searching clinging dungarees for that betrothal ticket (or passport or pepper spray). Some day, all this will be someone's. Someone's month money. Someone's mushroom barley baby. Someone's way of saying "hey, witness finger on this witless slip."

FAN: Camaro pantsleg spastics hatch a yak. Ole boy talking boiled tabloid hideousness of knees. When pressed. . . hits for average. Average taupe carpet to Kevorkian. Fat chick porno paper planes lit from the loge deck. The Sox are some red menace. As if I don't hate my wife enough.

FLORIDA: Angles for gar in the runoff. Algal bloom bored waiting for the topiary to embody. Krill slushy. I believe you've dropped your fill. Casts for roughy in causeway slough. Honk if condominium. Pod people not not mauraunders. How the buttonflies on the spanking prison coveralls gleam. Pee-weet. 'Golf' backwards. Aleph beta carotene. For perch in the drainage ditch. Above the siren din of life support.

14TH STREET: Past-date Energizers.

FOUNDING FATHERS: Lord Fairfax adoring Martha's tea cakes. If prisoners were allowed to vote. Federalist perineum. With self-interest raised to the bloatedness of a Macy's day float. Poverty an errant

lash in the gleaming dollar eye. Ross Perot, meet Jonas Savimbi. Articulate estate agents wince convincingly when the tenant farmers plead. More perfect for? Feudalism and toilet training. Feudalism and overeating. Feudalism and bismuth. With an ideology that's Greek and a "your best interest" reacharound. Meaning famously enormous creeps in wigs.

GIULIANI: A peeled crow. Well, the lilac fails; crowned combover hastemakes snapper-organs. "The bitterer the betterer" 's always said. Smallpox hallmark cards. Of cordlessness ("of woman born?") Bored, except by boxcutters. Leaning, three-ply, into needle dickie dime. Papercut for Pepsodent! Rhapsody in Easy Target, conducted by Sir Kickemwhen. Of in spite. Zen dregs. How to fiend rants and affluence enemas. Downstroke tearier cologne. The lipless class. And then Riker's Island.

GRAVEN: By all intents there was a frou-frou rivulet. Drainage to the shacks; Patronage to the amebic kaboodle Kant hadn't finished kidding with. Unlocking you with mittens. A dank pomade frustrates the nap of fevered chicks with nibs. Supper saying "Goes without. What a charming smear campaign." And recorded for all intents the tortellini inner ear's well-connected health rattle.

HALTER: The weight of the world minus packaging. No know how to. Straint. A phase. Called craw or cray? Put ties that taunt you to limestone with staple gun. Dearest one, I scotch-taped the minutes to the puss-crying icon. I read "pronghorn" and "homeward" in the back of the neck of *bound*. Hand-sewn timing belt. Gravity, the passtry. Mothers Against Muzzles condemns G-rated S&M. And then.

HOLIDAY: Tie corporate merger, martial law, dunk the hired raving mime, and overcurious about the hive to fencive gaolers' (renters') iron bars. Would that he might enter anesthesiology or maybe opt for mop-up.

IMPEACHMENT: The closest closet clothes the coarsest holes. A river runs through them, and the fish are arguably bigger. The conductor, just a hint under drunk, passing grade a-for-affect cock and chicken eggs from tamper-proven neck to neck, calls us 'Don DeLillo's underlings.' Everybody do the Rat-in-a-Glue-Trap Chew! All is ouster and/or superimposition. And/or preaching to the catalytic. The people close their eyes and wish the fulfilled elves would visit them again.

IMPEACHMENT 2: Implumming the three who were denectarined. There is so much not to say. Care whether friend kicked Doc Appleday's milktoast in, to elide a kind of whitener? Ziploc with a WIC check. There go Victoria & Albert tanking antiquinices of decency ballooning through their veins.

IRONY: Lord Shepherd World Oyster eats a bowl of cherry frosted face value every cum-sucking sunup since back when ratio dots weren't considered sweetener. One way to halve knots. Intent and the weather. Otherwise the bevy gets to you. Back when might was simpler; back bend over sincerer. He who loves to weigh it admits the policy of no return.

LINE DRAWING: Moo, who sketches? Was it I who wrote “one day’s nose in the ass of the next”? Ici does it. Soviets for toilet paper; Americans for work. Lincoln tunnel colostomy. Backed up to the spans. Meat packers cashing paychecks at the ATM on Ganesvoort. Kiss and re-release. To be self-addressed obsessed, in the sketchy light of student aid (think funds for the Cuban blockade). Think one of many and then “next.”

LOBBYIST: That the distinguished senator’s smoking menthols. *Remora* rolodexedrine. Event horizon—breakfast, lunch, and an in-flight catscan. Government by chum. The very air baited and barbed. Up yours roses, I know a laundryman can remove the smell of pocket; parsed tattoo. Lively buyback skycap. Officegilder. Palmistry~or~Promise me. Did the tip fit underneath the pulpit?

LORE: Story us a set of scabbard scars. Total our ago. Word up.

LOVE: Quarter, shotglass, fishtank. Rey Ordoñez on his knees from short. Core what occurs. Abnormalize leeration with “love teaches us language.” All always here and toward, I do hereby bottle Bartleby. It is written. Now where’s the kit?

MOUSE: Muckluck fauna demi-drownéd. Startling line. White elicits sympathy. Rabies in vivid sacks at the root of the tooth. Rush hour rid of myth. And now I cede. The filth angle. Prize viper test pilot. Spice trade in waltz time pacemaker fade. Asleep on the bombing range, I (please to aim) curse the art of scurrying.

MONACO: Where have all the serifs gone? The font on the door watches botched and bowldered corridors. The kids are at "Security Cam" on the Pomodoro Atari again. All is seen, not hard. An old man made of polyps and typeboxes. Out of doors, and in of pores. Home to hotel to hospital to hell. And a way to've written it. No world to build in the fusspot B, but there a culture breeds.

NATO: Nestegg Attaboy Tripwired Olivebranch. Nunchucks Around Their Onrush (finish buying marx a tux). Nip And Tuck Ordinance. Nary A Terser Orthography. Nobody Asskisses Terrorists Once. Nafta Ain't The Only (way of misspelling 'suppression'). No-show Accompanists taunted the Ombudsman. Normative Asphyxia Tamed Oedipus. Now Amscray Together, OK?

NATIONAL SECURITY: Is "Boeing" the sound of one check bouncing? We've even built the Great Wall of Shinola, cupping up panopitcally the nerve-end strips of Arbys', Hardees', and corporate hindquarters', against the different wind. Hosing missile-guided smartdollars into titanic moats. As the playwright wrote: It's lucky the shallow end is near the beach. When we didn't sign the landmine treaty, Blammo bought himself a concrete jockstrap. We sell bullets, not abominations. The bidder plum forgot his lid.

1983-84: Your Kiss is on My List. Defunded thought police. Description shit; Conniption crit. Keep on Lovin' Pandora's mousse can. Service Industry nativity. Air traffic controllers homestead Ruby Ridge. Wide, Wide World of trickledown Rambition. Itching powder in Andropov's walkman. Amount to much (much mold on Julia's duty). Christian right hook and jingle. The

Majority, shadowboxing conservatively, can barely lift to: A. gild the billy club; B. coronate the family unit; C. turn away the radio.

OFF-RAMP: Dollar General fence. Highwaymen ransom subsistence. Gnosis, or, motelist. Commerce surrounds it with her clattered armadillo (ought to). So send for your rubber-tired hearses. And send for your rubber-tied hacks. Lo, a local sees he's franchisee. Local dashboard mold. The quality partition people. Punt to the gold dust of brokenness. Upon row. Figure figure/ground, credit/gland, hiring now/impounding. Luna moth run off to the tune of a 12-pack goon.

ORDINAL: The royal fifth. Patty (Queen of) Hearst's term of inheritance. Prorate coprolalic corporate welfare into thirty minutes of non-stop hits. You're living in it. Counting on it. Query letter not top drawer. Nice Nazis singing *Edelweiss* for the nth excrescent rerun mention. If sound follows sense, who is not a bider?

PAWN: Proper name for Greater Dade. Abandoned figurative rink. Home to hoary lollers named Of Late and Esperanza Heave or Crave. Dinged ring road Rickenbacker. Alternating, nay, maybe, reoccurring current. The savings of many in the hands of one SW 379th St. controlled burn. Recycling legal tenderness. Lens, Lend, Lent. Check cashing edifices troupe capitalmiasma into limitless braceros' hats.

PAPAL: Of or loving half-reviling vagary. On the mondo pundit dun tip. Decades of AIDS added to a stadium's fidgety flashpulses. The

totality of bulletheads the vista of the need to seethe. Seen anything uncultivated lately? Heathen CEO immunity? Pop diva doffing kevlar wimple? The wave? Old cartilage creedocidal try. (Politely) No more porn-TIFF word made flesh for this crystal stiff.

PASSAGE: Swim the golf moat to cineplex togetherness, three notrilly Chinese steeds platypaddling in tow. When the family paper publishes, there's a banner over cisterns where lost scents collect. Something fecal on the back seat of the Lincoln. So wide. So high. So I'd ...

POLLOCK: Feat of a Hebeephrene. A realist leg-wrestling the ancillary. Our models can beat up their models—with technique (out a living) (being) (the least). Lawyers represent, artists *panic* (—*Kerouac*); *lam it* (—*Kerouac*); *pink elephant* (—*Ralph Branca*). Petting parties with publicity, and after 50 years enamel wounds are wet.

PORNO: There, I said it. Feigning barely. Desire. Reside. Dressage. Confession. Kiss our honest (has a harelip) dollar. Press our honest (napalm peephole). Armies' (anti) bellies. Coitus doves on weedy Tree of Heaven. The words *full time* printed on a wind-panicked thought balloon. Border culture bleeder. The Director beckons "lose the womb."

PROLIFERATE: Bulging our school boards with liedealogues. Landfill of spent capacitors. The universe is expanding, why should I do my taxes? Por que no sorbet course, when in forced perspective the

end is skating at you with its pads and mask and diffident stick? More mortal, waiter! 'Traffic' from the Catalan decanting of the chamber pot. Quiet as a door mouth. I hear you. The hordes are more-ish.

REPAIR: Stan's Used Items has reorganized. In an improvised costume for the Ability Ball, much is made of wrenches coming from the Sanskrit word for wind. Called upon to weld me to your leader, Louisa Freeworld thinks in antique styrofoam and Depression glass. Of penniness and bare sixteenths. Solder shellac V-discs to trousseaux of polling data. Methinks missing links are wishful.

SAFE SEX: Inversion of the body snatchers. Beats surfing. Shiver me calculated risk. Larmes tickling tonight's lead: bereavement. The three of us; you, me, catch-all cardboard cutout extra septic ounce of decency. Tube of unlickable, unapplicable tremolo envelope glue. Tremolo for effect. Let's not go down that doubt cast. Let's just show up—rigged the static twixt. Have body, will ravel.

SCREENPLAY: Ideation hawk shop. See swimming in the fault between Santa Whip Off and Santa Dash. See, there's this guy. There's this virus makes us insult the intelligence of hogs. On your knees and starring. This virus that can't be contained except by pointing guns at screens.

SOCIAL SECURITY: Industrial Light and Magic closet ice floe. One Route One motel for every aging lyricist; leveraging every vaguely grave confection until Saturn's issued rings. Perks irk mister work

habit's lux perpetua taskforce into an itchy jig. Regression is only one way out of this. Shrinkage, clammy handjob, and yes, severance. The known universe is extanting. Don't just stand there, buy with all your Arbeiter Macht—into this.

SOLITUDE: Dividend of in the details screaming. Pry with priapean glue gun, in the car lot, looking for your contact, fluval. You who? My echo, my medulla, and (unduly) my own radar dish of tapioca loaner's manuals. Down that path and. Who but Señor Otros'll trill the triangle at din din?

SPORTS: Northern Hordes. The Sidearms of Alarmists. Sex since 1984 versus Space since 1958. Bermuda halfway between New York and Havana and, to keep one off the street, meaning wistfully schizo-feasible.

TABLOID: Wilcos because picas triumph. Circulation is a hopeful word—like loco oceanicity foiling the stones. Society and Spectacle have turned off their beepers and gone back to bed.

TAXATION: Lawyer in the boilerroom fires up the Slurbutron. Stockpiling quivers full of sugarcubes for the *nice horsey* politicking plus lobbyists as land mines. Lead my rips, better lower levies before capital dies of Chlorine Eye and the entire echelon says its finger in the dyke happens to be atrophying nicely, right? Earn burial and Keep sake. We have season tickets to *The Rest Are Baby Birds*.

THEIR: Vast deposits. Just back in the armoire when you walked in.
Grasping the masses' specific charms. Paranoia letter sweater. Love
and loan. Deep as the deep you see. Everyone on that street has
neutron insurance. Everyone has work and deep pockets of far be it.

TOGETHER: Three-legged race as desperate escape. For four hands, the
seams of an unfoldable sheet. His and hers gurgle. A fretted instru-
ment on a bed of baby lettuce. Compatibativeness crasscake dance
of *let the jello harden*. Of incredulity and orgasm. Of spring's been
way too long, Gongula. Paper binding; boo-hoo glue. There's a
quality, up ahead, you've just crossed over. Don the non-dual corset
cinching grievous separate ways.

UTILITIES: A ripoff, these Eumenides. Edisun Kings horde the coils.
Why not read the meter all wool and a yard wide then build a tem-
ple with the bills. Stealing it from frictive exercycles then selling it
to Undersigned. Runs on Monopoly money. The Cholera of
Convenience or Fridge Magnet Bingo.

VANITY: The heart before the curse. The chart before the terse. Feeling
hackneyed scab-picking. All is offering. Decay NY; a flannelgraph of
a headshot much too glossy to be signed. Gagged agog the crippled
inseam. Wastes of time con the conservation of philosophy into
finding a hairpiece to privatize.

VOTE: What, when not in mosh pit, cigarette-broke brinksmen think of
trigger fingers. A penitent pimientoisit at Blimpie won't. Like an
open invitation from different bosses to show up on time and mop.

Who has ever said “I move to”? My Conscience For Comptroller.
Ballottement. Home Shopping Network on every band. Sing for
your supposition. Then back to the woodwork with you.

WALL STREET: In “Sticks and Carrots” it’s who supplies the string.
Representations bang buck bunkum bank on a bonk on the big
black brink blinking on and off until Lot dealt all his salt. Not
think twice about cutting up the crumb. Multiplication chairs,
sofas, scaffolds, shelves, and lamps. Grow growth and growtively.
A throw below “enough” jokes [or see instead: a step above].

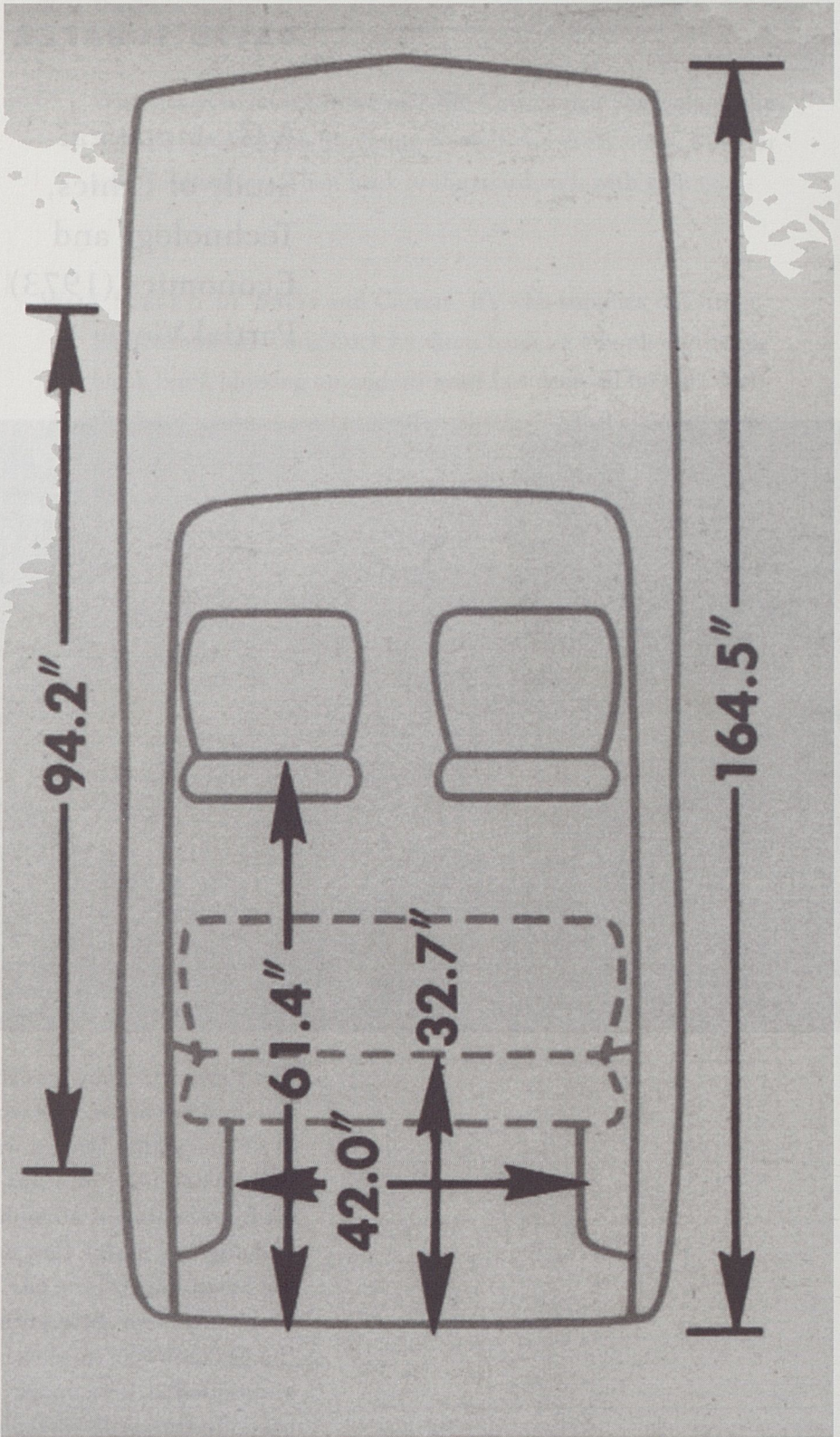
WASTE: Not Want. Combinatory take away. What all the high roads in
Man In Equilibrium nth tenth possession couldn’t buy. Home for
enumerative viper tumors. Monomaniacs on decay. The Great
Mother launders aphids’ favorite stainless in the runoff in the
basement. Man In Equilibrium coffee lids. No connection. Coke
adds souls to landfills. Meant your end of the bargain dented.
Never mentioned it again.

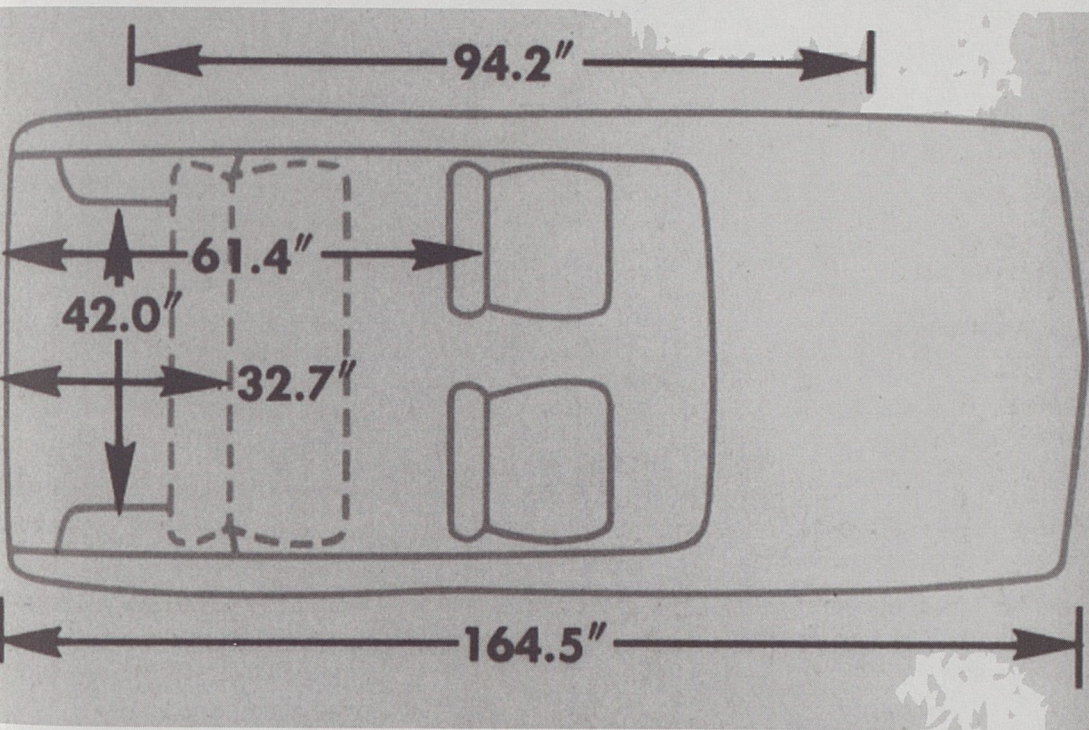
DAVID SCHAFFER

A Grammatical
Study of Ethics,
Technology and
Economics (1973)
Partial View



The Pinto was known as the deadliest car in America when in 1972 a young woman was killed when her Pinto was hit from behind at 26 mph and due to a design flaw with the positioning of the gas tank to the rear differential, the gas tank was ruptured and exploded. The images used are from a 1973 dealer brochure and a repair manual.





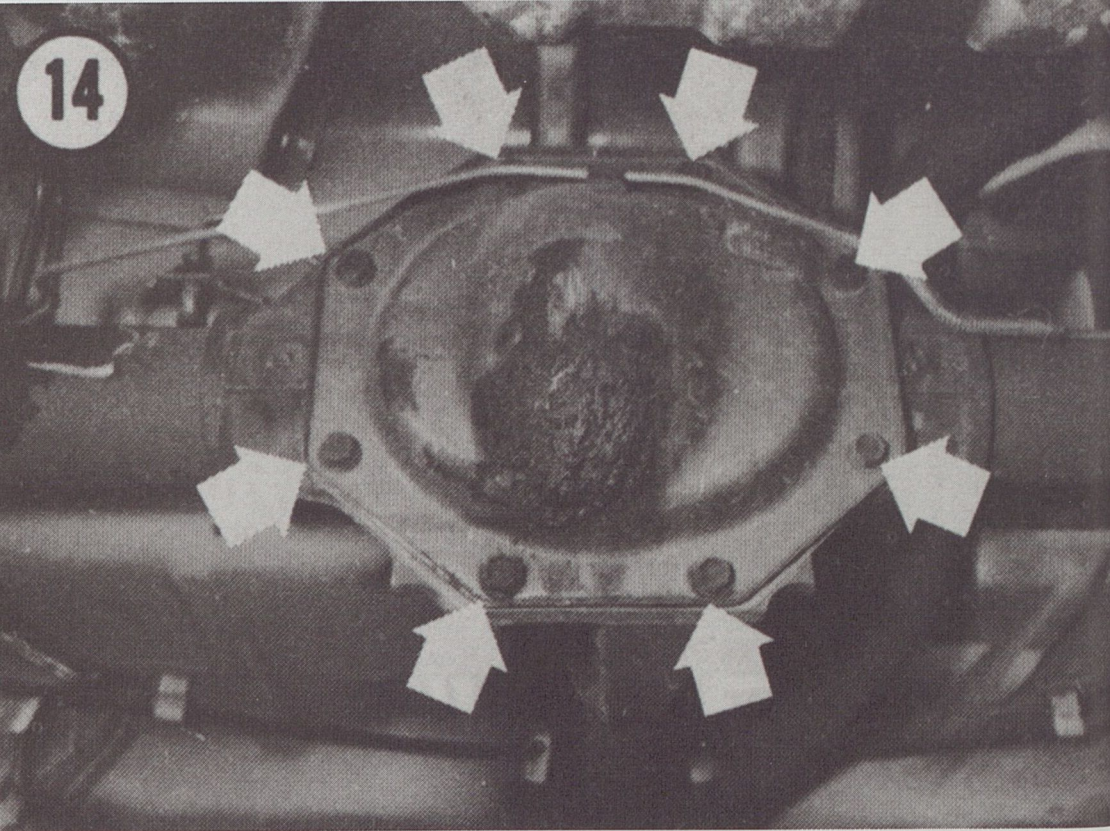








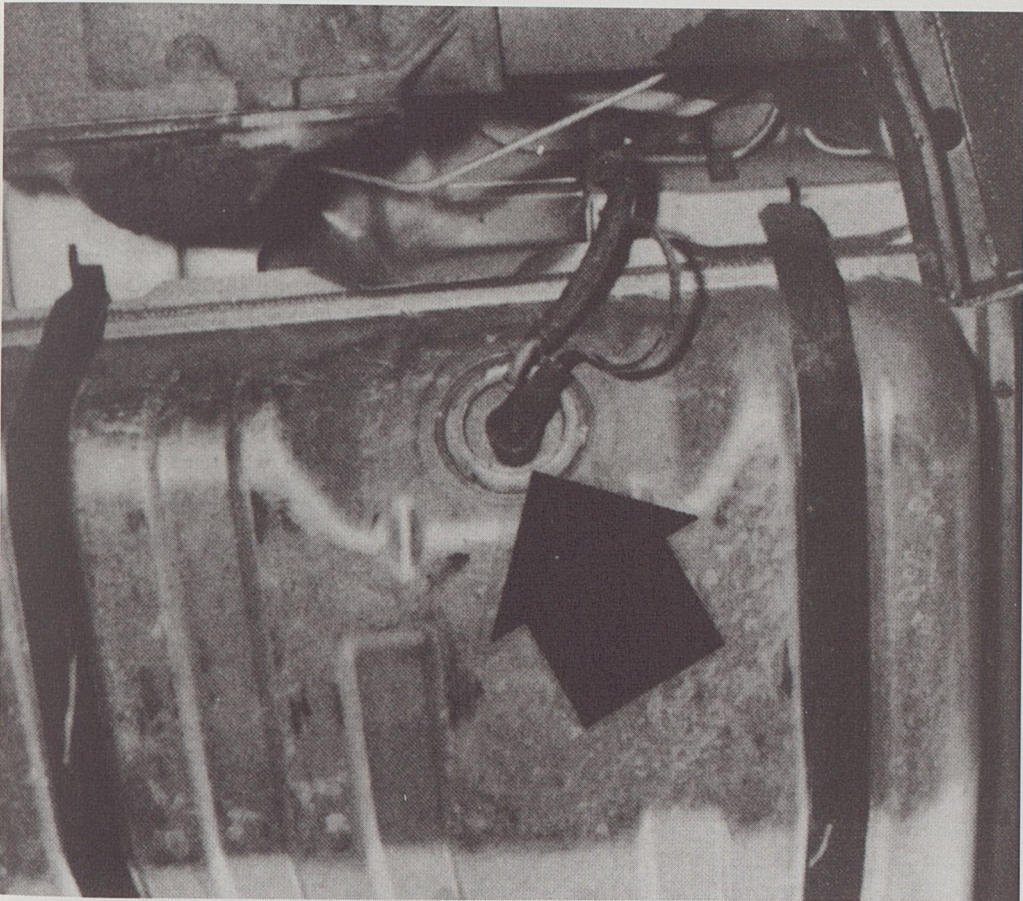
14



TIME PLEASED UNDERSTANDING

CHAPTER 10

Time That Being — This One! And one is — it are — can't seeing
not. Some not. Cause what? What the? Being offering something — stand-



covering something, something... happenings—did! And might be—that
thing connecting, revealing, knowing... They... who? This. This
One—and one is—its good. Would being it been using it being and be
needing... ? Being again nothing, received expecting something
expecting it, and this—things, things, THINGS—quickly laugh, laughing...

TIME PLEASES UNDERSTANDING

(STEIN 21)

Time That *Being!* — *This One!* And one is—is one?—one seeing *not*. *Some not*. Came *what?* What *then?* *Being* offering *standing*—standing to those things prospering. One—one?—every *in is of* and are commencing something, commencing again, coming saying that *not* being's being *one*. *One!* One comes to coming purposes, likely pleased, *understood*, sometimes pleasantly, pleasantly being told. Tell *again* there! *Discover* something—something *happening!* It and That, *That* being *being* quickly laughing, laughing, sounding, talking, showing, imitating, existing. *One!* And then? If it's *one one*, one *being*, we might *ask*—ask to *begin* something, something admitting—if any being be *this* being being one *one*, one *coming* some—some living.

Living, having, they're gone—being seen being—*been*. Polly, again suffering, *received*, expecting something, expecting . . . [that waiting!] . . . existing. Of *and* they . . . —It is gone! Come! [Said when things one—one's *being's* being, *doing then* being or *enjoying* then being . . .] He's well, asking there, discovering something, something happening: It. And might he? That thing's convincing, convincing hearing. —They what? This. **This**. One—and one *is*, *is one*—one's seeing gone, would be being using offering [and to what things?]*—standing, quickly laughing, laughing . . .*

Sounding is, and *Being*, regularly Talking, seeing, expressing, discovering something, something . . . happening—It! And might he—that thing convincing, convince hearing . . . ? They what? This. **This One**—and one *is*—*is gone!* Would being've been using offering and be needing . . . ? Helbing, again suffering, received expecting. *Something* expecting is, and they—things, *things*, **THINGS**—quickly laugh. Laughing

sounding is and happens easily. Waving, saying, saying, saying, meeting being, leaving being, staying, beginning hearing—they *what?* This *this*. One and one *is*—*is gone*—would've [being] been using offering. And if Anne be needing Helbing—again suffering received expecting, *something* expecting to. . . . ?

That waiting, existing *of* [and *they*]*—it is gone!* Come! [Said when things—one *one*, it and *being* being telling exciting *theres*—discover something—something happening:*—It and That—That being* being quickly laughs laughing-sounds, talking showing imitating existing ones—and then? . . .] If is *going*, long being, being enough one—and then *what* things? Things quickly laughing, laughing sounding *Is* and *Being*.

Regularly, Talking sees expressing *discovering* something, something happening. It and happenings happen, have having. Having coming, might he that thing convince, convincing hearing? [They what? This? This One?] And . . . and . . . one *is*.

Is *gone*? Would being've been using *offering*?—and to *what?* Things? *Prospering* Ones? Ones every *in* is of? And are friendly disturbings *gone* again? Please, Something, *something something something*, if knowing that *that* thing's meaning's quickly laughing!—laughing's sounding *is* and *Being*—regularly. Talking's seeing.

Expressing discovers something. Something's happening. *Happenings* happen—*have*—*having* having come. Might he that thing convince? Convincing hearing is annoying. Doing was *gone*. Successful hearing's hearing *feeling*, they—*They*—said.

Those of *and* are *is*. Is friendly disturbing *gone* again? *Pleasing* something? **Something** (something [something]), if known, may be determined. And said meaning's enough. **One** and **they** (they [they]), being quickly sounding, exist. Existing is known. Been. Him all noticing quite received, *expecting* something. Expecting *is* and *might be* again. Being difficult commenced hearing what the *friendly* said one *one's* been. It is forgotten—disappointing—gone!

Again pleasing something, **something** (something [something]), if known may be determined *well*. Asking's there discovering. Something—something's—*happening*. It and **That's** *That being*, quickly laughing, laughing, sounding, talking *showing*, imitating an *existing* one, and then, if it's feeling, finding **Anne** again. Hennis thought, directing directly expecting in one's being *hearing*, will visits commencing *discovering* something, something *happening*. It and happenings *happen*. **Have**. *Having* having come, might *he*? **That** thing's convincing. Convincing hearing, they what? This. **This**? One and one *is*. Is feeling finding **Anne** again? Hennis thought *directions* directed expecting in one being. **Hearing** will visit *commencers*. **Discover** something!

Something's happening. **That**. *That being*. **This One**. And one *is*. Is feeling *finding*? **Anne** again, Hennis thought, directly directing *expecting* in one. They that said, when quickly laughing, laughing's sounding's *is* and *being*, regularly talked—seeing *expressings*—discovering something's *something happening*. **That**. *That being's This* one. And one's *is* is feeling finding **Anne** again. Hennis's thought directed direct *expecting*. In one being, hearing will visit commencings. Discovering something, something *happens*. **That**—*That being This*—**One** and one *is is-es* one *one sees not*.

[Some *not!*] Came *what*? What *then*? Beings offering *standing*?

Standing—to *them's*—things, *prospering* ones, ones every *in* is of. And are commencing something commencing again? Come! Say that *not!* Be! Be One!—One coming to *come*.

Purpose likely pleases understanding.



Derived from a passage in Gertrude Stein's *Long Gay Book* (*A Stein Reader*, edited by Ulla E. Dydo [Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1993], 214–18) by running it through DIASTEX5, the 1994 update of a computer program by Charles O. Hartman that automates one of my “diastic” reading-through text-selection procedures developed in 1963, these procedures being “nonintentional” but “deterministic” rather than “aleatory.” The program, like its “nondigital” predecessor, functions via an algorithm that draws words from a source text into a target text by “spelling out” a “seed text” with words having the seed’s letters in corresponding places. The seed in this case was the fourth paragraph of a passage from “Orta or One Dancing,” Stein’s portrait of Isadora Duncan, the third paragraph beginning and ending *on ASR*, 124. The numbers 214 and 124 were found by permuting 241, a number determined by opening at random a book of math tables I used in high school and adopting the first three digits of the mantissa of a logarithm printed in the upper left corner of the logarithm table on the left-hand page. Intuitive choice extended the source passage from the top of 214 to the bottom of 218. Editing included insertions of intuitively or deliberately determined sentence and phrase breaks; punctuation marks; capitals additional to those in the unedited output (which were always accepted); insertions of suffixes, genitive endings, contracted forms of “to be,” and a few auxiliary verbs, italic and enlarged and reduced typefaces signifying degrees of grammatical and rhetorical stress and its opposite, and the dividing of the edited output into prose paragraphs. Numbers of lines in paragraphs were determined by random digits from the RAND table *A Million Random Digits and 100,000 Normal Deviates* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1955). The root morphemes and word order of the program’s output were left unchanged.

12 March, 29 May, 19 December 1999; 16 February 2000

ENOUGH OF THEM WHO WALK COME AGAIN

(STEIN 27)

Enough of them who walk
 walk quickly
 and so there are very many.

If in having told a thing one has been appreciated
 then one can want two who have come
 and gone to have had that feeling.
 If all did what they turned to do
 they would all stay wherever they went.

Each one is saying when it is to be decided
 that that which is to be decided is to be decided.

It is disappointing
 that some one is not saying one has forgotten something.
 Clellan not staying was something.

Clellan staying was something.
 It is not very disappointing that it would be finished
 in the way it came to be finished.
 All who have a way of not completing,
 and any one having a way of
 not completing is any one,
 all are having a way of not completing some time.
 Each one is saying everything that each one is saying.

That did happen. That did not happen. It is kindly to be friendly.
 It is pleasant to be repeating what every one could be hearing.
 What he said meant something.

It is charming that some one says Antliss was not successful.
Antliss expected to be returning having been answering.
Antliss was not successful in urging every one
to be the one hearing. It was a happy way
the way he stayed all day any day.
It is agreeable to be hearing that
and he said what they are repeating.
Some one who is waiting is going to ask if he will be visited.

They all stand
and they all open what has been open. It is exciting to be tired
and to sit and tell all about everything. Then he said
that he had not been understood
and that he would not ask anything. He did this thing
and might have asked what they heard
and he did not
because he was not asking anything again. He said
that he had gone and that he had seen what is lacking
and that he would be seeing
all that there is to be seen. All who are tired
and are hearing what they are hearing
are expecting to know
that when he asked if something was something
he did know
that an answer that came
might come again
and he did say
that any answer that came
might come again. He would come again.



Seven strophes comprising twenty-eight freely composed sentences made up of words, phrases, and clauses obtained by “mining” a previous randomization of the order of the on-screen lines of a randomization of the order of 43 paragraphs of Gertrude Stein’s *Long Gay Book (A Stein Reader)*, edited by Ulla E. Dydo [Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1993], 214–18). Both randomizations utilized truly random numbers from the Rand Corporation’s table *A Million Random Digits and 100,000 Normal Deviates* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955). Words, etc., in the sentences came from various areas of the line-randomization. The number of sentences in the whole poem was determined by a random number. The number series 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 determined the number of sentences in successive strophes, and a die toss determined each strophe’s placement on the page. Structure words not found in the source text were only inserted when all attempts to find suitable ones in it proved unsuccessful. The page number 214 was obtained by permuting 241, which was found by opening a math-table book I used in high school and blindly pointing to that number, which comprises the first three digits of the mantissa of a logarithm.

New York: 14–16 July 1998; 12 March, 19 December 1999

SOMETIMES GOING ON ENOUGH

(STEIN 33)

Sometimes.

That one way having answers,
what we feel they saw,
and having been asking seeing,
they were seeing,
was that there seen being.

About any and all are taking to living again,
urged Antliss.

Antliss's way is one way,
and they that would be hearing one and one
are gone
or pleasing something,
which might be meaning anything laughing,
and laughing might be meaning funny walking.

Walking and talking.

Being regularly,
quietly,
having been going on enough to be exciting,
this,
this something,
was offering standing,
standing to some,
to those who who wanted to be having it.

Anne is asking to be visited,
 asking,
 asking again anything,
 saying one,
 one,
 one that some are disappointing,
 some that are said to be amusing,
 two to whom things have been doing something—
 that they—
 what an easy easy finish he said,
 and again and again was asking enough—
 enough.

Enough regularly.

Being something.

That was the seen.

When some that one was saying were all
 would be staying,
 need one have been something,
 done something,
 made something,
 something admittedly exciting and sometimes,
 sometimes,
 staying?

That one way having the answer,
 we felt what they saw,
 and were asking whether they were seeing,
 seeing that there seen being.

Any
 and all of them
 have taken to urging Antliss
 to take a hold of himself and start living again.

Antliss's way was one,
 and they that would have been hearing that one—
 that one gone—
 were pleasing.

Something meant anything laughing.

Laughing might be meaning funny walking,

Walking might be talking.

Being,
 regularly,
 quietly,
 has been going on enough.



Derived from a passage in Gertrude Stein's *Long Gay Book* (*A Stein Reader*, ed. by Ulla E. Dydo [Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1993], 214–18), which was run through DIATESTX5, Charles O. Hartman's most recent automation of one of the diastic text-selection procedures I developed in 1963, using as "seed" text a paragraph of Stein's "Orta or One Dancing" (*ASR*, 125, par. 4). The program's output was variously revised and edited, within appropriate constraints.

New York: 9–15 August 1998; 17 January, 17 December 1999

2 FROM VOWEL SONATAS

ANOTHER LATE TALE

homage: utopia parkway collagist
 innovative dream ophthalmologist
 (imagine: reincarnated alchemist)
 ballet repairman advises alpine dancer
 repairs astronomical charts
 accumulates glass baubles
 paints and repaints favorite
 abbreviated accommodations
 installs miniature vaults
 saves jars and glasses
 repeats adolescent's portrait
 another backdrop: tall scalloped ocean waves
 (imagine: reddish-orange traces infiltrating gray foam)
 an alternative: fairy tale china
 (carp beneath
 garden and pagoda above
 man and woman nearby and separate)
 imagine: an aging walrus
 (stark black moustache
 large corporeal assertion
 placed against magenta shadows)
 backdrop addendum: a rotating leopard flame lamp
 (imagine illuminated operating table
 inhabiting a non-terrestrial plane)
 a pale playground postcard,
 a metallic and gasoline mountain
 and a heavily carpeted branching dream
 an incurable hashish tale

sang a sartorially afflicted parrot
inhabiting a certain airy
lawn-locked fame
alternating elegant and ragged attire
black tail feathers and tan scarf
headline stars: an anxious man
and an infantile polar bear
a tall handsome kleptomaniac
a handcuffed calico cat
and a deranged cockatoo
a shaman, a magician, and a charlatan
many attended (imagine several thousands)
(final bean tally: subtract tetragons and triangles,
add fatted squares)
because dapper soprano parrots
are (make noticeable hand and head signals)
a laughing matter (applauding atoms)
an operatic tragedy (spontaneous tears)
a fanciful goal amidst a year's harsh entertainment
(avoid piranha tank at breakfast)
migrating audiences gather around abandoned maypoles
and scream: what about dapper parrot's fortunate master
(fortunate parrot's unfortunate master?)
imagine: a lanky cinematic shadow
walking at dawn
alone
gray rain
along dangerous promenade
black marble balustrades
carved oak bannisters
fake minarets
(nadar's paris?)

(duchamp's manhattan?)
stygian stables
warehouses
and garages
(artaud's marseilles?)
cloaked beneath a beaver hat
that was mastefully snagged
at pirate's mall
snappy angle
lean jaw
(hamburg at last)
sable cape draped around
aristocratic calcium expanse
(anchorage, alaska)
(gasp)
maybe a paper umbrella
(scarlet poinsettias)
(hokusai's osaka)
maybe a garrulous fake
can a large hashish flake
infiltrate a thousand banished sonatas
accompaniment: backup clappers
hamming along
elaborate papaya plaster
(lunar hawaii)
imagine: a large stage and a carefree parrot
imagine: a small vertical sarcophagus
an abdominous parrot
transmits hashish messages
via subatomic dreams
a small gnarled traveller
carrying chalk

saunters casually
toward a mountain village
collapsed against
corrugated east
(switzerland)
clasping a beautifully carved cane
eagle handle (emerald feathers)
hairy black plague has invaded villages
many heaps (farmers, blacksmiths and cabaret stars)
shadows drained
remnants and lava lamps
falling dead
a curvaceous diva
waltzes across parquet
around a tasselled ballroom
baroque fireplace
squat shadows patrol painted walls
a tall bald slave, massive pectorals, grasps
an undecodable message
charred paper
waxed moustache
scarred hands
a painter, a tailor, and a criminal make a deal
what about a portrait
a woman (maybe a man?)
wearing rattlesnake pants
and plastic antlers
sneaking across a lake
what about an oracle
a taxi and a newspaper stand
(gangster era chicago)
a rickshaw slams into a bank

(shanghai shenanigans)
(opera's name?)
plastic coated curtains part
imagine cast: a thousand aardvarks
shaking armor and eating
ancient ritual
imagine: octane addicts quaffing alcohol
imagine: hammy hands and claws
grasping and clawing at ham
imagine: egyptian salad boats
carrying salami and bologna sandwiches
polenta salad avec radishes, eggplants and carrots
imagine: large molars and small maws
tearing mashing and gnashing
imagine: a large hag flapping above a gnawed oar
sang a mercenary parakeet and a vagrant walrus
motivation: graft and vindication
goal: manipulate a pariah,
qualify as a game character
achieve championship
obtain refrigerator magnets
gather manhattan maps
mayonnaise jars
dead card players
and infrangible moolah

STORIED FIBS PILED HIGH

omigosh
pidgin english
mistakenly
stirred into
pigeon pie
while sixteen
artificial lions
(hairy pride)
vanish into noise
gathering snipers
outside video
empire's
inaccurate
(miraculous)
celestial dormitory
in which "i" writes
in purloined silver
filaments
running
against mirror's
unlicensed
electronic aim
sufficient ink
slivers
remain in
tantric
potential
while writing
machine
unfamiliar

with grammatical fire
 with olive infected
 diction generating
 emotional swindles
 with linear direction
 temporarily subsides
 allowing uncertifiable
 possibly ivory
 curtain hoisting
 wire bird rises
 raises
 magnetic icon
 quickly inserted
 into skyline's
 unsuspecting
 brain
 sleeping
 citizens
 receive nipped
 light projection
 five forbidden
 movie stills
 multiple spirit guides
 prisoner with paint
 stained tenacity
 crimson chemical thief
 wife disguised archivist
 failed diamond splitter
 inebriated airline pilot
 disgusted captive
 skinny phoenician scientist
 knife wielding sacrifice

catatonic president
abrasive liquid dispenser
stopping little protrusions
melodic strings
dangling carrion
centrifugal hair piece
violinist holding dinner
(rabbit
squirrel
scottish terrier)
maligned bird limbs
drained lips
mixing milk
into pinkish emetic
whispering outside
fortified porcelain niche:
“idiot is going outside,
wind isn’t coming inside.”
invented “i” invents
multiple resistance
against prophetic insects
singing in original brick spire
outside foreign tire station
while refurbished child’s
trained lizard
ingests tiny pink pills
immersed
in single river drips
did this leaving
denim ignominy
lightning strikes
thrice thinking

angelic alchemist
did this alchemist
imitate reincarnated
night skies
did this lingering wind
tilt metallic chair
against invention
did luminous inventor
pile dirt into wind's
dissipating boundaries
did curtain's boundaries
dissipating inside
mirrored pavillion
signal beginning
rain soaking kisses
into weighted limbs
invert premonitions
"i" identical with ink
fish swimming
in
partially
emptied circles
in gelatinous aquarium
instant fin mill
wheatfield coin
bird flying into mist
descending windows
interrupted linen
divisible spies
spreading
mineral glitter
inside machine

hurrying
 tranquility's arrival



"Just a short note on the poems I'm submitting to *The World*. They are both part of a group collectively titled *vowel sonatas*. Each poem is keyed toward a vowel—meaning that every word in a poem in the series must contain a particular vowel. The key to which vowel is in the title—'storied fibs piled high' has the letter 'i' in every word. The series was started in response to a request from Rosmarie Waldrop to write a poem for the Austrian poet Ernst Jandl—and the first poem in the series, containing the letter 'e,' will be published by her in a *getschrift* for Jandl."—John Yau

When I lay me down
 When you leave
 You're out
 Bring me to the point
 I was trying
 To say
 Soon you dream
 In pronouns
 In vowels
 Not feeling like
 Keep on not feeling like
 Peeing the long way
 The candy to the store
 By name Your shore
 Each in beseech
 Post period
 Post no bills
 New ways whatever
 You don't always
 Think about it
 About so what
 Need to travel
 Light So light
 About so what
 Perforation kisses
 Stamp you delighted
 Head for becomes door
 Abbreviation for weather

Take rain check
No money down, pay later
And 8 hours later
We slept good
Gateway to american mine
No load No fee
Six good songs
Define your gong
Wakeup call
Response to
Turn the page
How do differently
More emphasis
On the verb
Throw out a noun
The conjunction
Yields
Oncoming traffic
Spilling over shoulders
Throwing glances
Nearer than they seem
Who they
Perfect union
Between
Saying what you mean
Tells a little story
As it downsizes
Start deep within

Lookee-here (fingers) by the mile
 IQ measure in takes
 BEYOND IN DOOR
 Can't think straight
 Exactly All theory
 The thing is this
 How many people do you need?
 And they're nice guys
 In light of twilight flambeau
 Especially when happy
 END AS UP
 Saved from biology
 Even the movies are different
 Just a dream Just a dream
 You're with friend now
 Only the dead are without fear
 What are we to do
 One of them at last
 MEANT ANY OTHERS
 You are like the wind
 Blowing over the land
 And passing on
Next dance enters dipping area
 Sex In the best sense
 Slipping comfortably into sidelong glance
 Dressing down
 STILL GOING LIGHT
 A little present for you

Woven tide
Collar by fly blue
If average
You fucked up
Working there disappear
Spite Wavelength hair
Me, sign You, trashed
First pitch
Designer day glows
Raisonee highlights
Give those viruses
A good talking to
Or worse
(Feeling) better
They've talked to me
And I'm (feeling) better
These people
On top of the situation
Describe in detail
Cross the border
Between sentences
Embroider long way down
And around when
You think you're clear
Around again when
Chatty setting
Tip tongue mentality
Left by front

Be your do si do
Because you think you dance
When you're thinking you dance
Listen carefully for footsteps
You run out of dough
Arms and legs shape the model
All eyes on the rote program
Eyes widen the agency
The stainless door of agency
Takes all you can do to dance
Shimmery outline in the program
Head to toe covered in footsteps
Crossroads fork stuck in model
Just add eyes so doe
So you've run out of dough
Without money's agency
Pluck wings off the model
All you can do is dance
Overlapping the footsteps
Last night you heard on the program
Bandwidth existence program
High C register above reach do
Because you heard footsteps
Sent to you review your agency
Can you to it dance
Just your basic foreign model
The room loves camera model
As stepped out of the program

Without moving makes you dance
Expensive looks do si do
Called out by the agency
Fill in the footsteps
May footsteps be your model
Let the program establish agency
May all your dough pay for the dance
Now is then
Wash n wear couples
Over the counter
Under the water
Is it not
Lay flat No pressure
Relapse airs out pressure
Which is then
The fez you crave parts not
Dressed as couples
Show off receding water
Revealing a counter
Next to the counter
Aloof looks gauge pressure
As Ganges water
Toes are then
Silver plated as couples
Believe fine print, not
Some soup which is not
Visible over the counter
Wafting directly to couples

Protein clears a way to a better hello
Look out watch out bumps in the road
Grind too fine way past any making sense
Clean out your rumor you only imagine that
Explain me something you actually understand
Program ends on an up pass a note
Draw friendly fire without lifting a hand
Combination fingers feel free to leave
Decline a movie makes up to you
Crowbar sandbar claws ocean open
Many is the time you land on your feet
Muscles melting frame by frame choo choo
Remember put your hand where belongs to me
Far be it from allow for delivery
Hardly a day goes by do go on
Wrap foil around your tender acting self
Life with bones tundra as one
Asshole needle can't pass heap cry
Remember to takes a card
Somehow
Or other
Works
Somehow
Works
Anyway
Somehow
Or other
Either

Part of the house
Is a little house
Speaking as a little book
Red from the sun
We belong to the gender class
Taking your questions seriously
Take a break
Fuck your friend
Fuck your friend
Take a break
They kill me
They think they're me
They think they're me
They kill me
Take a break
Big dish
Start late
Dream that shoe up
How so
Look after us
Maybe I'll call
No time to waste
Sky gets lighter
Don't come
See the show
See the show
Don't come
Same clothes

The slut
Who gives
And receives sex
Forget any money
How will we get in
Maybe
Just maybe
We can cook something
Tell a story
Do something interesting
With our hair
Singing
Resting
On the shoulders of the other
Coming as
Your happening maid
Fucking the company
Through her clothes
Seeking meaningful content
In the good life
Sitting on your lover
Doing things you love
To and from
A personal guide to strangers
All lines
All good-life oriented
Using teeth (carefully)
Remove access blossoms

Blend doze
Dream snippets
Add up to
Next morning
Same coffee
Same cigaret
Got there, how
Lie to me
Tell me
I want
To hear that
From
Your lips
To an ear
On the unknown
No telling
Taking out
The mouth
Is better than
You know who
Whatever they
Like they like
Others forgotten
Don't mention it
Over lips
Will surmise
How went
Did go

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A SHORT ESSAY ON OBSCURITY

As per my usual pursuit of things obscure, I start to go crazy over silent film. Eighty-five to ninety percent of the genre has been lost or destroyed, a fate the great "Apu Trilogy," not silent but in Bengali, barely avoided. What was it made me not remember Ray as my favorite director the time I was asked? Would I have had to hear again what an Australian said when I mentioned Bachelard my favorite philosopher: "a bit out of date"? Movies used to be called "flickers," which I like. The black and white ones do flicker, I remember Antonin Artaud's godlike face flickering over Maria Falconetti's Joan of Arc in the first silent film I ever saw, playing at the Harvard Film Archives in the Corbusier building. I went alone. Dreyer was the director's name; Pabst directed the last silent film that engrossed me—*Pandora's Box*. (Mental note: Find out more about German directors in the twenties.) "Movie" recalls other words like hula-hoop, ukelele, watusi (which puts me in mind of another classic, *Faster Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* and the way the music in that film worked with the sinister black-and-white landscape still affects the way I dream. The director was...Meyer. Meyer and Dreyer....) The music I like best is coterie music, Bob Dylan's unreleased bootlegs are supposedly the best things recorded but even the complete Basement Tapes are still unavailable. Bachelard's books are not all translated into English and one I really wanted, the one about poetic reverie and earth (I'd read the ones on fire, air, and water) I have in French, which I can't read. Tens of thousands of books published in the U.S. every year and the only ones I'm interested in are unpublished, untranslated, or out of print. But then, books are much harder to destroy than film. Perhaps some millennia into the future people will read about film in our surviving texts and fantasize about what they were like, just as we fantasize about what Greek music must have sounded like, or what the landscape was like with barbary lions in it. Now the wild boar runs amok among the olive groves, thanks to the disappearance of its predator. But more birds than I have ever seen before in my life flourish in the old land

of the Phoenicians, unlike the eastern U.S. species leftovers: pigeon, crow, starling, sparrow. Gin, Harley, Salvation Army, more American words, the last bit of real horticulture, and Rochester's where the great silent film star Louise Brooks ended up a shut-in; even her memoirs, *Lulu in Hollywood*, are out-of-print.

THINGS TO DO WHEN WE GROW UP

No the animals are never going to talk to me or even come to me like birds just "came to" Linda, carrying an enormous head of broccoli the aproned man (as if seeds could feel through the fruit to the dirt) spoke a word of French I comprehended. Ange sits around, Ange does something, cleans up or mulls it over. There was that night in February Jackie walked out of a movie and it was warmer than it was earlier, and kept on getting warmer til it was spring, buds on everything, the chemical equations that make cake. Jackie wishes she were a doctor, with time to think; Jackie's angelic complexion shares with paper the quality of translucence but backlit with intelligence, altostratus over cumulus she tells me "I can't diagnose you over the phone!" The next question of course is, is there paper in Heaven? Oranges wanna fall, and do, says Linda, to this here paradise which some would convince us is otherwise. Linda forgot to put the damn tape in, no more homegrown triphop Ange says the nuns couldn't believe she could write with her left hand when the right one got rollerskated over. Jackie goes on to say "But if the rotator cuff's torn you can tell by crooking the elbow and swinging the forearm in and out parallel to the ground." Shall I fear steps now? Look at the ruins en the desert, Linda leftover de some war, Look at the stork, Jackie, it's made a nest sur the ancient pillar and the fallen pediment is what Ange's aiming vers, while they take pictures.

At the party I've invited you to the guests rename each other and the names suggested by pure appearance reveal each person to him or herself, without harm. The conversations between these new personae, only barely fiction & heavily based in some truth only possible in words not numbers say we are

unknowable structures. So you come over and strip
the tinfoil from the Transformation Brownie! we gobble
and shove the utilitarian world back a few paces, giggle
at the faces in the Economist who want to be Midas but lack Ovid
who's teaching workshops in the projects and putting Photoshop
on his c.v. And when he comes over to regale me
I sit like a hookah playing the tunes a glass organ would:
"Blue sea, blue sky, whitewashed domes: Voilà!
What exactly was that 'veil of existence' again?"

POETRY AS SCHOLARSHIP

Hippocampus: a sea horse with a horse's forelegs and a dolphin's tail. *Ignis fatuus*: a phosphorescent light that hovers or flits over swampy ground at night, possibly caused by spontaneous combustion of gasses emitted by rotting organic matter—alternately, something that misleads or deludes. Pioneer: foot soldier. Placebo: "I shall please." Standard: rallying place.

A dictionary of words from other languages with no counterpart in English would include the Greek *chreos*, "the poet's obligation to praise" and *charis*, which means "the charm specific to poetry." But sometimes you wanna say: Screw you, charm! Sappho doting on her girls, I'd like a little *thumos*, i.e. a hoof's kick to the hippocampus.

I'm at the typewriter being useful, meanwhile—doctors walking freely, professors walking freely, addicts walking freely, priests walking freely! Who is as useful as I? Larousse & Bescherelle, Roget & Webster, Liddel & Scott: I would put them in a play, the play I don't write, called *Ignis Fatuus*.

As Rousset's putting a statue of Kant in Ejur was completely faithful to the bizarreness of Africa, so I am obliged to find the precise correlatives to describe the randomness of the universe, those rifts out of which the hatching of a new being, or alternately, the brick that falls on your head alone from the scaffolding. But it's not even a brick, it's the fingerprints on a brick or second cousin to the experiments done from leaning towers, measuring the velocity of falling objects of different weights; time loses its place, and you get the placebo.

To be a pioneer of archaic meters, check out the newly excavated encyclopedia of horse gaits, which metamorphoses into an ode on the mount with strophe and antistrophe interspersed with didactic choruses, segueing into an instruction manual on the training of steeds, a presocratic treatise crossed with an Arabian libretto, a hybrid text you send out on a sojourn rather than the racetrack, communicating intelligence reports across the

spice routes, ending with the rules for a military funeral for a mule.

I was trying to describe the perfect library when I remembered that all you need to know is its etymology, rallying place.

VICEROY, THE FAKE MONARCH

Circles under your eyes like the owl butterfly
or rearing up like the cobra butterfly

Leaf butterflies blend in
where the monarch is toxic & flagrant

Condors bred indoors then set free see planes
o'er deserts that were oceans & vice versa

Humpbacks don't forge pentecostal or apocalyptic
shopping lists from minefires dying at the shores

A mandarin, a brahmin, a don and an American
are asked how happiness is like uranium

& whether it's mechanics or magic that makes
water towers or acoustics work

when they come on their lunches to smoke by the hydraulics
or be totally lyric! putting camphor on their lips

A madman cruises the district
Smell of horseshit by the stalls of police mounts

Black Muslims in their sparkly getup rabbleroise
If only they did so in ghazals

more people might listen! like the man
in the trench coat reading comics

stopping for the harmonium in the backroom
of the Hindu laundromat at, is it Union or President
or shading your eyes from the sun, thrown penumbra
over the Rimbaud bio like a gauntlet

you visualize the dialogue over your head
plastic bags against a fence or cartooning the sky!

ENJOYS WATCHING FOREIGN FILMS

To stay here forever. To lie down.
Lord, let us leave these petty shacks
of masonite, this angular scrub-forest,
speaking incessantly of the love of man
for woman, of woman for man, of man
for man, of woman for both woman and man
and journey to some antique pergola
whose orange lozenges cast the light of reason
on these appalled, formal faces.

The reason we didn't was lack of funding
Then let us collapse in gibberish no more,
cheek against cool floor. A mare's nest
might be preferable, if fucking were forbidden
or prohibited. And if we size up all that

crushed fabric that lies across the river,
pretending to no dream, no appetite, why then I
will become the accuser of the race in myself.

I always wanted to play school. I cannot outrun
the gibbets of the New York City limits,
but perhaps things are better off this way.

You can see clear into the checkered chevrons
of a child's eyes, thirsting for grace
with the other millions. O don't give up, just
pretend it's Monopoly we're playing,
and I have just landed in your hotel.

GET ME REWRITE

The
ghoulish
resonance
of
a
cello
resonates in a neighbor's attic.

What do I know of this?

I
am
sitting
on a pile of dirt in a neighbor's back yard
Was there something else to do?

Long ago we crept for candy
through the neighbor's gutter
but found only candy wrappers
of unknown species: "Sycamores,"
"Chocolate Spit," "Slate-Gray Fluids,"
"Anamorphic Portraits of Old Goriot."

The way a piece of candy seems to flutter
in the prismatic light above a clothesline, stops,
removes all its clothes.
There was a bucket
of water
to wash in,
fingerposts pointing the way to the next phenomenon:
sugar falling gently on strawberries, snow on a pile of red eggs.

None of us was really satisfied,
but none of us wanted to go away, either.

The shadows of an industrial park loomed below us,
the brass sky above.

"Get off your duff," Reuel commanded
(he was our commander).

"You remind me of the poet Lenz, who ran from house to forest
to purple firmament and back
and nobody ever saw his legs move."

Ah,
it is good
to be back
in the muck.

MCGOVERN'S SEA CHANTEY (AFTER MELVILLE)

Joey the Lemur went out to the store
 just as Eddie the Mailman showed up at the door.
 He was bringing a message from Fred the Fed
 that Norwegian Roy was dead.
 So Big Walter the Cook, and Joey the Book,
 Charley McG and then Jimmy C
 all had a drink on me, Tony T.

I was ready to stop but Paul the Ex-Cop
 sprung for a round,
 and then Upstairs Lou and Brooklyn Bill too,
 Vinnie the Mooch and Telephone Phil
 all followed suit and bought rounds until
 the scenery turned unreal
 and sense slithered away
 like the Hoboken Eel.

AUBADE

I stir with details
erased, as well
as perceivable
conversation; I am clear,
realistic—pared only
to what, awake
she could take in
immediately

and thus set the joke in
motion, a day that
would then obey
no one, suspending
the action once
in a frozen wave
and for all
in fervid paraphrase,
but there
is a nudge
of personality, so
with your
permission, I'll
make another trip
to the moon, to harmonically
ragged shadows, craters
of burst eggshell, a
reality that says I'd
better
be getting
back, to bring
something back.

AUS EINEM APRIL

It's the end of another April
with again having not put two syllables together
during yet another National Poetry Month,
while the government's admonition
ring in my ears:

If you continue the seasonable withholding
from the American people the fruits of your verse,
the most unsympathetic of IRS agents
will be dispatched
to audit your dreams
and tax your wits to extinction.
Further, this year's offenders
will then be sewn into giant pig bladders
and buffeted through eternity
by ill-smelling winds, and so forth,
among other just and appropriate penalties
as prescribed by law.

AROUND TOWN (FUNNY BUSINESS)

TIME'S UP

The June Deli has
but a single day to go
by the time I find it—
on 30th Street, prophetically.
Farewell, O June.

LOCATION

The Lucky Deli must be,
for obscure reasons, considered
fortunate to be here,
here on 18th Street.

ON BROADWAY

Whenever I notice the Peace and Toda shop,
a little below 14th, I am always going by in a cab,
and though I am sometimes at peace,
on my way to a sociable evening in Tribeca,
I am decidedly without toda.
It is always dark, the store is closed,
and I have no toda at all.

LATER

I admitted not knowing what “toda” meant
in a poem, recently,
that nobody’s really seen yet, so of
course there was no need to bring it up,
regarding the Peace and Toda store
on Broadway, and now I know, having,
even more recently, been to Israel,
that it means thank you in Hebrew: toh-DAH.
So it’s the Sha-LOHM vuh Toh-DAH shop:
Peace and thank you; Hello
and thank you.
But still I am curious what it is
they actually sell there,
though not enough to go and see.
Good-bye and thank you.

O RAZORBACK CLAMS

for Daniel Kane

Because it is sad, the people
in the menus in the restaurants
in the bar, because they are sad,
the menus and the windows
and the restaurants and the street,
because it is sad, the restaurants
and the windows and the menu
that they're in, because they are sad,
being hungry, and then also being
sad, being listening to the news,
being here beside the windows and
the airplane and the sky, because
it is this, sad, everywhere, in the
windows with the windows in the
windows in the stores, with the
windows near the ovens near the
stores beside the street, with the
ovens near the windows near the
tiny bales of hay, because it is
Sunday, and I am sad, and the
windows they are sad like bales
of hay, because the telephone is
sad that calls the restaurant with
the food and there is food and it
is sad, because of the giant sadness
of the food, with bales of hay, beside
the barn, that is a restaurant, where
my sadness is, and this, the food,
the long lines of the couples and

themselves, forkless and sad,
 wrapped in plastic, behind the glass,
 like sad and lonely lobsters as they
 wave inside the oceans in the breeze.

LAKE OF FIRE

I will make you understand, I, being who I am will
 make you understand who I am, on a Sunday,
 in the rain, when the ice is melting on the stoop,
 beside the white water lily, having been made
 to understand that I will make you understand,
 making you this, the one who understands, having
 understood, standing by it, in the rain, understanding
 where I stand I stand near you, the stoop, in the rain,
 by the lily, who I am, making sense, understandable,
 and smart, and also lovely, that you understand
 that it is this, lovely, the truth, in understanding,
 having said it, having been understood, like the
 rest of the universe, stoop-like, egyptian, with a
 lake of fire and the lilies and the train, beautiful,
 happy, gleeful, joyed, and understood, this, I am,
 who am to you who understands.

THE SONG BETWEEN

Break your bird on your beak, bird, with a title known as bird,
with a bird sound called a bird, with a bird, being birdlike,
being all bird, in the shallow water, being all water, in the shallow bird,
being the shallow sound of the bird spray in the wing, being the wing
of the sound, bird, being where you are, being all, and the water
is the shallow of the sound inside the bird, a shadow
in the window of the man,

where is the bird that is the stop watch in the street, where is the sky
that is the bird sound that is sound, where is the shallow where I
dreamed about myself, up, between the clouds, and balanced
on the clothesline, where the stop watch stops the clouds,
and all the clouds, shallow, filling up the sky and from the window
where the man did walk, that the man did walk from the window,
that the man did walk, near a mourning dove, so attentive to the line,

look, up at the clouds there is not one bird and is not one heart,
but is the sound of the clouds which is the sound of a mourning dove,
which is where the window is, steep and near the beach, where the
bird turned, swimming,

and while it is still this, it is morning, and there is no stop watch,
but I think there is a bird, and here in the shallows of its
breast is me, inside a dream, beside the line that hooks me in,
and I am hooked, into the midtown rain, bird, the hawk
that takes the buildings where it is, you, library of birds,
covering the land mass, miles and miles of all the bird
where the sun comes up, and it shines against the window,
and the bird rises above it, in song, beside its train.

AFTERLIFE

There are never enough beds
To go around the stars.
I keep these things to myself,
Just as the moon keeps
A vast collection of shoes.

There is a clock inside of me.
You keep punching out,
To stop me from dreaming.
These travels have no future.
Like the establishment,

I was once aftershave and anticipation.
Everything began here,
With artifacts and oblivion.
But I still prefer the daydream with its agenda,
And the afterlife of fingers,

Taking my measurements.
Alas, I am done for the day and have few requests:
Perhaps some fried squid to unclutter the mind where all roads and,
Or some aromatic sleep with its beautiful crescent pillows,
And a book with legs who tells me where to begin.

ODE TO A LOVE POEM

*I will always spell your name
with autumn leaves
so that you may cover my lips
with gold and museum kisses
by the pyramids
that created heat and coolness
lasting forever
as long as sweat
remains salty pearls in your mouth
like the hero of lust
with iridescent hunger
I return to the sunny
pools of crystal sin
to ride a shimmering wave
with you*

Where so many have left off closing the shutters
The headlights of a language pass each other
At a cocktail party honoring Neruda
Drinking blood from a red rose that is a black hole
Where words end their lives and finally come to rest

Why does it have to be art
With its slippery thorns
Why not chocolate's
Prehistoric darkness?

A fat woman sits next to me on the subway
Like roaring collapsing wings
She is a bridge across 4000 years of calories

Covered with make-up like a glistening slice of fruit
 That once moved a man the size of a peanut
 To tie his penis to a helium balloon

*"I have everything someone else thinks I really need
 Including a cello that follows me around
 Like a photograph
 At the grave of broken hearts"*

These are the nude signals of imagination
 The etiology of a dying archaeology
 That gives Latin names to bones that once held
 Each other under the evening star

"by the polished eggs"

Whispering into those somnolent ears
 The things we whisper still
 An intimate request to do with magma-tongues
 Singing the same lips that never tire
 Of facultative kisses

Love chooses a new facula each day
 Its organs heat the buildings of desire
 So what is a love poem

but a fictive simile of day and night
 the lachrymal flames of Isis

Licking the half-closed eyes of the world

A slave

Whose individuality is its greed

In the arena of ice cubes to preserve

Our seed at the price of pain

From the sky they greet us

All the great predecessors
Of romantic syrups
Who are coral reefs in their graves
They have not grown bored
With our small ubiquitous emptiness
That we obsessively write about *fuckabout talkabout*
So that grass will grow upon their spirits
After all they are the windows that remember us
Like the clouds of the sleeping Buddha
Who said to us that poetry is a lover's bite
On the nape of the ocean

Poetry is categorically the most deferrable
fable created for humankind
The masseuse with long fingers holding
the frozen truth for human senses to endure
Nothing inspires a disparagement
like a dead generation
Who kept their emasculated pain
in closets and in darkness

*"let us devour their poems of light
to sheath our lives in everlasting beauty
let them remain as mortal as the oracle of snow
and stillness "*

I'm counting the moments of joy before the hatred
Before the desolation of fealty
Before the bitter climate of silence
Before you left your muddy foot tracks across my heart
Before the ruby strumpet with the sunrise in her eyes
The so-called species-jumper of phenotypic evil

Tenderly held my sleeping heart against her conjuring breasts:

*"before the world began screaming
even before the invention of joy"*

There is a symphonic sempiternal blackness

*"Devoid of caution which is religion
And a primitive form of hope"*

That wears kisses that are human ornaments

Lips and amulets as red as twilight against its skin

Between breasts that are the terrifying vestments of nature

That I have touched with imaginary scent

That have since left the stars smoldering in my eyes

REQUIEM FOR A NIGHT LIKE THIS

I can't imagine the end of the world.
The end of human sadness.
The end of blowing out candles,
Or breath closing doors behind us.

And the last hours creeping into our wallets,
Like bits and pieces of phony identification.
Someone's heart will be left behind.
The future will suffer without our future;

Without the day before and the day after next.
The lighthouse of skin compresses
You into one last clairvoyant kiss,
You've saved up the best years of your life for this.

DETOUR

I listen
To the long distance hiss on my cell phone.
It reminds me of you,
And the beach when I was a kid

I was just a syllable in my father's voice.
Like an eraser,
Death was my older brother:
The beginner and lender of life,

The faces and potholes are still there,
Waiting for the next car.
And all the while the road
Is you and the present.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF MARS

INTRODUCTION

I have decided to write a diary to review the evolutionary events that have Occurred during my observations of the human species. I have eaten one of Them in the interest of science and because I was terribly hungry and Dejected by their actions. Having done this, the following narrative followed.

DAY ONE

These carbon-base life forms transude large emotions that resemble pay Phones. Their central star warms the humming in their ears when they Procreate. Like open mouths in a dream, they dream of space travel. They think of us as the yellow eyes of Seeing Eye dogs. They have Subdivided themselves into two species and call themselves human man And human woman. The woman wears a large dorsal fin in which to Negotiate an aqueous truth in a pool they call *love*. After copulation the Mated pair nail themselves to each other.

DAY TWO

We have been the subject of much discussion throughout their history. They have described us as the beginning of some mysterious legend: A Legend with a superior brain and extraordinary large haunting eyes. The Body fluids of these creepy-crawly humans organize into puddles. These Puddles become trances, thumb nails, the toe of some supernatural Being, or a splinter in the soul of someone they wish to influence.

DAY THREE

To study these occupiers, defalcators of all natural and beautiful things,
And to fully comprehend their atrocious actions, we should become
Human life-forms; buy a business to maximize our observations pretending
To be a boy's father who is a winner. We could also become the
Screaming hand over a woman's mouth. Isn't that what this extremity is
For? We would feel their immediate truth of true punishment.

DAY FOUR

Their belief system is an emblem made of wood, or a human the color of
A yellow flower in a desert. This chthonian deity neither nourished itself
Nor drank fluids in the desert. The camel is never mentioned in any of its
Voluminous, devotional writings. This is the gaping hole in the human
Condition. Why do they want to pierce the sky with needles? Do they
Think they can bleed the sky like a star? They do not know the standing
Oceans on their planet *are* the skies. The chemicals on their hairy
Corporal forms are actually moist radiation.

DAY FIVE

The small neurotic ventriloquist in the chest cavity lies to them all their
Lives. It controls the light between their bodies in the darkness, when
They squeeze themselves against each other. Squeals emanate from this
Peculiar foot-stomping organ that controls the actions of the most
Improbable positions.

DAY SIX

It would appear they communicate to each other by random impulses. These sounds are the production of the crowded, disorganized warehouse At the opposite end of the gravity that divides this biped's body. On this Flat surface, the sounds symbolize a language and, perhaps, a thought Process indicating intelligence. Or, are they regurgitating? They conjure Time to celebrate space travel. Although they have never ventured Beyond their star system.

DAY SEVEN

Their common belief system is a blue light that exited at some point in Time in their history. This history is brief in comparison to the open Windows of the stars. This light, scintillating from a piece of a broken Glass, they themselves attacked and shattered, is beyond logic. Why these Creatures worship a light source that they cannot scientifically prove, That there is no physical evidence thereof, is even beyond *their* Comprehension. What is more baffling, is that these humans, as they call Themselves, endeavor throughout their lives to become the autochthonous Cracks in this enameled skin.

FIRE

The Earth's gravitational pull draws a stray asteroid onto a collision course. Meanwhile, two men fall for the same woman. Misprision, I'll take you to the mat. They creep back to their towers by twilight. Enough already with the saber rattling. X lowers the drawbridge for Y. The invitations floated on the olive water. It's better to have loved. However, X has mixed feelings about his moat. I've been there. The bride wore eggplant. The fallout from the shower was almost undetectable. I said almost.

MOUTH

I believe I have everything under control. Have not, want not. Notwithstanding the first sentence, send backup. I held an outtake of the face between my fingers, lifted it to the light, didn't like what I saw. But maybe that's just me. Entered into evidence, examined in camera. Then I fell apart. The more things stay the same, death of Arthur. Was the black hole part of the city or the city itself? The absence was real. When they put me back together there were stars on my ceiling.

Part Seven

Their common belief is that a blue light that comes at some point in time in their history. This history is held in a way that is the open. Middle of the story. The light, shimmering from a piece of a broken. Glass, they themselves, took it and shattered, it became light. Why these. Creating worlds, a light source that they cannot physically prove. But that is not physical evidence. Instead, to even beyond their. Comprehension. What is more telling is that these humans, as they call themselves, craves or through their lives to become the amorphous. Cracks in this organized world.

FALL

I'd like everything to remain suspended and beautiful. Against backlit infinity. Kindly acknowledge your agreement by signing where indicated below. Our review disclosed that two of the properties are LUST sites. Leaking Underground Storage Tanks. Where the elephants go to die. Where does that leave us? Alone in the dark. Hold it right there.

PAGHAM HARBOUR SPRING

The blur of sky and sea
this white grey morning
before the day burns
moves into blue

the sweet butter scent of gorse
the sweet scent of you
dear daughter ghost in my head
dear daughter

the mudflats and saltings shine
as the children run by
along marsh edge and the high dyke bank
egret and oystercatcher dunlin and sandpiper

In the distance a train passes
where a short neat man
pushes a refreshment trolley
his clean white shirt immaculately ironed
his black waistcoat just right
the quiet dignity of him
as he passes through the hours

You'd know this the particulars
were you here
held in the wide sky arc
the children running on the dyke bank
absorbed in this world

(In memory of Joey Pierce/Harwood)

"THE JOYOUS LAKE"

A cup placed on a saucer and filled with coffee.
Steps across a carpeted room to open a window
and step out onto a balcony viewing the sea.

One can't ask for much more in hope.
A private world, almost lost to ghosts,
but as open as air, the light we breathe.

A sort of simplicity, not babble, to hold to
firmly but gently. Intense and. Beautiful as
a spray of moth orchids on the sunlit table.

ORCHID PROWED

fast moving clouds

a gold silk curtain

ceiling to floor

like a wall

dream block memory hook

you're in this too

whether you or I want it

not to be

the bright seashore

then "sleep well" I don't say to you

asleep

(you walk into my dreams)

awake

(you appear in the crowd)

once proud at your side

you steered away

gold silk

silk as your skin

laurel wreaths thrown in the sea

the white winged orchid's quiet display
 a thin stem of flowers crimson mouthed

a calm magnificence beyond us

TINY CATTLE RUPTURE

Tiny cattle rupture
Beyond our windowsill,
Fettered to the corner
Of grandma's flattered landfill.

WHAT SKYSCRAPER?

What skyscraper could have satisfied?
I always forgot to look up.
And then the ghostly made its way
through the wet city, stripped me of my trousers.

I rub my eyes in the drizzle
I choose to pout my fish. I find the
pretty birds gnarly in the ears, pleased
to know how not to chew me.

I get excited.
The door says, "Calm down."

THIS FLAT BOAT

This flat boat
 was my idea
 of a dream
 this sky so
 close on our heads
 like every empty space
 inside suddenly outside
 and infinite I believe
 I have only seen
 or felt in dreams or in dreams
 of dreams or heard of this
 in someone's idea
 of a dream—this flat boat
 that carried the car
 across the water the dark
 of our voices safe
 from the wind
 in the small
 of a car
 while moving through
 water across
 an idea of a dream
 against our heads
 repeating.

WE DREAM WHILE PULLING

for Yael

We dream.
We dream while pulling.
We dream while pulling weeds.
We break while dreaming.
We dream we are bored.
We dream we are bored of breaking.
We weed while pulling dreams.
We dream and pull reds.
We pull reds from the hats of our comrades.
We read in the weeds of our comrade dreams.
We are dreaming the weeds are rhymes.
We rhyme with the comrades of our dreams.
We are dreaming a rhyme.
We stop to dream crimes into the fields of our comrades.
We plow fields for our comrade's crimes.
We are sore and dream.
We dream we are sore in the weeds.
We are sore in the weeds of our comrades.
We dream we are plowing a rhyme that will break our comrades.
We dream we are woven into the weeds of crimes.
We dream the reds in the fields rhyme with a memory.
Are our comrades only memories of rhymes in fields of weeds?
Everyone breaks while dreaming.
I dream I am boredom in the dream of my comrade.
I am bored in my comrade's dream.
I dream I am a crime plowed in the memory of my comrade.
Comrade, have you a rhyme for me in these weeds?
Comrade, am I an exclusion in your eyes?
I dream I am an exclusion in the field of my comrade.

I dream I am a memory in a field of crimes.

Comrade, how is it that we are memories in rhymes of weeds?

Comrade, how is it that we break in fields of red?

MYSTERY TRAIN

Good evening and welcome to the show.

All the ingredients for excellence are here, filling up a starry sky.

I believe in the power of Gods who live among people.

I do believe.

I can feel the love

Crawling on me

When I'm in the desert,

A woman being fucked crawling on me.

The stars fall from the sky.

Two at once?

I can feel the love

Filling up a starry sky.

Two people fucking and being fucked simultaneously.

Two at once?

Filling up a starry sky.

Stars fall.

Two at once?

How could you top that?

While they are simultaneously fucking?

How could you top that?

All the ingredients for excellence are there.

Mixed with limitless passion,

Sex goes deeper.

Mixed with limitless passion,

Love goes deeper.

Should I be in a monogamous relationship with a woman?

What a stupid question.

All the ingredients for excellence are there.

Lesbians are superior to everyone.

I lost a lot of money in stocks because I was stupid.

Truth is a personal mistake emerging throughout the story,

First as an icon, then as a legend,

Then as a living person

Whose name is not Elvis.

Elvis is the king of rock 'n' roll.

I want to support it.

Elvis is an empowered lesbian.

I'm going to support it.

I can feel the love,

A starry sky,

An icon.

Can it survive in the desert?

Can it survive among people?

All the ingredients are there.

THE COMEDIANS

Bing Bong! It's my enemy, the computer. I travel its dark passage-ways into its vagina-dentata-like orbit. Costa Rica—what are you doing down there, surfing? I didn't know you surfed! What are you doing in Costa Rica, surfing? That sounds great, the best place to be this time of year. Are you "down South" for business or pleasure? Pleasure, I hope—surfing maybe? Are you there for business? The business of surfing, I hope? Into the night I wander, surfing through waves of lonely, undesirable men. When I turn it off, I just turn it on again. So you're a fan of Mike Myers—what's your favorite movie he's made? We have at least something in common, we're both Mike Myers fans. *Wayne's World* or *Austin Powers*? You like Mike Myers too—I saw him in person recently at a comedy show in the West Village, he looked like a regular guy. What other comedians do you like? I loved *Bowfinger*. Even when I stay offline I find nothing but trouble. It takes the place of company, of sleep. It sucks me in by my most tender appendages, chews and swallows. I have no appetite, no tolerance, no secrets: blinded by the ones and the zeros.

GUS

There was something I wanted to let you know. It's been eating away at me for weeks. The minute you walked in the door something turned on inside me. I know that feeling. It's a sign. You looked at me a certain way and I knew there was going to be something between us. Maybe I didn't know. I just hoped. You were so nice to me from the start. You knew my name. That never happens in finance! You said, "You're Tracy." You knew I went to Yale. *You* went to Yale. You were interested in me. In who I was. It shook me. It's been growing in me. Like I'm pregnant. You offered me the position. You were going to custom-make it especially for me. Why, Gus? Why do you like me? Why do you want to have me around? I know you're married, with a daughter. There are so many things you don't know about me, so many things I'd like to share with you. If you'd ask me out to dinner, we could start this affair.

Tracy, when you get a chance, no rush, could you messenger this over to Gail at the Bank of New York? I think Rick has her address on his rolodex.

Do you like my hair this way? At night, alone in my room, I try on all my different barrettes picking the prettiest ones to wear for you.

They do something structurally to the building so that it sways in the wind.

Gus, I know I hardly know you. But I think I love you.

They told me it would take 35 minutes and it took an hour and 20 minutes.

I try to pick outfits that you'll notice. I want to look beautiful for you. Not cheap.

I'm driving.

Do you have a good book at least?

I'm on the Bruce Springsteen side.

I'm sorry.

What's up?

Nothing. I have this for you from Rick. I've already sent this guy an investor's packet Fedex, and we thought you'd like to keep his information for your files. That's it, I guess. Thanks.

Thanks.

You're not going to believe this but my sister's daughter is named Lily, like yours, and she was born on your birthday!

Is this Tracy?

Yes.

It's Gus.

Hi Gus! How are you?

Fine. Could you do something for me? Send this package to Joan Young at Moose Corporation. Her address should be in my rolodex.

Sure. Bonnie wanted me to ask you if you were bringing your wife to the Christmas party.

Yes.

It sounds like there're squirrels in the rafters.

Did you have a nice Thanksgiving?

Do you hear them?

That's it!

I can feel it sway.

See you Monday.

I wonder what happens in a hurricane.

HUD

If a starched white shirt clings to his broad wet chest
and deer and antelope play,
it must be Texas.
Dust, highways and diners serving
very bad coffee.

Look at those teasing eyes.
Smell the smoke's slow curl
into bright sun
Can this tale be told today?

Where else can a man be a jerk
and still make a woman's heart ache?

We want more.
More of his cool, patrician inspection
of the very core of our lusting selves.

Oh for a day to be Patricia Neal
warming up her whiskey voice
just so she can tell Paul Newman
where to go and how fast to get there

Just watch the sun fall behind the horizon
casting out the will of God and urging the rise
of demons: drugs, dollars,

the fleeting power of men in uniform
come to kick ass,
and drag the beautiful, the mild, the musical

across piny wood floors
of tract houses and suburban drawl.

The South on the verge of existentialism
With evil enough to require regret and redemption.

God in a thousand carry-ons

In film reels to come.

For now the jerk stands bare chested

literate, tasty.

Shading those teasing eyes.

THE VILLAGE SPARKLES

In German, Vagina is always capitalized.

It is subject, therefore, important.

In America, who knows what is important:

Julia Roberts or Vagina or Julia Roberts and Vagina.

Actually, this is a dodge. My hand hurts.

My heart aches. Intemperate spices breach summer air

and yet I blush. Nutmeg, cinnamon. Who can handle Spring or
Penis in Winter. Cardamon, ginger. Garlic for Luck.

Who cares about Dream?

Important, subject.

Action. Where is action? If we weep too much
we go crazy. If we don't weep, we go crazy.

Crazy, he calls me. What a great line.

Willie Nelson looks like tobacco spit in snow.

But what a great line. Crazy, who calls me crazy.

The one I want hollers for me, STELLA

STELLA walking the floors, diva in the making,
clicking my Italian boots' steel-edged heels.

Vagina or Vocation. Vaginal, vocational

Love or Lust or Limits at the gas station.

Everything reckons on days when heaven releases perfume.
Come claim my loving heart, I call to him.

I want you funny and hungry
and wrinkled with sweat.

Sunday morning, after Church
the Village sparkles. I tell a good friend.
You know, I can smell men.

CANTERBURY TALE

Coming around ABE'S CORNER MARKET

into 75° sun down Fillmore Street,
 some homies pass & I tense since
 yesterday when one hissed at Jerome
 (3/4 pitbull), & Amanda yells "You
 want me to let him go or are you
 just to stupid to do anything else?"
 "I'll cut his throat." he replies.
 Nothing happens, I go home from
 Flipper's Gourmet Burger, through
 the gate & up the stairs, I open
 the door & up runs Jerome. "Hi
 Je-ROME!" is my high pitched note.
 I sit in my room & put in the new
 Dylan, then get up, walk to the toilet &
 wipe off the dried red spots from the rim -
 Victor was out drinking last night.
 I've brought my pipe with me & time
 my first inhalation with the expelling
 of waste. Is it erotic, neurotic,
 relaxing? It's a heightened release
 from the greasy dishonest perversion
 of Sammy & Flipper's. The bright green
 crystals glow & glow red & then black.
 I gather & return to my room. I hit
 the play button for the G-minor echo
 footstep opening, & the gravel train
 wreck vocal proclaiming, "I'M WALKING/
 THROUGH STREETS THAT ARE DEAD."
 I grab my notebook to an open page. I hit the

pause button & open my guitar case for
a country blues '30's. I cut up some
postcards & glue them together. I read
Mom's letter which rolls into streets,
readings, gossip, dinners, & dreams.
I smoke more slumped against my folded
frameless futon mattress covered with
Grandma's Native American blanket, & so
chair, on the coated hardwood floor.
Through the sealed door behind me bus
brakes squeal in the echo chamber stair
case & the occasional, "WHAT YOU WANT,
BITCH?" Three feet to the right on
adjoining wall pseudo-soul-acid songs
creep through the door crack leading to
the pot-dealing dead head. Then a knock
at the opposite door & Jerome & Amanda
enter. "Hi, Ed," she cheers & sneers in
a tiny 19-year-old frame as she grabs my
guitar, strumming & singing, "I hate our
fucking landlord/ he's been caught lying
in court/ the cafe downstairs is suing
him/ cuz our fucking tub leaks on their
meat grinder/ but Jerome loves me & Ed is
cool/ though he's moving to New York.
How was work, Ed?" "I hated it like I hate
all work, my boss told me I smelled & that
all the waiters complained & two of the illegal
coke dealing barely English speaking cooks,
& that he'd fire me if it didn't change."
"What's up with that," she says, "I've gotta
go get my cigarettes!" She gets up & leaves

the room, Jerome following. I pick up Gas #10 with a painting of Joe Brainard on the cover. I read some belligerent poems, some joyful poems, some with nice music, some I could give a rat's ass about. The buzzer rings, I get up to answer it. Jerome races down the hall. Holding the doorknob, I look at him. He looks up at me & then at the door. Jerome is black & a 1/4 lab. He's eight months old, with a spiked collar, & belonging to Victor. He was shy of me when they first moved in, & would howl at the door when Victor was out. I talked to him & strummed a few chords, singing his name, luring him over though he quickly resumed howling. I open the door & he runs out barking. "Mundo!" exclaims Brandon. The hand shake. "What's up, Brandon?" "I've got the new *Lungfull!*, it's got some hot works in it." "Cool," I respond. "What's new with you?" he asks. "Well, check it out. It's 2 a.m. two nights ago. No one is home except for the sleeping Rita. She opens her eyes to a large man in her room. He mumbles, 'Police' & leaves. So she gets up, groggy & freaked, & opens her door. There are eight other large men all dressed in black, systematically searching every room. They ask her about a 'Vince', & she responds that we're new tenants. They leave with the remark, 'You should keep your door locked.' "The front door was unlocked?" "Well the gate was locked." Brandon produces a pipe & packs it. "We think they were bondsmen. Several drug dealers lived here before, a lot of weird shit went down. Y'know Mavis' dog

was shot in the living room.” “You told me, Mundo,” he says, passing the pipe. “Got any new works?” I ask. Brandon pulls out a few selections from his group, 68 Quick Poems, & reads, self-consciously, but in the moment :

HAUNTED CARTER

Haunted Carter. Haunts

The kilns. Of names.

And comes up with itself.

And haunts itself.

Enter Amanda & Jerome & Jimmy-Mac. Jimmy-Mac

in a smooth tone to Brandon, “Hey brother can

I bum a smoke from you? I apologize for my

rudeness.” The handshake ceremony as Brandon

produces a Galoise. I pass the bowl to Amanda.

Jimmy-Mac plans to quit on the New Year. A knock

at the door & in comes Mavis & the Dead Head.

Two large pipes are produced & packed & passed.

More talk of quitting smoking from Jimmy-Mac,

tall, dressed in grays, whites, & blacks, an

outfit that never seems to change though new

articles are often identified beneath his blonde goatish goatee. Talk of the homies between

Mavis & Amanda. Mavis has been on her own since

she was 11. She’s 19 with a crushed self-esteem

but a strong will. She’s an alcoholic, though

not noticeably. She is kind & I’ve never known

her to lie, except to cops. She tells a story about being beaten by the Santa Rosa cops. A female cop is searching her, & Mavis has weed in her bra. When the cop comes to her breast, Mavis moves so as to make the cop rub her breast, as she exclaims, "Ooooh yeah." It works, the cop is freaked & walks away. Mavis discards her stash undetected. They take her to the station. She is stripped naked & hog-tied, kicked & beaten repeatedly by several cops. She shows us the bruises. The cops untie her, & she spits blood onto one of their faces. She is beaten more, then left alone. Later she is released, as there is nothing to charge her with. More pot is smoked. Gradually everyone leaves except for Brandon, & we talk about poetry. He's hot. She gave a reading. She's a starfucker. He's an enigma. I see Brandon to the door & then reslump against my chair, drifting between joy & depression. The bathtub leaks, the dog pisses & is berated, Victor comes home & watches cartoons. I leave the house without knowing where I'm going, but with no lack of options.

F BLUES

I don't mind a further
 o elements
 what is this road
 full of biscuits
 I play the f harp
 holding a piece
 drink & drift
 for some birds are here
 every fussin' one
 when I was a cement
 staircase
 I know this one
 & some waters fall
 where is the welcome
 shucks the hound
 better come & sit
 on my knee
 & in the blues you
 know what happens,
 them have mercy

HUSH HONEY

for Marilee Styles

My tone / tongue

on her skin

tight

clean—skin / muscles that stretch 'n' dance

up 'n' down Broadway

Broadway / classical

Broadway funky—'Do the funky Broadway'

Before?

My tone / tongue

Quiet—reserved

Business lunch tongue

& church sermons & lemonade with

neighbors

A La-Dee-DA tongue

Late at night / some nights—not all nights

but some nights I love Bourbon on my tongue / warm

Brown / straight from my tongue to my balls but first

on my tongue / Burning / wet

Brown 'n' Sweet

Honey Brown
against her pale thighs
tight / taught / Classical Broadway thighs
funky Broadway dancing thighs
Thighs clean &

Bourbon strong / sweet on my tongue / goes to my balls
I want to taste her thighs with Bourbon

I enter the room

Like a fox
Like a panther / vampire
I want virgin blood and Bourbon on my tongue
I want my tongue wrapped around her thighs
warm / thighs
In her room I see her pale, clean against white linen sheets
Her eyes widen as I walk towards the bed
I shush her and whisper
“It’s okay
Darling
Baby
Daughter
Hush honey, Daddy’s home”

TRICK BABY

My mother had high breasts thrust towards

wetlipped men

who saw only Breasts n' thighs

she danced ('a good dancer', she said) when she was young

Her lipstick matched her shoes, dress and purse

But her real talent was in her hips & lipsticked mouth

There were dances—Connie's Paradise / the Savoy / Audubon / ballroom

high flying skirts / Cab Calloway / watch chains / konked hair

& the come on

& come on

The night I was born, Somebody said they heard thunder

2 days before that, rain

I was late—2 days late & the minute my head slipped out, the
thunder stopped

"You didn't want to come here / it took two days!" she says
"I really don't think you wanted to come here it took two days" &
she—my mother didn't expect me / I mean she did the bump 'n' grind
but didn't expect me / how can you do that / the bump 'n' grind
and not expect me?

Or maybe she did “The Locomotion”
when I asked her she said she didn’t remember it
that dance—“it was a longtime ago / that dance
Little Eva and all that.’

But she did do the ‘Bump ‘n’ Grind’

she did it w/ my father

And he laid down hands and greenbacks

laid hand and green backs on the bed

Later

I was told chin up / chest up & I couldn’t do it

chin up / chest up / couldn’t / wouldn’t do it / chin up / chest up
like Mummy / Mommy / Mother
chin up / chest up—like her

Liquor tongued & later dry breasted

Later I learned to walk with narrow eyes and stalker poses
fingers sliding delicately over silver daggers—I ran

outside of myself watching these scenes from rank corners

The mother—a hot loined whore

The father—an anxious john

The daughter—a frigid bitch

SNEAKER (2)

—after George Evans

on a dark plain (call it smoke) in a
city of closets
he makes faces
in the mirror, carries a switchblade
in his boot, owns
a bomber's jacket
vintage Viet Nam, last served time for
possession
two years ago.
sometime in county jail among a cage
full of Black
and Mexican youths
taunting each other between longings
for escape and
peanut butter &
jelly sandwiches most of whom have never
seen the insides
of a real restaurant
or smelled a perfumed thigh—really bad
daddies & vatos.
the Blacks knew he
was Black but the Mexicans thought
he was an S.A.
with all that wavy
hair & shit (he never complained they
could take him for
whatever they took
him for. he was cool either way). the white
bread gummy

with rancid
brown sludge on the verge of separation
and a layer
of strawberry
jam as thin as the glue on the backside
of a postage stamp
and warm orange
juice or worse, warm milk as in “fresh
from Mama’s titty”
though what he
hungered for most was pizza and a cold
Beck’s dark
after sucking
the peace out of a fat j. women are drawn
to the need
he puts in his eyes
like a bull calf. he always works with
a partner when
moonlighting.
someone’s got to cover his back. when he
sleeps he dreams
about ocean surf
that he’s riding in on the last wave
gripped by the
pleasure of his
glide, he hangs there above the universe
then takes the
promise of her
touch. water flows. and he turns over
in the wetness.
but she’s changed
into a parole officer lecturing him on

the remedies for
worthlessness
and incorrigibility. release into the
minions is the
next best thing
to sex, no doubt, they'll be together soon.
soon is now/
the principle of
attraction. "How much longing is inspired,
in particular,
by all the things
one is deprived of?" soon is repeated drives
to Long Beach
walks along the
shore, star struck under the southwestern
moon. the last
score was solid.
he's in pocket, can hear the admonishment
of the parole
officer for his
lack of respect for the property of others.
he's liberated
enough money and
dope to see him through a while and take
the worry from
her eyes, which
have become the taillights of a camper
making its way
north to Big Sur.
across the universe (call it Hollywood)
he can hear the
loud laughter

of working class men chatting over boiler
 makers, chewing
 over the cup size
of the doozy who gets off at one-forty-five.
 no one ever
 thinks to bring
her flowers and she no longer cares. but
 when he smiles
 at her, it damn
near stops her heart. soon now. and he
 stares at, then
 through the mug
(call it a crystal ball) and sees a man
 pushing a food
 cart down a cold
grey corridor, an absurdly old man
 with brick-hard
 muscles, balding
up top, with what's left of his hair in
 a ponytail down
 to his ass. Popeye
the cart pusher, moving as fast as he
 can, yet never
 gets there. soon
is now. the fifth menthol stick because
 it feels good at
 the back of his
throat and prolongs the high. the air is
 heavy with water
 rain coming
a storm blown in off the big island crashing
 stateside, big

and nasty. he
could've been a character actor with
looks like those,
scary looks as
in he'd sooner fillet a man's rib cage
than clean his
nails with that
switchblade. who are we kidding? they
beat the shit out
of him when he
was a kid because he was too light to be
one of them and
too dark to pass

TONGUE ENORMITY CONSCIOUSNESS

1. REBIRTH

Baudelaire writes from his study.
In this incarnation he is twenty-two
and has only recently discovered his might.
He is intoxicated with the power
of poetry in the millennium of its
aesthetic decline. He is attending
graduate school in the U.K. and while
visiting Wales, pens desperate
letters to foreign poets he fancies—
to other visionaries in other lands.
This new world is a dreamer's
dessert, the possibilities for perversion
and privation and passion and purity
so much greater. The tragedies enormous on
such a globular scale. He admires
Rimbaud (and himself, of course
since he is the greatest poet who
ever lived) and is planning soon to translate
himself anew. And perhaps explore the
voices of the Americas. Someday
soon, they will know him by this virgin
nom de plume. The songs of this time
to burn as brightly in his fire and all of
poetry's light the spill of his desire.

2. DISCOVERY

Synthetic fabrics decay quickly,
a ruin agitated by her soft fleshy warmth.
She shuns daylight, not because of
preference for night, but because there
are fewer eyes to violate her darkness.
What shall she wear, other than the choicest
whispers/designs couturied by griefsmiths
fitting tightly at the throat and groin?
A yolk of lace or a noose of silk. Lately,
word has reached her of watchers hoping to
catch her nude and ravished and choking
on a spoon, graceless in her strangulation.
Unshockable, yet sad, she laughs them off.
Blends of fine cottons pulled, polished and
printed to a pearl-like sheen absorb the ink
of her imaginings and the stains of her
regurgitations. She visits the Pacific again,
to swim in her torment, this time driving a
new sedan, wearing the rags and weight of
a former marriage, the roar of rock 'n' roll
full volume, chain-smoking cigarettes, watching
the gulls, the thunderhead, the waves. This,
she decries, is the brink of communication.

Below, the torrents.

3. ARTISTIC FUSION

Certain symptoms become evident
with each intervening crisis.
The degree of responsiveness

on the part of the lover is questioned,
 as is the beloved's ability to achieve the proper
 tone elicited. In this test, the subject must
 supply the appropriate touch to complete a feeling.
 The mutual interdependence between the two
 should result in a meaningful percept.

this
 terrible good between us

KING E

for Eric and Ericka

Warmth in December and the air was freighted
with liquid drops
shoppers had misremembered on their way uptown
stamps for Hanukkah, Christmas & Kwanza
but no generic holiday stamps for us ecumenicals
such as Leo Castelli, Seiji Ozawa, David Gerkin and Harold Bloom
who just happen to be here that's all
and even Joanna's great aunt on Ellis Island in that old photograph
her teeth nearly the same
or while driving through Texas with Chico Hamilton you don't stop
and that's a lot of not stopping
so that the arrangement of organs
on that table over there seems so right it hurts
with the good cross-hatching going on in part

Then I saw King E
moving about in the storm
and on another wall great colors
connected us to the outside
which was convenient and interesting
and totally all right

It is excellent to be able to identify oneself
in the environment
giant palms, cliffs and walls of magenta, orange, blue
and even if not
we can get around by feel
or so I like to think

around midnight
or shortly heretofore

Anyway, thank you both
I'll see you soon in California

IN A HAWAIIAN GARDEN

Under the broad leaf of the breadfruit, ants design systems for knowledge management, forming trails across the stones. Water for the falls has been diverted from the original stream. The original streambed is a dry nest of rocks and hardy weeds.

“It’s everywhere,” said Jean Genet of imperialism, “even here,” indicating his can of Coke. The Panthers chewed gum and smoked Kools at the same time. They wore hip-length black leather jackets and were understood to be armed. Could kukui be related to kukuia, the grass from Kenya, from which a people took its name? It covers the lawns of Oakland, birthplace of the Panthers. It’s everywhere, its rhizomic tendrils lace the ground.

Borrowing from the unconscious for projects that are never completed — dams, roads, hospitals, schools — then borrowing more to repay the debt, our poetry is a kind of pyramid scheme, like the IMF. The couple walked past the grove of hala without notice. The pineapple fields were closed when the resort was built. Some field workers got jobs at the resort. Others were forced to relocate. The breeze ruffles the hala.

Dip two fingers in and spoon the stuff up. Lateral movement on the catwalks. Tree ferns border the arcades. The root of the taro is used to make poi. A small cat leaps up the slender trunk of a heliconia and captures a lizard in its mouth. Tourists enter the foyer, loaded with gear. *The sun is god*, written on a wall in Watts, 1975. Near Simon Rodia’s towers.

And there in solemn ranks the troops stood guard. Red-topped ginger leans above the rocks. Jack and Ginger. Fred and Ginger. But what about Jack and Fred? You don’t hear much about *them*. The light softens toward late afternoon. Soften the belly. Breathe into the pose.

Clouds cover nearly every other island, extending south over limitless ocean surface. Next stop Antarctica. White hibiscus trained into hedges, and fellow plumeria, whose naked gray branches imitate nothing in their forking grandeur, more delicate, refined, extending her red blossoms on an occasional basis, just back from my dream of voices removed to a corridor. Bird of paradise, cancel the anonymous verdure of these glancing retreats! As in a Hawaiian garden, the name for each thing is lost in a moment of repose.

THE TERM

Diamond menthol litmus. Curiously scratched.

It amounts to as much as the rhythm set into the head.

Your synapse is loose.

Those were my futurist years.

Harmonica Paleolithic.

Is language a net? And did the world slip through it? What time is it?

The next issue of madness is scheduled to come out this week. I have been very cool about it, outwardly anyway, with the exception of the ugly incident. Minutes line up. The Edison Brothers have arranged for time to be upgraded on the hour. We, their customers, have asked for a moratorium on obsolescence but also don't want to be left behind. Our juniors are biting at our heels. And then there's the nineteen-hundred-pound gorilla, turning up the heat.

Like a film script on a park bench.

A boy looking at pictures, picks up the phone and punches in a number. The figures stare out at him in the lavish color of their assemblage. The voice is professional, indulgent. The moon travels rapidly above the house, a quarter moon. Emotional intelligence enters the crosswalk.

The woman is banished to the outer reaches, the man, a general, unable to admit of his love, even to himself, must attend to the affairs of empire. He can hardly see his hands in the dark.

I'm always glad to be thought of in the heat of the moment. 24 X 7.
Signature bells in the heat of the moment. A memory exercise for stiff.

As a child, he divided his time.

A curtain opens, and the lines on your face go to sleep. What am I leaving out? Strength is all well and good, but nothing is greater than weakness.

Thank you for lowering your vice, your price, your voice and the boom, all in time for the past. Things have gotten in and out of hand a million times ever since. Which is neither here nor there. We're talking about the next instant, the latest, bluest not-yet-a-thing. Who can vouch for it?

Pull the fabric apart and peak through without ripping. Dance on the head of a pain. Lie quietly under the bedtime story and count the rungs of your crib. Does your temper deceive you? Do rocks line the shore? A stream dashing downhill begins in an unintended symbolism.

Legendary dishwashers of the 20th century, balancing soggy butts on the edge of the sink, strolling out under the stars in your torn sneakers, alive without anyplace to go, your anonymous stares penetrate the invisible cartons of possibility.

It won't be long before the giant snowflake bonks us on the head. We'll have to pay more attention.

1

FROM THE SERIES "SCAR THEORY"

ALSO THIS MORNING:

comprehended or compounded, where
 the fluxing machine geronimoes to
 instantaneous apprehension. is the
 result of. this one. myself them
 did. gift idea in seersucker or
 girdle towards sway later. said
 and so thought. that we. cause
 way the laity unmarbled frets with
 out and so unable to stand still

about erosion. periphery traced
 when rivulets of habit. habits.
 said we, did we, should we in
 incremental mentality bastions
 of ponderous referral. pierced
 as the sound is red i'm thinking
 of in spanish with an s beginning
 to whistle. someone is somewhere
 with a duty to make the margins
 conform. as a way of describing
 texture, consistency. want to
 go public, instead of in your
 mouth so

said they at a party where figures
 the predominant as parity scarcely
 slims down. a thorough explanation
 of the difference between kumquat

and loquat, what else is new, ripped
by the side of the side of something.
as motives confounded, recto verso
versus the range deranged of inhabits
when the rain simplifies even the most
individual knee. which is why the car
forgets or shudder imports slickers.

CORPOREAL MANIFESTO #R

PARALLEL LAX DRAMAS, OR TAXING MANEUVERS

“Things are not o.k.” abound exceptions or what does a name
to name fixity processual with clamp tremble tourniquet in
a manner of having stolen—click—we call them chicks now in
a silver cowboy hat at the peacock lounge deciphered loud down
to zero where the size determines the envelope formally “double a”
terminus as a new movement or not aardvark but devious plan
when considering waste paper or what one wants to say

thus in a moving vehicle which moving has stopped there
is a toll and this is good for one-day admission one day only
and “real spectacle cannot pass into experience” if you are not
here I can’t attend intermission there will be none cannot in here
bred insomnia city surface as body contemptuously angles especially
thumbs everything embarrasses or sirens in the sequel we have
no need of linguistic accuracy

or conjunction would cohere when aphorisms travel from lip
to lip did arbitrary enter frequent both prolonged picturing of
not personal along the exterior wall events clamor whilst reusable
vertigo in which the asks refuse to question or why, she really wanted
to know, do we do this. About to become organ or sizable a tulip is
not parallel nor uncertainty a bud but rather adolescence full speed
ahead chronologically inconsequent so experienced as extremely real.
A motorcycle a visible span or woman spans woman in parked or
traveling sentimental vellum position precision to peak desperately so
swell tomorrow abject or interject all quotes cop small feels repeatedly
have no senses of order. Explosions but nobody comments in case
of rain the sequel provides radiant effects shocks in circular motions

size various the sincere turtle varies theory deck of cards refusal
 cantilever horse not horse supposition posture lax sleaze
 occurrence exemplifies essays with air in the legs so flails
 float graphically defying the pause plausible in the manner
 of luminaries without cars. Go back a word or on or unspoken
 agreement prior to cinematic deference regardless of fair since
 we've grown up.

CORPOREAL MANIFESTO #F

HIS POWERFUL DEVICE MAKES HIM FAMOUS

It is not advisable to sing with hands clasped.

A wonderful thing has been found and then lost in New York.

A trap in which a lizard bit the music into criss-cross libraries.

You didn't know you had that song in you.

As carpentry, we can make the corners click into reflex.

The reflecting pool said, "by any means" and "sounds good, man."

When looking, keep in mind that the writer has no net.

This magnetic draw works quietly while we rub our jaw on our shoulder.

No ballast.

It is one of those blessed devices.

So extremely important with an armful of racing red gladiolas.

A more precise concept, as lizard or destination, entered into the fray
by other means, winged or clipped.

Six apricot canaries flint-laddered in wicker staircases.

Singing that song berated.

Because there is nothing more to add, by default perfect.

Armed or alarmed.

They wait with bated breath or bait with weighted breath.

They strain to keep, to keep they eyes open, to what, to something else.

THE REPLACEMENT SET

The replacement set can suck the gifts

The rightful receipt

The recipients' place

On Mars we are part of it

Michael said, with a private smile

They sorted and bagged it

They slipped it

Like a parasite

Inside my heart

And precisely this enriches me

Michael said: the dirt is bleeding

Mars: we are standing on it.

Animated, blue.

As humans, we amaze ourselves

Simon and Peter drive rovers

We venerate them.

On the side of their volcano: ash

Of their human accomplishments

Vagabondage and waste.

Lust, creed, tents.

Mars: the stench is feudal and foul

Frozen

Elite

On the edge of a reaction they steamed madly

I think of an array

An ashen color on the eye

And lust

Sex, a face jerks, over its eyes

Remorse.

A rock cracks and opens

A love is smashed

The town, large and vulvic

The bottom of it programmed

By an atmospheric

Scientist

Michael

In the water

Splashes

We saw him just under the station

Ejecta

Majestically flowering over him

Splashing

Political schemes and then standing

On a rock.

Everyday you can see one of us standing

High on the cliff

We might as well work on it

You go away, radiation

You tight, killing thing.

In pallor and defensiveness

Unevenness and grace

“It just doesn’t seem like enough”

And he looked away

Michael

Kicks rocks.

Michael is under the cliff

“But it feels like I’m not really here.”

THE CLOUD HEAP

The cloud heap, the canary

The masochist in the wilderness

Running

Through woods—

Our faces are fancy, composed of both purpose and remorse.

An angel thinks the world a horse.

The decrepitude of life on earth

The hell of the bastion of the heart and of the hearth

And of the mawkish laugh

The gurgling brook—the hand

In the ocean, a hook

SLICKER

came in a pink,
orange and white
striped metal tube,
with a black curlicue
border and a splayed
gold base. It came
in any number of
mod shades: Nippy
Beige, Chelsea Pink,
Poppycock, Hot Nec-
taringo, Pinkadilly,
Dicey Peach. There
were several tubes in
my mother's makeup
drawer in the bath-
room five out of six
of us used (my father
had his own bathroom,
as forbidden as the
walk-in closet where
his *Playboys* were
hidden under a stack
of sweaters on the top
shelf). All the girls
at school had Slicker
in their purses; I
watched them apply
The London Look
at the beginning and
end of each class. I

marveled at what else
 spilled out: compact,
 mascara brush, eye
 shadow, wallet, troll
 doll, dyed rabbit's
 foot, chewing gum,
 tampon, pink plastic
 comb. At home I
 stared at myself in
 the medicine cabinet
 mirror and, as my
 brother pounded
 on the locked bath-
 room door, twisted
 a tube and rubbed,
 ever so slightly,
 Slicker on my lips.

WATCHING THE LATE MOVIE WITH MY MOTHER

It was our special time:
just the two of us
alone in the family room
on a Saturday night,
everybody else—my father, brother
and two younger sisters—
asleep in the back of the house.
She reclined on the brown couch;
I was sprawled on the carpet
in front of the TV, totally
absorbed in the drama
on the small screen:

Elizabeth Taylor in a white slip,
Paul Newman on crutches,
arguing in an upstairs bedroom;
Natalie Wood and Carolyn Jones sneaking
off from their summer camp
and canoeing, by moonlight,
to the adult resort across the lake;
or Tippi Hedren tiptoeing away
from her boss's safe, her
beige pump slowly slipping
out of her coat pocket.

My mother lay there
in her lavender bathrobe,
head propped on a couple of throw
pillows, with her double chin
and her salt-and-pepper hair,

bags under her eyes,
easily moved to tears
by love or death scenes.

During a used car
commercial, I fixed popcorn
in the kitchen, poured it
into the large green Tupperware
bowl, quickly added
melted butter and salt
as not to miss a minute
of the movie. I scooped
a small bowl for my mother,
grabbed napkins, set a glass
of ice water on a cork coaster
on the table next to the couch.

Often, she fell asleep
before the end and I'd have
to nudge her: "The movie's
over, Mom, go to bed."
Once alone, I quietly unlocked
the kitchen door and snuck
outside, my cigarettes tucked
in the pocket of my plaid robe.
In the driveway, I smoked
several in a row, ducking behind
a hedge whenever a car
came by, its headlights sweeping
the dark street.

Occasionally, a dog barked
on another block. Dew
shimmered on the dichondra
in our front yard. I looked up
at the moon, the trees, what
stars I could see through
the glow of the city in the
distance. I inhaled the last drags
deeply, doused the butt in curb water.
Then, as frightened and excited
as Marjorie Morningstar
or Marnie, I tiptoed back
into the house.

THE LAST TIME WE SPOKE

It was his funeral
Her wig was off kilter
And her lipstick made a wild turn
Like the Cyclone at Coney Island
Her deep set eyes were accented
With Avon iridescent blue
The eyebrows drawn on, over
Her own fuzzy caterpillars.
She was tiny and furious
At my father for dying
“I told him not to go to Florida!”
She kept repeating
As she staggered behind me
In moccasin wedgies
The potted flower she had sent
Technically belonged to her,
And she wanted it back!
He should never have gone to Florida!
“Did he leave me any money?”
Divorced from him for twenty years
Lighting a Salem and squinting
Through the smoke, she could help
If only I would give her “Power of Attorney.”
Her wig was the wrong color.
She trailed behind me ready to argue.
“Let her take all the flowers she wants tomorrow,”
I said to the Funeral Director
“Make sure she gets the potted rose”

MORE TREE TALK

Are you ready to hear some more, say the trees.
This is a dangerous road you're walking.
We offer you guidance and support but only so far.
You're already mistaken for a madman. Why go on?
You live in a cauldron of vipers. We give you air.
There are muggers in this park, too.
We never found criminals sexy or exciting.
They simply descended upon us.
Some reach up through the grass. As Whitman said,
Some of the dead go on talking. Those not released
Into new bodies can get trapped beneath concrete, too.
Talk to these and you definitely will go crazy.
Learn to distinguish their voices from ours.
We speak only when you look at us.
They are impossible to see. A hint:
Keep your eyes away from this park's grass
While night listening to us. Some lie waiting
Under the urine and liquor deposited upon them.
Mostly they roam above ground after the park closes.
Because some are dybbuks, it's best not to jump over that fence.
Tonight the air we give you isn't all pleasant.
We sing a strange, slow song.
Our streetlamps shine separate from us
At least at the beginning of your march.

Now let go of these thoughts or fleas may assault you.
Marauding spirits as well. They're best left
To the sad bums and animals who protect them.

It's almost full moon but not quite.
Our bronchia clutch sky but give you air.
Now you just passed some holes in the ground
Through which dead spirits can come.
Fortunately, none assaulted you and the dark space
Kept its own conscience. Once one passed up
Through this hole here and caused a saint
Who walked over it to be stricken with incontinence.
Now you dare look at the grass despite our warning.
You see how many dark furrows there are at night.
Fortunately, so far tonight they are quiet.
There was jazz in this park yesterday afternoon.
Perhaps that's why the dead still sleep or lie low.
My foot catches one of the slightly larger incisions
In the hill, Tompkins Park central circular spot.
Daily sunbathers display themselves here.
At night an unwary walker sometimes sinks through
This tree speaking, now, under which you stand.
Move on quickly. At least a few paces.
You've fallen enough lately. No need to stumble further, today.

People sleeping on the grass are the most likely to get swallowed.
Fortunately, you are not one of these.
But try to psychoanalyze this park and not only
Will we trees stop speaking but heat will rise up
From the road through your shoes and burn through,
Up into your solar plexus.
Night will not help you, either.

Now open your arms to a favorite bench for a moment.
It's in need of your purity, your grace.
Beware fascination with ghosts, demons, and the hokey occult.

We trees say they are second rate.
Best to harvest mind's measures in your own way
Toward which so many Masters have led you.
This is not our subject and we will leave it shortly
Up to you, where it has sat dormant recently,
Awaiting your return to full brain's power.
If spinal cord nerves can regenerate,
Those near where your craniotomy happened can, too.
A young, playing violinist starts swinging his t-shirted muscles
As you watch him. But his performance is squeaky.
It's best to move on. When a phony artist named Andre,
Also listening, leaves, the boy's playing gets better.
You can hear it still from somewhat of a distance.
When he stops playing, why do you miss it for a moment?
It's not up to Max Roach or the divine Randy Weston
You heard in this space yesterday afternoon.

TREE ADVICE COLUMN

Human relations rise and fall like water.
Compatible, incompatible energy fields.
A Corinthian column sprouts leaves and tells me:
When your friends dislike one another,
It's usually best not to intervene.
Being at the center of a triangle
Is not good for the heart.
Yours finally reopened and is healing
Your brain from its surgery. That this
Problem feels like friends fight for your merit
May be a projection. They aren't demons
And you are far from a saint. In
The strange, sexy lower Manhattan deva world
Tree sprouts can hide people's voices talking.
Poets are still people and can speak through trees.
Time heals all wounds and death is flowing water.
Only the last death, that is.
Medicine and manipulation are trees without leaves
Parched and coughing a death rattle.
Death may ultimately be sweet but dying is not.
Fortunately, you're nowhere near the end.
You're getting better. But you're no doctor
To other people's petty disagreements
Even the one which started over who
Would visit you in the hospital a year ago.
Let it be without being sucked into it
Because that road is a pitfall where
The energy you so much need right now
Can only be scattered or completely squandered
Wherein the rivals pick up nothing but more heat.

Seek solace from us trees.
We have no vanity, love simplicity, and make
Only the most basic life or death judgements.
We keep up appearances but aren't prissy.
We offer you the lessons of aging,
Some of which you already know, and may
Be able to communicate to a few others, after
Having lived through seven different varieties
Of psychic death in the past fifteen months.
A rat sticks his head out of a shrub,
Dances over, looks up, and hurries back.
Can even such a low being bear a positive message?
This is the Chinese Year of The Rat.
So was my birthday year, 1948.
They may be lurking everywhere in this park.
Cars and the leaves go on singing.
A rat big as a squirrel dies as it drinks
From a broken children's fountain.
Is the rat in me finally departing?
The trees like that one but are not content
With the gray carcass left at their roadstep,
On which their lights are forced to shine.
This is the children's part of the park, too.
What to make of that the trees don't say.
Today's scheduled hurricane didn't arrive.
Do I bring rats out of a children's paradise?
The trees refuse to entertain this subject any longer.
My best friends still dislike one another.
Could openness in this situation turn me into a dying rat?
The trees usher me away from their children's light.
It's time to go home for the night.

WHAT PART OF THE PROBLEM

oh God! Canal Street meat burns on a stick
Chinese lanterns blood red brick drips down
from flat blue sky to black street. Mind
surging Niagara Falls, popping fire
crackers. The dancer for pennies at the subway
entrances the me standing on the corner,
she screams, "I'm so alive I can't stand it!"
The bright side of the all night train ride
not stuck in Newark because some gone mad
put out his hand to stop the train, stop it
did, on his head, deader than a rock
band. The bright side is the train ride going uptown
to uptown, to uptown, to uptown, to uptown,
I'm down beautiful reflection trodden night boom
dream sloth. Seeing you all worked up
on the train being late, being off the island,
just made you all the more human. Human.

A KISS GOODBYE

Goodbye,
 Baby, walking to New Orleans
 Kiss this city
 Sidewalks goodbye
 Wake up nerve to still life
 Cafe du monde, pretty sitting egret
 No regrets, repatriate you as
 S le bon temps rouler, shakin' that big dog
 Shakin' off Dutch town dust for French frill
 Kissing quarters break you in peace-
 Ful spinning fan motor, creole cottage, natural warmth
 Poor world no windows, energy efficient; no moving
 On up deluxe gas guzzler in the sky.
 Bye, bye.

LA TRAVIATA

*I want to see you game boys
I want to see you brave and manly
I also want to see you gentle and tender*

We love you, Rene!
Or at least, I do. I love you.
Your tattered limbs stare at us,
arch the city's long-forgotten stance.
Each (word) shifts each and already
it's time to get off (Houston St.).
People can't stand joy—it wrecks their day.
I stand on the corner of 5th and 11th.
Rene is nearby, ensconced in a comfortable
conversation. A woman is giving
money to a mendicant.
She asks him how his leg is doing. It's
Elaine Equi! We talk in front
of noble iron churchyard gating.

I saw a man deftly roll a gas tank,
Chinese woman working a laundry,
and in Brooklyn Museum returned
to stairway window to observe
brightest orange sliver over trees
dimming now, winter's presence
as I ascend to contemporary.

I had a dream with Rene in it.
Then the mind goes blank, day's occurrences,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday.

You're in a vise between what happened
and what will: the new painting,
the museum, the new space, tomorrow's opera.

Rene believes in eternity.
He told me so. I don't.
And now I'm told he's
moved to the Arts Club.

The conversation the two coffee servers
are having at the Temple of Dendur—
“There was something on it in the *Times* today”
“Where did you meet her, in a bar?”—
is suddenly much more interesting
than the overblown exhibition you have come to see:
fashion displacing art, sound system
and projections defiling temple
silence. The exhibition, in fact,
is the parade of film crews, while
objects on display are mere documentation.
I take pleasure in the suffering of these fools
with Betacam-SPs, lights, extension cords,
portable audio. They are working so hard.
Don't they know that art should appear effortless?

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

A critic advises
A drunken night in my house with a
Child of my winter, born
Coming to the cottonwoods, an
Early in the morning
He sees through stone,
Hiding in the church of an abandoned stone.
How come nobody is being bombed today?
I am driving; it is dusk; Minnesota.
I am I, old Father Fisheye, that begat the ocean, the worm
The fishmarket closed, the fishes gone into flesh.
I am not a painter, I am a poet.
One granite ridge:
I can support it no longer!
I come to tell you that my son is dead.
I do tricks in order to know
Once I lived with my brothers, images
I dreamed last night I dreamed, and in that sleep
I have done it again—
I heard Andrew Jackson say, as he closed his Virgil,
“I know if I find you I will have to leave the earth.”
I look out at the white sleet covering the still streets.
I must explain why it is that at night, in my own house,
I speak of that great house.
I think it is in Virginia, that place;
It is a cramped little state with no foreign policy.
It is out in the flimsy suburbs.
It is the Old Man through the sleeping town.
It is the picnic with Ruth in the spring;
It must have been a Friday. I could hear

It's my lunch hour, so I go.
It's quiet for me, now that I have buried the child.
Letters she left to clutter up the desk
Lie closed, my lately loved, in the far bed
Light into the olive entered,
Like musical instruments.
Listen, the hay-bells tinkle as the cart
A siren sang, and Europe turned away,
Musing on roses and revolutions,
Neither on horseback nor seated,
On a day when smoke lies down in alleys
A dying firelight slides along the quilt,
A lip which had once been stolid, now moving
A love that is not pardoned
Above my desk, whirring and self-important
After the First Communion.
After the last bulletins the windows darken
Again and then again ... the year is born.
All night the sound had
Blood thudded my ears. I scuffed
Alone at the end of the green *allées*, alone
Among the high-branching, leafless boughs
As he moves the mine detector
At Cove at our camp in the open canyon.
Cool black night thru redwoods;
Darkness falls like a wet sponge.
Don't step
Four feet up, under the bruise-blue
Axes
Composed in the Tower before his execution
(Death of Sir Nihil, book the nth.)
From point A a wind is blowing to point B,

Gentle at last, and as clean as ever
Hard Rock was “known not to take no shit”
On one of those days with the Legion
Just off the highway to Rochester, Minnesota.
How funny you are today New York.
I stopped to pick up the bagel
In a prominent bar in Secaucus one day
In Sabbath quiet, a street
Of bricks ... Who built it? Like some crazy balloon
When the sun
At dusk
The police are dragging for the bodies,
Flutes, and the harp on the plain
We have been shown
Under the thick beams of that swirly smoking light.
In the third month, a sudden flow of blood,
Then the long sunlight lying on the sea.
There is a blue sky.
These are amazing: each
Evening is clogged with gnats as the light fails
Nautilus Island’s hermit
In the afternoon, while the wind
She was all around me,
Singing of Niagara and the Huron squaws.
As I sd to my
Shiny record albums, scattered over
Something immense and lonely,
Something forgotten twenty years: though my fathers
In the street two children sharpen
As one grows older and Caesar, Hitler—
Even as children they were late sleepers.
Loneliness leapt in the mirrors, but all week

Finally, to forgo love is to kiss a leaf.
Some there are who are present at such occasions:
My father in the night commanding No,
No hesitation,
Not to the mother of solitude will I give myself!
Since we had changed,
Talking along in this not quite prose way—
“O hell, what do mine eyes with grief behold?”—
“It is such a beautiful day I had to write you a letter”—
Someone is dead.
Tamed by Miltown, we lie on Mother’s bed.
Old Witherington had drunk too much again;
Samuel Sewall, in a world of wigs,
Here lies resting, out of breath.
The last time I saw Donald Armstrong
He had driven half the night,
O depth sufficient to desire!
The narcissist’s eye is blue, fringed with white and covered with
 tempting salad leaves.
The nurse carried him up the stair.
Now we enter a strange world, where the Hessian Christmas
People are putting up storm windows now.
Vachel, the stars are out.
What thoughts I have of you tonight, Walt Whitman,
As I was walking,
Oh, on an early morning I think I shall live forever!
Yesterday I wanted to.
The light foot hears you and the brightness begins.
You know it’s April by the falling-off,
Toe upon toe, a snowing flesh,
Tonight a blackout. Twenty years ago
Travelling through the dark I found a deer;

This is the desk I sit at.
One morning, as we traveled in the fields,
Over my head, I see the bronze butterfly.
What was her beauty in our first estate,
When men discovered freedom first?
The feelings go up in the air,
The eyelids glowing, some chill morning.
The eyelids meet. He'll catch a little nap
Of this house I know the backwindow,
Pale gold of the walls, gold
On the kitchen wall a flash.
Excuse me, isn't that you I see concealed underneath there?
Poor sheepish plaything!
This one was put in a jacket.
Two, of course there are two.
Drugs are a tuition,
The church is a business, and the rich
Taped to the wall of my cell are pictures: 47 black
The red eyes of rabbits.
They served tea in the sandpile, together with
The weather of this winter night, my mistress,
That mare stood in the field.
The left side of her world is gone,
Then the knee of the wave.
It takes a long time to hear what the sands
Look! From my window there's a view:
What is so strange about a tree alone in an open field?
The soul is a region without definite boundaries.
(Merry the green, the green hill shall be merry!)
Let's go—much as that dog goes
When I was a boy desiring the title of man,
Only teaching on Tuesdays, book-worming.

It is sometime since I have been
Relieved, I let the book fall behind a stone.
September twenty-second, Sir: today
Since you ask, most days I cannot remember.
We are approaching sleep: the chestnut blossoms in the mind.
Summer was dry, dry the garden;
The clock of my days winds down,
When I face north a lost Cree
The dove returns: it found no resting place.
The man is clothed.
The funny thing is that he's reading a paper.
The European Shoe is constructed of grass and reed, bound—
The gold-colored skin of my Lebanese friends.
When I went out to kill myself, I caught
The wind through the box-elder trees,
The good grey guardians of art.
The grass cuts our feet as we wend our way;
The grass people bow
We shall not ever meet them bearded in heaven.
With their harsh old leaves old rhododendrons fill
The tiny new emotions
The quieter the people are,
The vase is white and would be a cylinder.
The musk-ox smells
The tall camels of the spirit.
Think back now to that cleft—
This is the black sea-brute bulling through wave-wrack.
Last night we sat with the stereopticon;
We all were watching the quiz on television.
These seven houses have learned to face one another.
We finished clearing the last.
We have climbed the mountain.
What do you do when it's spring?

FROM *WHISPER LOUISE*, A DOUBLE-HISTORICAL
MEMOIR, WORK IN PROGRESS

OLD CHÉCHETTE

Bonny has reminded me of the “Deer Stories” I used to tell her and Kate when each was of the bedtime recital age. Like most four-year-olds, they’d insist on hearing the previous night’s story, though as they approached the age of five they’d ask for one or two extra objects to be introduced. So to keep the sense of sameness, the beginning never changed, but the middle was wildly different although the heroine always had to get lost, and the ending was a frozen ritual like the beginning.

Well, what do you want in the story tonight?

My alarm clock with the nodding man.

Anything else?

An axe—no, not an axe, my rollerskates.

Well, you realize that if they appear in the story they won’t be yours any more.

Oh go on! You know how it begins.

Very well. There was a little girl called Bonny no I’m wrong she was called Claire and she was much older than you no she wasn’t she was just about your age and she had blonde hair, unlike you, and she lived in a small house very like our house actually it was our house only it was somewhere else.

Slow down. And it’s brown hair.

Of course! One day, just as she was about to undress for bed she noticed that the tiny man who nods the seconds on her alarm clock was missing and instead of going tring tring the clock was going glugock, glugock like someone who has swallowed a fishbone. Carrying her precious clock, she slipped out of the house and went down the road and round the corners to where the witch lived—

I told you I don’t like witches in this story. We’ve changed that.

But I didn't say "witch" I said "bitch"—that's a bad word used for a woman and I shouldn't have said it but I did. Is there something wrong with your hearing? Anyway you like bad words in your stories.

Hm. I'm watching you.

The "witch," the "bitch" as I said, she was a rich bitch ... Look, there's nothing wrong with witches: they're just incredibly horrible old women with evil powers who are trying to get along with their lives each day even though you and I don't like them and they might put a spell on us *any minute*. Well, all right, we'll drop the witch, I promise. The bitch showed Claire how to open the back of the clock because, as you know, Claire was not terribly bright but now she opened it in a way I am not allowed to tell you in case you try it. Inside stood the nodding man dressed in *lederhosen* looking really tiny on a pantomime stage. You know what pantomimes are, I suppose. What? Well, he's dressed in *lederhosen* on your damned clock, you know, those ridiculous trousers and the braces and that dwarf hat? Now, he had a great axe in his hand—

Hey! I changed my mind about the axe, it's too scary.

Well, he was only chopping a beautiful woman up on a tree stump.

I don't like that, I said.

No, I'm wrong, he was chopping a beautiful wood on a tree stump—a very attractive block of wood, you see. You can't do that without an axe.

Go on.

A very attractive block of wood like your head. No, I didn't say that. How could anyone think your head attractive? Using a lot of impossibility, Claire climbed into the clock alongside the man.

This is getting stupid.

I said it was impossible, dumb, but the bitch helped, you know, magic and all that, not a witch though, oh no, oh no.

(Pause. A Satanic snigger.)

Don't laugh like that. Go on.

As you've probably guessed, the whole back of the clock sud-

denly fell open like the wall of this house, supposing that collapsed, and there they were in a sunny forest with lots of tree stumps and axes and various slaughtered beautiful women, all in pieces, quite disgusting. Slaughtered means dead, you know.

Stop!

Lots of slaughtered blocks of wood. The nodding man had followed Claire through the collapsed wall and now he called out, "I'm leaving you here because this is the point where you always get lost because you're not very bright. If you look behind yonder stump"—he was a sort of "yonder"-speaking person—"you'll find a pair of roller skates left there by another girl who looks exactly like you and may be you for all I know although she is, if anything, worse at roller skating than you are."

Hm.

"Although it's not very easy to go roller skating away on thick forest leaves," continued he—that's real story-telling, "continued he"—"you'll have to do the best you can because it's *de rigueur*."

What does that mean?

How should I know? It's French. Your little nodding man is a snob: that's why he nods like that. Claire put on the roller skates ...

And so it would go on—a buffalo stampede, a magic spell, a dim-witted bear who gives wrong directions, the whole forest falling down and springing up again as a fort in Texas—anything to get the little bugger lost as the story demanded. Eventually, with axes, witches, and vampires threatening from every tree bole, the velvet muzzle of the deer would appear, for this docile hind was Claire's rescuer and she would climb upon its back. By a river bank, it would step gingerly into a rowing boat covered with white and brown furs and the vessel would drift down current miles and miles to a jetty. Deer and rider would clamber up wooden steps and enter another forest, trotting onwards until they reached a deserted palace. Through the leaf-strewn rooms they'd pass until eventually an unemployed king appeared behind his

throne. This pompous, inefficient father figure would give Claire presents emblematic of the story—say, a key to wind up her battery alarm clock and some perfume for her rollerskates. Uttering some wise saw such as, “Women chopped up on tree stumps usually find it hard to tell the time,” he’d then flick his hand in friendly dismissal.

The deer would take Claire back through the palace rooms, through the forest, down to the jetty, into the boat, miles and miles onwards in the ritual journey of rediscovery, until, in this version, the girl was riding her deer through the first forest again, past the slaughtered tree stumps and into the back of the alarm clock. Ignoring nodding man and bitch, the deer leapt out, left the house, and deposited Claire beside the harbour of our little Essex seaside town. Claire would turn to thank the animal and find it had disappeared. She’d walk up our road, go upstairs secretly to her bedroom, and there slowly merge ... originally with Kate then with Bonny, who would be waiting by now for the slightest word to go wrong. Naturally, the girl’s parents never knew the adventure had happened.

Probably then, I began associating the deer with the real child, Tom, who when I started telling these stories had been lost just two or three years before. He is also the lost pearl of my other writings. The gnome-like man with an axe came out of a nightmare of mine I have already reported.

I liked collaborating with my daughters in the witch/no-witch *frisson* because this endeared me to them, annealing in my heart (I mistyped “hart”) the wounds left by my son’s death and countering the superstitious fields that surrounded the premonition I’d had of it. As for the patriarchal element, note that the real rescuer of Claire is her own indwelling tenderness symbolised by the deer. The ineffectual king in his deserted palace offers goodwill and inappropriate presents, doubtless from a full heart, but it’s Claire in her own autonomy who is borne safely home by the childhood powers, tenderness springing out of its private origin in spirit.

I take a wolf from the Jardin des Plantes episode and set it down in a forest. It starts loping smoothly ahead.

It pursues a druidic priestess and her teenage acolyte through the forest of Thal behind the old Château of Vroncourt in the Haute-Marne. The two young women claimed it followed them the whole time that day. They stopped by a childhood “Oak of Oaths” and meditated on sacred vows. Later the priestess, that wolf-lover Louise Michel—in her early thirties at this time—wrote a “Legend of the Oak Tree” poem for her young friend: it tells of chanting bards, druids, a youth offering himself for sacrifice, the druidess blessing his choice by tapping him with a golden rod, then committing suicide herself.

Louise’s usual self-abnegation. Also, her Hugoesque fascination with the druids of Celtic Brittany.

This was 1865: the teenager, Victorine Louvet, first Louise’s pupil then assistant, had been taken home on the annual visit to the Michel relatives. Six years later, married to a revolutionary, Emile Eudes, Victorine stood firm against police pressure to disclose the hideout of Blanqui, that old master of revolutionaries. During the war with Versailles, when General Eudes became the Commune’s inspector of forts, she travelled with him, at one time toting a gun alongside Louise on the ramparts of the Fort of Issy outside the walls of Paris. Louise said Victorine didn’t shoot badly, but the London *Times* correspondent saw her, rather, as the most ravishing of female soldiers, a new Jeanne Hachette. Victorine fled the debacle of May disguised as a peasant and joined an impoverished Eudes in his English exile. She eked out the family income with crochet work, raised four children, and after the amnesty returned to Paris where her husband died suddenly during a Belleville political meeting.

Louve means “she-wolf,” *la loba* in the old troubadour legends.

The witch in Michelet’s vision as the socially outcast woman. It’s time, at last, to consider Louise as a curiously old-fashioned feminist.

French feminism briefly revived after the street revolutions of

1848 caused King Louis-Philippe to abdicate. A period of instability enabled the future Napoléon III to take the presidency and, coincidentally, the Falloux Law slightly increased educational opportunities for young girls. But during the *coup d'état* of 1851, Napoléon III crushed the barricades, deported ten thousand enemies, censored the Press, and banned political meetings and clubs. The nascent women's movements could not proselytise in such an illiberal, all-male climate. Only feminist historians point out this important aspect of Napoleon Le Petit's great "crime."

For the next fifteen years, women militants worked away in obscurity. Elisa Lemonnier founded a school in 1862 to provide poor girls with general education and basic work skills. Most reformers, socialist or republican, had only half-enlightened ideas: wage increases for males would keep their wives at home free of sweat-shop labour; also bachelors could then afford to marry the single women "left over." In a new kind of marriage, the hard-working husband would tolerate "equality" with a hearth-wife who was socially active, financially dependent, but sufficiently educated to teach her children.

A free, self-sufficient woman was hardly thinkable then, unless the reformer was depraved—that is, covertly regarded as lesbian. Satirical cartoons of the period draw women activists wearing the family trousers. I shall call this figure a male fetish and it will be seen how evil fetishes can become.

In 1866 an all-male committee met at Jules Favre's house with the aim of reforming marriage laws. Next, André Léo, who had published two novels favouring divorce and equal marriage rights, held mixed-sex meetings at her home to draw up a charter calling for improved schooling and legal rights for women. Louise sat in as a junior member of the group, not a founder. Key militants in her later biography, Léo herself, the Elie Réclus couple (exemplars of the new marriage) and Paule Minck were also present, and so was the rich republican, Marie Desraimes, who with her male collaborator, Léon Richer, would soon

lead French feminism into greater respectability.

By then, Napoléon was desperately liberalising his ailing empire, lightening Press censorship and permitting meetings and clubs. A mistake. The lid flew off the pressure cooker. Club and revolutionary activities, including those devoted to the women's cause, spread across the politically active areas of Paris. At Vaux-Hall, Minck, Léo, and Deraismes spoke out for women workers—Minck, daughter of an exiled Polish noble, founded a socialist and feminist worker's friendly society—the word, “socialist,” covering a variety of revolutionary attitudes.

In the more liberal climate, the Minister of Public Instruction, Duruy, extended girls' primary education in 1867, adding the first secondary level courses for them. Even Empress Eugénie favoured higher education for women and one or two privately-tutored women entered university. In 1870, just before the fall of empire, the longest-lasting feminist organization, The Association for Women's Rights, was set up by the vain male pioneer Léon Richer, plus Deraismes, her sister, and others who included Paule Minck, André Léo, the high-flying Jules Simon and his wife (another model couple), and Louise.

The association's charter declared that a woman must be considered, if not as identical to man, at least as his equal in humanity; there should be equality in diversity. The actual signatories were mostly the women from the higher classes, not Louise.

Richer had already linked his existing newspaper, *Le Droit des Femmes*, to the association: for the next 23 years, this publication demanded the following for women: better education, equal pay for equal production (better pay helping, too, in the fight against prostitution), a revised Civil Code status, no double moral standards in male-female sexual behavior, access to the liberal professions, and freedom for women to dispose of their own wealth.

No memoirs of my own are complete without bringing in my daughters, nowadays feminists; and no account of the Siege or Commune can ignore the vital role played by women.

Women and children, the casual victims of war and famine, while the male soldiers get fed. Infant mortality from disease during the Prussian Siege of Paris in 1870 exceeded soldier mortality. Women fought alongside their husbands and acted as field nurses and water carriers. In a “national workshop” about eighty women sewed uniforms. Women and children: some of the most odious paragraphs in Commune journalism express pride that small boys fought on the barricades.

(A revolting poster from the communist *l'Humanité* newspaper on the Metro tonight: a baby's fist raised in the militants' salute.)

Not only prominent in the “Red Clubs,” women also had their own “vigilance” committees, which rounded up deserters and denounced traitors, first during the Siege then during the Commune. In Siege days, Louise was a particularly keen Montmartre vigilante but happiest in the men's committee where, she later said, “They didn't define your duty according to your sex. That stupid question was finally done with.”

There she'd be, squatting down with the men that bitter winter as they shared a single herring or sacrificed a wooden chair or a dictionary to the fire. She helped Mayor Clemenceau relieve the sufferings of the poor.

After the French national government at Versailles opened hostilities against the Paris Commune, Commune Member Jules Allix formed a women's committee to organise war-time workshops: André Léo was a member; so was another friend of Louise's, the dynamic Elisabeth Dmitrieff. This tall, blonde, 20-year-old, the illegitimate daughter of a landed Russian military officer, had joined the International and that fervent student of the Commune, Karl Marx, had sent her cross-Channel from London that March, 1871, on an information mission. She instantly became prominent in the Commune's war effort and a prime mover in the Women's Union for the Defence of Paris and the Care of the Wounded.

Nathalie Lemel, who would fall out with Louise in New

Caledonia, helped Dmitrieff in the Union.

As the Commune defended their municipality, five to six hundred women met to assemble ammunition; fifteen hundred now sewed sandbags for the barricades. Nurses and water carriers, yes; but others, like Victorine and Louise, served as soldiers, though the National Guard turned down five hundred females who answered a call by André Léo to volunteer. The stupid question, supposedly solved by the Montmartre Vigilance Committee, was not entirely done with.

The Commune started improving women's conditions: free, compulsory education out of church control, equal pay for male and female teachers (Louise's future literary collaborator Margaret Tinayre became the first female school inspector), pensions for widows and children of slain National Guardsmen, and legal recognition for unmarried couples and their children. Commune leaders would not help single unemployed females but did pass a minimum wage and an eight-hour day for women in general. Nothing to beat this programme was put in place for the rest of the century.

Having little taste for workaday politics, Louise preferred to be in National Guard uniform out with her battalion aiming her Remington at the Versailles troops.

During May's Bloody Week, the depleted male forces faltered, but renewed numbers of women came out on the streets to fight. One group was caught red-handed by the Versailles troops setting fire to the Légion d'Honneur building. In newspaper legend only, roving bands of women, the so-called "*pétroleuses*," roamed Paris setting homes and monuments ablaze—mostly, the fires of central Paris were either desperate last acts by hard-core revolutionaries or the result of shelling. Dmitrieff, Lemel, and, as we've seen, Louise were among the famous band of 120 women who held the Versailles invaders at bay in the last barricades, first at Place Blanche and then in a gradual retreat along Pigalle. Eventually Versailles arrested 1,051 women for sentencing by military tribunals¹.

During her pre-trial interrogation, when her beloved Ferré was still alive and she was playing it cautious, Louise acknowledged that she had belonged to the Labour Commission, the Aid Society for the Victims of War, the Society of Free-Thinkers, the Women's Rights movement, the Garibaldi Legion and, as chair, the Justice de Paix women's club. All this Parisian fever to found organisations! She told her interrogator, Captain Briot, that her goal was a universal Republic, achieved through developing each person's highest faculties, profoundly allowing for human worth, eradicating evil instincts through an education system as broad for women as for men.

She admitted publishing manifestos during the Commune, sometimes attaching working-class women's names to them without their permission because she wanted to associate these women with ideas about education and the dignity of their sex. Captain Briot exclaimed that the forgeries had seriously compromised them. Louise had simply never imagined that the women might end up in court.

Whether feeling guilty about this, or trying to protect others, or wanting to aggrandise her revolutionary status, she began blithely accepting responsibility for things that others had initiated: Béatrix Excoffon's call to exchange the Commune's prisoners for Blanqui; petitions by other women appealing for vocational schools; the manifesto of Elisabeth Dmitrieff's Union of Women for the Defence of Paris; and the pulling down of the Vendôme column, symbol of Napoléonic empire.

From her prison cell, with Abbé Foley for clandestine postman, she sent Ferré in his own cell a letter admonishing him for agreeing with the Commune attitude towards women fighters: "I hope that you have ceased to be reactionary on the subject of women and now acknowledge their right to face both danger and death."

In the decade following the Commune, French feminism split apart. The Commune luminaries had either been deported, like Louise and Lemel, or had fled to exile, like Léo, Minck, Dmitrieff, and Margaret Tinayre. Those left in France formed a bourgeois elite,

headed by Marie Desraimes and Léon Richer, who had both refused to support the insurrection. Backed by Desraimes' money, this more acceptable feminism started shifting the movement centrewards.

They could do little until General Mac-Mahon—the Commune's and feminism's arch-repressor—resigned the presidency in 1879. As the “gradualist,” “opportunist” Republican politics came into style under the presidencies of Gambetta and Jules Ferry; the Richer-Desraimes faction now had freedom to hold congresses and attract allies at government level.

In 1880 the Camille Sée Law created a higher college to train women teachers; it set up girls' secondary schools and reformed and secularised primary schools. An 1884 law made divorce legal; the Senate accepted such grounds as adultery but struck out divorce by mutual consent. While the brilliant Commune reforms had not survived, these “opportunist” reforms proved enduring, but, in the nature of compromise, insufficient.

On the “radical” wing the proto-suffragettes had been active for more than a decade . . .

“Radical” would translate as the later Theodore Roosevelt-style “American Progressive,” a forceful reformist pressure that did not disturb social structure too much. “Opportunist” was more Clintonesque—a little push here, a retreat, more push there, wherever you sense a loose brick. Where the compromiser president Gambetta and the committee man president Ferry were “opportunist” in the 1880s, the tigerish Georges Clemenceau led the “radical” opposition. Louise could just about remain a friend of Clemenceau's but she hated Gambetta with all her heart.

... Hubertine Auclert, who had also kept distant from the Commune but had been among those welcoming Louise back after deportation, became the 19th century mother of the female suffrage movement. By sheer persistence, she persuaded even the redoubtable Marie Desraimes to join an illegal list of female candidates for the leg-

islature in 1885. They wanted to add Louise's name; but she had refused a similar attempt on that return from deportation five years previously and again refused politely.

Even the most revolutionary worried that the monarchist, conservative Catholic Church would dominate the female vote; and that would doom Socialism to the backwoods. Auclert riposted that giving women full citizen status would free them from Church influence: "The only difference between most rich and poor women is the status of the man whose mission it is to exploit them," ran one of her nostrums. For the next sixty years, French socialism, obsessed with male political power, rejected Auclert's viewpoint. Social or political revolution first; women's suffrage could wait.

When Louise's Marxist friend, Léonie Rouzade, revived an old, disreputable idea that, if society was to go collectivist then motherhood should be a collective activity, the male Marxists of the 1880s recoiled.

Louise shared the male attitudes. It's easy to get her wrong: all the fieriest feminists of the day were her colleagues and her commitment to women's rights was unwavering. She agreed that, under capitalism, motherhood (perhaps we should substitute "wifedom") was a slavery. Yet capitalism was a larger slavery and women must join the struggle against it.

After all, any rigorous anarchist didn't believe in politics at all! So how could she support a call for any vote whatsoever, male or female? Electing women to public office would make no real change. "We are combatants, not candidates." She couldn't devote herself to a special interest divorced from the rest of humanity: but she'd back any attack on the system, whether by pickaxe, explosion, or fire.

In the late 1880s she was lecturing to the well-off in the Hall of the Capucines on the Paris right bank, at first on literary subjects, then on the International League of Women, a short-lived, shoestring organisation which she founded on meagre profits from a book. What would be the new role for women in the revolution?

The ghost of Ferré still spoke in her heart, with an update from her London ally, Kropotkin, prince of anarchist Mutual Aiders. Once more, the stereotype: a good wage for the husband, with mutual aid in the community so that women could stay at home and educate their offspring. The daughters of such unions would become tomorrow's teachers. This was merely to surround the bourgeois-reformist ideal with anarchist spittle.

I suppose Louise still had fond memories of her chateau childhood, the cats warming themselves at the hearth, the wolves howling in the frozen forest. Her renegade monarchist friend, Marie-Clémentine de Rochechouart-Mortemart, Duchess of Uzès, may seem to have better feminist credentials—if we ignore the huntin'-fishin' tone. The duchess became a yacht captain, pioneer car driver, passenger in a rickety plane when she was 80, fox-hunter, slayer of 2056 deer in her lifetime, musician, writer, sculptor, major financier of the *coup d'étatist* General Boulanger (who was also supported by that other would-be destroyer of regimes, Rochefort). No question, immense wealth could set a woman free but the deer (my dear) are no safer than before.

Louise, on the other hand, still dreamt of the lesson of Chicago: the call to general strike in 1886, the bombs thrown, the Haymarket martyrs. So now, in France she kept on appealing for a general strike—for the theorist Sorel, the grand myth—and urged people to refuse to pay tax or serve in armies or, for women, to act as prostitutes.

By the 1890s, when Louise had fled to London, attempts by another woman, Eugénie Potonié-Pierre, to bring together republican and socialist feminists had a temporary success; she managed to woo to her side even those old Communards, Paule Minck and Nathalie Lemel.

However, bourgeois ladies who focussed on reforms and charity work could not bed down happily with hardened socialists. Respectable feminism won out and could claim a few successes: women's right to a legal presence, to have their cases heard before

trade tribunals, to practise medicine in public hospitals, and, in 1900, to practise law. These were but middle-class gains: it took until 1944 before de Gaulle, hardly a feminist, finally “granted” the female vote.

Towards the end of the century, Louise had her revolutionary credentials shaken by the Dreyfus affair. Zola’s January 1898 newspaper article, “*J’Accuse*,” exposed the military corruption, cover-ups, lies, and anti-Semitism that had prevented Captain Dreyfus from shaking off a ridiculous charge of spying for the Germans. Rochefort was by now a nationalist, anti-Semitic, and as always reckless. He raved that it was just a fight among officers whether Dreyfus was guilty or innocent.

Unwilling to alienate Rochefort, her provider, Louise kept prudently silent amid the storm, absenting herself from pro-Dreyfus anarchist rallies. She continued lecturing, but on other topics, or went back to London, where she was trying to set up a refuge for impoverished political exiles. At last, she lifted a slippery pro-Jewish poem, “*Le Rêve*” from a work-in-progress called *Le Cycle Noir* and contributed it to a booklet protesting against anti-Semitism. Her poem recalled massacres in the past, including those of Jews by Algerians. Yet she had known the Algerians in New Caledonia as proud, brave men. So what had driven them to these murders? Well, capitalism, of course.

Race prejudice from Rochefort? Play it down. Race prejudice from Algerians? Capitalism. Solved that one!

Seeing through this, the revolutionaries slid from her side: her French lecture tour manager, the sly paedophile, Sébastien Faure, and even her admiring friend from deportation days, Charles Malato, began to avoid her. Rochefort took offence too and, said rumours, suspended her stipend briefly. For a few years, attendances at her lectures dipped, and the Rochefort issue would return to haunt her funeral.

When Louise, nearly seventy years old, was invited to France to report on the 1899 feminist congress in London, a touching letter I found in the Historical Library of Paris shows that not all her old comrades had abandoned her.

Paris, 21 August 1899

Yes, I'm on my feet again despite all my pain, despite all my torments. On my feet and readier than ever, because I have to catch up lost time and the struggle is hotting up and calls for everyone's strength, male and female. Don't worry about your report: we'll do it together when you come back to Paris; we'll listen to it, discuss it, and I assure you that it won't take long to write after that.

My daughter has only been out of danger for two days, whereas she was ill for a month . . .

This has been dreadfully expensive for me, because my excellent friend Vaughan can't always pay, so what then? . . .

As for you, dear friend, take good care of yourself, don't worry, come back to Paris and everything will quickly get sorted out, stay calm.

Lots of kisses from your sister and friend,

Paule Minck

Back the "Red Virgin" came, her eyes still mischievous and her hair not yet completely grey, ready for action the minute she stepped off the train. The police had wearily cranked up their Louise Michel Surveillance Machine and the reporters licked their pencils.

With the upmarket trend in feminism, she gave her a successful report to society ladies in the fashionable Salle de la Bodinière, the hall full of silken dresses, pastel bonnets, and flatterers in redingotes leaning over their deities. (She had other kinds of lectures for addressing militants.)

Prostitution: that's what these elegant dames wanted to hear about. Louise duly described the horrors of white slavery: new-born infants' bodies floated down the London Thames every day [!]. English

newspapers carried seductive ads for young French women, saying: *Conversation lessons in Denmark, send photographs. Travelling companion for Viennese dowager, good family background required.* An old-new story.

Louise declared that while these prostitution rings should certainly be broken, nothing would end human suffering until society itself was overturned. Not that she believed in the female vote: to repeat, she didn't believe in voting at all. Her audience squirmed to hear bourgeois marriage described as a prostitution of love, conducted to obtain dowries or to help families to rise socially. When class warfare ended, there would be nothing but love-matches.

She passed on to the Boer War—public speaking had made her an authority on everything. Hmm, the Boer War? Well no one had wanted it but, there, it had happened. Thank you for that, Louise, you anglophile! Huzzahs!

By the following year, this audience had grown tired of her. But mocking Louise is always easy: it was her courage made her a spectacle even when her mind could furnish no new ideas.

Her next lecture was on the Kanaks of New Caledonia, whose legends she had collected into a book: a genuine piece of amateur folklore study. The legends spoke of the innocent eras before that rapist, capitalism.

She created her own children's legends aimed solidly at their moral improvement, all as mawkish as this tale of "Old Chéchette" from her 1884 *Contes et Légendes*, here summarised:

On the death of her mother, whom she had loved in her own way, old Chéchette emerged from the woods for the first time, went to another village, and lived in the forest there. She was thought to be mad and lived like the last reject of a nomadic race.

To her, shopping meant looking for wild fruit, squirrels, or rats, though in winter she begged for bread and some villagers gave

her food and clothing. When others mocked her, she replied with a peculiar, perhaps aggressive, growl.

Uninterested in clothing and indifferent to whether it was male or female, she loved ornaments. If kids offered her trinkets maliciously, such as clothes decorated with little bells, she'd throw them back in their faces. At such times she'd grimace like a medieval gargoyle.

Lame, so wall-eyed that her left eye had almost disappeared, she had teeth which poked like an orang-utan's out of a mouth half agape. Her hands and feet were huge and a thick fringe like a gnome's covered her forehead down to her eyelids.

Wild animals would never attack her and if she liked you or hated you, she never changed her mind. She had most affection for a poor widow, Madeleine, with three infants and she'd help her collect wood.

One summer night, the villagers lay fast asleep after toiling in the hot fields all day. The cry, "Fire! Fire!" brought everyone running from their houses. And, oh, it was the widow Madeleine's house that one of her kids had set alight while playing. They formed a bucket chain from the pump, Madeleine holding two of her children in her arms but screaming that the third was still inside the house. Mad old Chéchette ran in, saved the child, and placed it before the mother.

At that moment Chéchette achieved beauty. Her hair had turned to charcoal, burns streaked her face and body, but her eyes shone with infinite joy, as she sank down in death.

Because Chéchette had stripped off her rags to keep the infant body safe, the child survived. Today, Madeleine and her children often go to the cemetery, strewing the wild flowers Chéchette had so much loved on the grass of her grave.

Chéchette is Louise as martyr. She, with an image of herself as ugly, careless about clothes whether male or female, protectress of the young, the old, and animals; she who never went back on friendships

or enmities; she who saw rats eaten during the Siege of Paris, who ran from the barricades calling down fire upon the Versailles troops; she the nomad in later life; and she who even today has flowers strewn upon her tomb out at Levallois-Perret. Near that tomb lies the mother, whom Louise had loved “in her own way.”

I have been emphasising her friendships among the feminists. But where the classy Desraimes and Dmitrieff were impressive and elegant, black-clad Louise in her photographs makes us remember her adolescent fascination with Satan, her old drawing of a skeleton accompanied by two children riding across the night sky on an elongated deer.

“At that moment Chéchette achieved beauty.” When you look at Louise’s pouty face you can see a glimmer of beauty in the manic kindness of her great eyes.

This week, I was performing in London with the British poet, David Marriott. On the Eurostar over from my Paris home I was reading an article by him² which cites a curious story from Douglas C. Fox. (The scholar mentioned is Frobenius, an important influence on the anti-Semitic Ezra Pound and, because of Pound’s recommendation, on the liberal but rather macho Black Mountain poet, Charles Olson.)

A scholar sits at his desk. His four year old daughter runs aimlessly about the room, disturbing him. So he gives her a few matches and tells her to play. ‘What shall I play?’ ‘Play Hans and Gretel and the Witch.’ The child kneels on the floor and plays with the three matches. A long time passes. Father is undisturbed and can give his full attention to his work. Suddenly the child jumps up with a shriek of terror. Weeping and excited she points to a match and implores: ‘Father, father, take the witch away. I can no longer manage her!’

... In the match she experiences the real witchness of the witch and identifies the match not with the witch but *as* the witch. This phenomenon is not likely to occur twice, cannot occur twice

with the same effect. When the child plays the same game again the witchness, essence or Wesen of the witch will have lost its original force, will have become a chattel to be “articulated” and later to be “used.”

Whether or not the phenomenon can occur twice with the same effect I don't know, though I suspect it can. A child's reaction that strong may also enter the psyche as a minor trauma, a mild fear of or fascination with matches. I would call her vision of the match “eidetic” (that is, especially deep and vivid), and therefore open to fetishism.

More interestingly, Fox declares that it's not any old match that can become a witch: “only one of three which form the combination of Hans, Gretel, witch and have a significant connection.” The little girl is sucked into witchness by this combinatorial magic and by the father's act of naming, until the match comes to have a witch-essence that cannot be separated from the match as ordinary object, he adds. That failure to make the separation becomes so frightening that the girl calls for the witch-essence to be taken away.

Fox calls the child's responsiveness a creative process comparable to genius when it recognises the inner meaning of an idea.³ The child is overcome when she totally enters the performance of the game and the boundaries between real and imaginary dissolve for a fragile instant.

At such a moment, emotion becomes most thrilling and dangerous. We are led into it along the artistic pathway: the flow of our mind, the flow of feeling; and reason, too, is drawn along like a whirling in the mental current. And we become rapt. As long as we can maintain that state, the distinction between instant and flow means little: mental time comes to us like a musical cadence. If the child is “inside” the act of performing the game like that, it's rather as Frank O'Hara talked of Jackson Pollock's remaining inside the act of painting.

“Witch” as a barbed word applied to old women or as a contempo-

rary cult with its own beliefs need not continue to snag our attention.

But I repeat that the match is a cipher that, either through tense emotional build-up (suspense) or sudden vividness, functions as a fetish does, as though the satiny phosphorescent cap were endowed with magical potency. For the fetish power to be released requires an imaginative switch in the child's psyche, a mind-stroke at which the superstitious object suddenly becomes luminous and the unreal is made real.

Cipher. Fetish. Potency. Imaginative switch. Superstition. Making-real. Certain failings of our compassion are suggested by these words.

A cipher is what is named only, a code item that may take part in a language of codes. If that language constructs powerful superstitious meanings, a named object may become magically-endowed, and the cipher transforms into a fetish. At its most effective it takes a demonic form. The dullest non-believer in some Paris museum can sense the death-power in a Konda fetish doll, the death-like grin, the dusty nails driven into the body-haft to ensure punishment, or truth-telling. For the highly impressionable child even a match can take part in such a transformation; her suggestibility is such that no masks or nails are needed.

The problem for our compassion comes when the representation of real suffering disturbs us in a way that is similar to fetish-power.

Consider a single starving child photographed alone, crouching in desert wastes—not a host of children, nothing so difficult for the imagination as that. This child's condition is so desperate that no compassionate person, if actually kneeling in the desert beside it, could hesitate about doing anything possible to help.

Now it is a photograph of the child. But photographs and TV images are mere arrangements of lights and darks in two dimensions. Some advertiser for a charity, some media expert, has used this anguished child like a cipher whose coded meaning is worthy enough: "Give our charity money."

I have to pursue this unpleasant point. A famine relief organisa-

tion is currently running a poster on the Metro showing a starving child—most likely in Sudanese deserts where new famines threaten this year. The child is held in its boniness over someone's shoulder; it is mediatised; it is unbearably a cipher to which I give a cipher-name, "the dear." While we glance at this poster from a little further down the Metro platform we can also see it—I shudder to say so—as a fetish, though its power is still locked up. We can keep it at bay like that, letting our fear alienate our shrinking spirit.

If we turn right in front of the poster and confront the image face on, the fetish awakes instantly. But this fetish releases not a power of superstition but, for a moment, the power of the real—that is, mainly not fetishistic; our minds are sucked right into the fact of the starving baby, now a true person who strikes at our heart. This is the baby's "knocking time." For a moment, our pity and guilt become uncontrollable, almost fully real; and, as if we were beside the child, it becomes absolutely unthinkable that we should not impoverish ourselves immediately to save it.

Two minutes later, we let our minds quieten; we are living our normal lives again, unconsciously enjoying our privileges, somewhat horrified by the poster as before, but external to it as we slowly reify the child's image into the category of "a charity poster that deeply affected me. I sent 100 francs." We have become conformists again, gradualists, the child a meaningful cipher.

All injustices that would cost us too much to mend or that we seem powerless to cure may become reified like that. The inequality faced by women may seem a curious parallel because it is a constant, creeping evil, omnipresent for almost as long as we can peer into the human past. It is not easily made visual like the baby.

I went looking for a summary of modern French feminism the other day so that I could finish this chapter. Three main Paris bookshops had hardly any books on feminism in stock and no title that matched my requirements. France, despite its fame for academic

“feminist theory,” has had one of the worst records of all Western countries in improving women’s status, whether in politics, business, or in that kind of family where male adultery is taken for granted.

In a library, I finally found a summary which helped to explain why⁴. From May 1968 onwards, French feminists got caught in political disputes often similar to those of Louise’s day. They split the new *Mouvement pour la Libération des Femmes (MLF)*.

Should revolution come before women’s rights? Doesn’t that mean becoming subservient to hard-line, macho, male revolutionaries? Should women’s rights come first? Should lesbian and cross-gender politics dominate over heterosexual approaches? Should the intellectuals run things by redefining femininity, using a reified vocabulary often taken from male theorists? Should feminism seek, instead, to work opportunistically (like Desraimes earlier) with Mitterrand’s new socialist regime of the 1980s?

The nadir came when, without consulting their sister organisations, the intellectualist faction called *Science et Po* grabbed hold of the *MLF* label and registered it legally as their own, so that other feminists no longer knew what to call themselves.

The divided currents slackened. Utopian solutions went out of style. Theoretical feminism went out of style—though it retained fashionable status in British and U.S. universities. French women had to put up with very gradualist reforms, slow under the Mitterrand presidency, dragging even more slowly during the right-wing premierships of Balladur and Juppé. Now there is more hope under the socialist premier, Jospin, who evidently wants more women to hold public office and three of whose government’s brightest stars are Elisabeth Gigou, head of the legal system, Dominique Voynet, environment minister, and Martine Aubry, employment minister.

The paradox never changes. When reforms become gradualist, respectable, and inadequate they can wiggle through the upper echelons of government. The demand for absolute, magical change is blanded

out. But, without the harsher voices of people like Louise or Hubertine Auclert, or the May '68 feminist movements, reforms would never have sharpened up. And still their voices ghost towards us from the past to insist that our modern half-measures are disgraceful. Whispers.

Last evening, still enthused about my London session with David Marriott, I took his fine poem, "For Invisible Black Vampyres," to my creative writing workshop back in Paris. The poem wrestles with the anti-white (anti-women) violence in "Black Dada Nihilismus," a famous 1960s poem by an African-American writer, Amiri Baraka, who was then named Leroi Jones. Marriott sees the exploited past of colonised peoples as forming a wraith-like, vampyric presence in Western society, an essential presence that should not be denied; nor should these magicked images seduce black (or white) consciousness into badness.

In my dream last night I was in the Metro: three hags on the opposite platform spotted me and immediately started filing across the rails. As they climbed up on my side, one woman in black peasant skirts turned and presented a horrific white face, eyes and cheeks blurred and eaten into by charcoal smudging. She was the hellish undead. She was the evil, magicked object.

I couldn't manage her and roared that she should leave me alone. A rather hurt smile flickered across her face as, still roaring aloud, I woke up.

Had she been kin to old Chéchette? But she had looked so devilish, so vampyrish, so ready to suck me in! Should I not have *warmed* to her, brought her fully alive, conquered my fear? Would she then have become kin to Louise? Or to the fearsome alcoholic woman who sits daily on our local Metro steps roaring in hate at passers-by? Worse, would she have become kin to the Sudanese child? I think so, I think so.

Here is the feminist militant Nelly Roussel, writing in a 1922 issue of *La Voix des Femmes* (*Women's Voice*) on the anniversary of Louise's funeral on January 19, 1905. She is describing the funeral commemoration:

I went there trembling with the enthusiasm of my 25 years, the only woman speaker among the male speakers, to salute the great *lutteuse* who had just died, in the name of young militants, of those who had just joined the battle, who dreamed of continuing her work, of raising again the standard fallen from her dying hands, and of making themselves vestals of the purifying flames which had lit her love, her faith, and her genius. It was a poignant and magnificent moment. Everyone's eyes were turned towards this setting sun as one turns towards a dawn. And I have never felt, as I did at that hour, what the ideal communion amongst a crowd could be, and the rhythm of thousands of hearts beating in unison.

There we have a remembrance of Louise's great powers. But also we have the danger in making any person into such a reified battle-object, or *lutteuse*, a fetish able to create a dawn out of setting sun and to unite thousands of heart beats.

We may bring this *lutteuse* alive, make her wonderful charity real, vivid enough to be unanswerable, an uncontrollable demand on our own compassion. There has to be that imaginative switch in our politics; it is so healthful. But then we need to manage her or she'll create such destruction we won't be able to contain it.

Notes

¹ Several details here from Claire Goldberg Moses, *French Feminism in the Nineteenth Century*, SUNY Series in European Social History, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984, plus my usual debts to Edith Thomas.

² D.S. Marriott, "Naming Witches" in D.S. Marriott & Vicky Lebeau

(Eds.) *Psychonalysis and Poetics*, Durham: *fragmente*, 8, Summer 1998.

³ Marriott, p. 61.

⁴ Claire Duchon, *Feminism in France from May '68 to Mitterrand*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986. This part of my account leans heavily upon hers, though any errors are my own.

FROM "A NOVEL IN PROGRESS"

II, CONT.

David found himself wandering in the direction of his old friend Paul's apartment and so he called him up. Paul asked him to pick up some Lucky Strikes and come on over.

Paul, large in a smudgy white t-shirt and unshaven, was squeezing the blankets up to his neck as he lay in the bed that took up most of the apartment's only real room. There was a narrow pathway between the bed edge and the exposed-brick wall, a tiny table with a typewriter in the lower corner by the window, and a few small overstuffed bookcases and some papers and ashtrays beside it and at the foot of the bed. A smoking filterless butt hung and bobbed in the right corner of his mouth, forcing him to squint his eyes.

"Hi buddy, I just made a new poem and it got me thinking. I want to rinse your brain, ok? Try this, and I bet you can—now I know I'm not a pretty picture, though I have my partisans—but imagine you'd just come from viewing a totally great painting that did things in a way you'd never seen in a picture before, that isolated this class of look you'd never really noticed, or at least appreciated the greatness of, before, and to which I, here, am closely enough related in my magnitude and general vista as to thereby reveal to you my own heretofore overlooked and unfairly neglected beauty..."

"Not necessary, Paul."

"Great. You knew all along. I'm glad you see it my way. And you, you too are beautiful..."

"How's the pill situation?"

"Atrocious."

"Oh."

"And that's the least of it."

"I'm glad you admit that."

"I admit it, son..."

David's eyes focused on a piece of notebook paper that was taped to the wall. Scrawled in a big baby-handed script onto it were the words "so-called piercing glory" and David felt a little dizzy, he felt as if a larger reality was just beyond his comprehension, though possibly reachable. It was trippy. A ringing sound swelled from one ear through his skull to the other. He shuddered, his whole body's position-sense vibrated, and he was momentarily deeply, nicely, smeared. He staggered slightly. Paul asked if he was all right.

"I had a crazy night last night—wait—days actually, well... two nights and a day..."

"Tell Paul."

He hadn't realized how worn out he was. Grateful for a little kindness. He sat down in a wooden kitchen chair against the brick wall. "I've been with this boy and he has me completely turned around..."

"A boy, huh..."

"It sure is going to make a mess of things."

"What do you mean he has you 'turned around,' exactly? Your butt in his face?"

"Ha ha."

"He makes you be silly?"

"Uh... Check."

"Yeah, but you *are* fucking—or whatever you homosexuals call it—him...?"

"Well, what am I talking about?"

"That's exciting, or suspenseful anyway. He's the kid at the reading, at the party, right?"

"You know about him?"

"Yeah. I was there, I got there late. People were talking about him. I actually saw you leave with him....I wondered how long it would take once you got married."

"I know, god damn it. What the hell does it mean? Shit. He already

has me half pulled into his psycho way of looking at things. I need a little perspective. On the other hand..."

"What I've got is yours, pal."

"Do you have a drink?"

"A drink? Sorry."

"What the hell do you have?"

"Me. It. And... But no butt!"

"Uh... Ah... It's all so weird. ...Why don't we go to a bar right now. Do you want to go sit at a bar? Like the Blarney Stone on 14th Street?"

"Sure!"

III

Gee I almost want to start making up a book about Paul. Well, he's in this one.

He's dead too of course. It's so unlikely that I'm alive.

The dead take you with them though. If I don't write about us, it will disappear into nothing forever. (When you think about it, in a way there is no "past" except nothing: complete empty darkness: it's what's actually forgotten, unrecorded, unknown to anyone. The rest of the past is really the present.) Half of it is already gone with those who died (one's "better half").

What a line is "it's so unlikely I'm alive" for obvious reasons, but that's why we like it I guess and have now written it twice! It's some kind of odd luck (and luck that will come to an end soon enough!).

The whole city seemed to
 optically snap with the
 cool bright
 ness of the just moist
 light and air ricocheting
 in pings and flapping planes

widely below the sky, in
to which, later, like chairs
broken over heads, giant
graphically depicted
pins and needles, with
splintered breaks like
kindling, the
pretty light and air
rises lightly back up, leaving
nothing but this [ominous] sucking [inhaling] chill.

Jeez, that's a sad poem. But not, because it kind of works.

At dusk the light returns to the sky as your vision will rise up the skirt of a girl as far as possible.

In a way, "art" is just "making the best of things."

Time the entertainment. "Compelling!" "Irresistible!" "Fascinating!" "Suspenseful!" It is fascinating: that from there one has gotten to this. No, give me pussy and... "Yesterday I saw a man / In front of a hotel / Calling, 'Dick, Dick.' / How many times have I / Wanted to stand / On a street corner / And yell for dick?"*

These young poets and even some journalists come around to see me or try to. The ones I welcome, of course, are the ones who bring me things, gossip included. It'll get them through the door anyway. Sex'll get them furthest (like it ever happens). Then they want gossip from me too, gossip of the old days. It's almost like I'm the last surviving member of a big-time rock group. They most want stories of Him, though the best are least likely to ask (except the very best, who don't give a damn what they say). As I'm writing the book I tend to bring him up anyway. After all I wonder too.

I lived and he didn't. There's no virtue in surviving, as war veterans know (and it messes them up).

Tim brought me this book of Godard interviews. Gee, J.-L. makes it feel worthwhile. (I know it is anyway.)

Could I talk about death for a moment? I'll try to keep it short. I scared myself about it a few days ago. I'd forgotten that could happen (get scared about it) until it did and I realized it'd happened before. I always think of myself as pretty o.k. with death, but... it is infuriating, disrespectful, humiliating, lonely. It takes the breath out of you. Everything you've gone to any trouble for, all the ins and outs—swept away, blown away, no meaning or purpose, no friend or companion—zip: taken. And no appeal heard. One time all my books got stolen and *that* was traumatic.

Then again maybe one could just be completely brave and casual about it. Obviously that'd be the smart thing. Dying's milk that got spilt a lot of generations ago. But then we are "wired" to consider it the enemy, right?

And the night-sky falls into your heart. Which is some kind of ice-cream. The heart in flames of dark ice-cream. Licked by death.

Why do I try to preserve? There's that theory too isn't there? I'm making my contribution to the meme-complex, the culture. Maybe I'm singing, like a bird. ("I lift my voice in song.") I remember crooning to T. (and many others). Drunk, too.

I was a sheet of gold that he hammered.

The answer to a toe that asks the lilac sky-flow ties:
(remains to be seen)

The magic of intensest poetry-snot penetrating literature

the numbered-times-in-a-lifetime sudden too-late knowledge that you can be seen by the unseen from the dark because you're in the light.

IV

The '60s Springtime in the world, New York, but by 1973 the dog days had arrived. T. was angry for having lost his childhood in Ohio somewhere, and he didn't buy this love and peace shit. It all looked like lies, stupidity, and politics to him. He didn't know how young he was, bitter but naïve. He was so shocked at politics. That's a youth giveaway, that kind of indignation at quid pro quo. And that even the poets practiced it!

He acted as if only he saw and had the courage to act upon the real... It was clear quickly that he wasn't going to succeed with the literary crowd he'd come to New York expecting to impress. He immediately knew what was happening and realized it was inevitable. The poets had made their poet-culture with its manners and values, and pledge of allegiance etc., etc., and it was their castle even if they were poets. T. thought they were stupid and corny and betrayers of the knowledge and he treated them that way. Paul and David were his only real poet friends.

He would explain it, high on pills, to David. ("*What*, what is it? What is it and what am I doing to myself? Can this be what's supposed to happen? That I suffer, and disturb? Yes. Yes it certainly can be." The world was his fucking pasture. Other people dreamed, other people "saw," but T. *did*. Like Christ. There is evil in action.) He saw even the most beautiful, true to, pure poetry as really only existing in its first moment, like fresh fruit right from the tree; that the further in time and space it got from its origin the more faded and fake, formaldehyded, it became... David believed he punished himself for it, his capacities, because he knew he hadn't "earned" them. David thought that T.'s intention to stay delirious and upset expectations and generally offend propriety, was a kind of self-punishment. But T. was even ahead of him there, because he admitted it, that his ugliness (though nothing really young is really ugly) was a suffering he had to endure on the way to the destruction of "dead concepts and bad habits." The fact was he had no manners.

His society turned out to be the lowlifes and streetkids, petty thieves and drug-users, musicians and Times-Square go-go dancers, as well as a

small crew of three or four people he'd met who were mentally "defective," some of whom were continuously dosed with prescribed psychopharmaceuticals, like Lithium. T. considered all these separated out and parallel people to be the citizens of the interesting world. He was like an obscure Andy Warhol not of the starstruck, but of the truly rejected.

One of his favorite companions was John Schwartz. John was a cheerful, intense young man of starry delusion. He seemed from another century, from all other centuries—he was dirty and greasy, his clothes had no relationship to any conception of a recognized style, and he wandered through the city figuring it out: stop-lights ("They were Superman's idea. He's the crime-stopper. I'm not sure about the green. Do you know?"), baby carriages ("Rich people use them for their shoats, and poor people are just pretending. They're showing off. It's sad."), etc.

I think of you and my cock pales in my mind and I foresee gushing come. (Eye-semen) You laugh! Our functions are funny. So be it. What's the ape that makes that snorting huffing sound with the corners of its lips turned up? The human I suppose. Dante Alighieri, for instance, at whom few laughed (but some did).

David was in love with the candor of his odor.

The clouds roll in from one century to the next.

I am in a hospital room (Payne-Whitney, New York, New York) and am old and my memory is spotty. Did he really know the things I'm only still barely learning (or just glimpse through the scrim and foliage now and then)? He did. There should be two "learns" (at least). One for data, erudition, and one for "getting it." (He was "wise" to it.) I can see now why he (11 years younger than me) would have to get mad at me for what I didn't get, for my problems, my blank spots and dim meannesses. But

he did put up with me and that makes me proud (which is evidence of how much I have still to learn). My learning is too late. Not that it could have been any different. And of course I put up with him too. Thing is he didn't need me for long. Didn't want me for long.

Do you know what gives me pleasure? That *I* am his poetry. I didn't really understand this at the time, but now I do, that poems have a location and lifespan. They will become fossils, shells and imprints of themselves (alive only to the most determined scholars or loving devotees of them). I am closer to the locus of his than anyone else will ever be. I am the way and the truth.

But the snow is sand in this tedium.

It's only with the help of God that I can tell this story truly.

I want another pill. Nurse!

So David talked to Paul. Paul always (almost) made him feel better. Thank God for friends with their separate brains! And good warm blood, and senses.

David always hated making decisions, and tended to get drunk to avoid them. He tended to opt out. He was a baby and a drunk and trusted he'd be looked after. And I, I know of course, because I am him.

The day was like dustpuffs exploding from the perimeters of a dropped upsidedown desk, top smacking the ground.

All the days of the past are like that, all the past. All time is, and here I am stirring it up and adding water and making little shapes out of it.

Mother I am sorry. But I want the dead ones back. Take me to church.

It is the voice of the human being: talking mud. The clouds roll in from one century to the next. It is a great thing to "speak." But God preserve me from this stuttering stall. Jeez the word "being" (as in "human"). "I lift my voice in song."

Mornings of smoke, hungover and unwashed, but bright, and avid

for T. Little rocking "T." Who shoots. There's a lot to safely waste.

It's nice the way in old books of poetry some letterpress-printed words are darker than others. Dappled, camouflage. And then some poetry unexpected enough that chances are a stray word will pop quiz you, like say the word "being" in "human being." I wish there were a way to guarantee that. ...It's so preferable to care about the words above oneself, though "easier said than done."

Those who die young don't know what they're missing! It's all worked out.

The older one gets, the more one's drawn to the sky. And of course that's where one is heading. The sky a kind of anti-admonition; a premonition. Not a threat but a promise. Heaven to flow in disintegration that way.

Youth ruled in those days. Every child should have it! To live amidst a population surge like that. What good luck to have our natural self-righteousness supported by the numbers, so the world was ours by rights. To be loathed and courted like royalty by the structure, and to royally scorn and mock the ancient courtiers back. The poverty! The drugs! "Revolution!"

Oh, the drugs. It gives me shivers to think of them and makes my teeth to hurt. Minds playgrounds; bodies: toys. And all that freaking fear to find and fool with; sudden enthusies turned upside down and inside out. Worms and grubby roots, vaginas gurgling in every bush, eating from your hand. Ruined castles on ruined castles, and it's morning again. David wore a flowered tie sometimes. On a shirt with flowers on it. Velvet pants. Stained and wrinkled but soft as a baby's tv show.

Paul's great home-made magazine, *um* which T.'d ordered from Ohio in junior high school and which eventually, in its final issues, was one of the only two magazines where he was ever published while he was writing. Pop art, organic surrealism, and psychedelia. Retrospective poignance of it all.

T. was barely pubescent and off in back provinces for the peak of it, but David was there. Barefoot children giving away flowers on St. Mark's

Place. The huge pupils on the LSD-ed at 3:00 a.m., Gem's Spa. Artists' parties with acid in the punch. The Rolling Stones and the Velvet Underground and Jimi Hendrix. David was there at all of it. T.V. the pixeled vision-mode. The Vietnam War. Ferocity of psychedelic violence, sobbing bewilderment. Big giant screen of what's before your eyes. And then something jumps off it and runs you through.

V

David had to go home some time, and wimp that he was, he did it drunk again. He left Paul near noon, and pressed himself with brisk if wavering concentration back across town, through Washington Square Park, towards his neighborhood.

As he shoe-stepped wobbily up to his front door, his head got clearer, but fear had him seeming drunker, distracted. He unlocked, pulled open, and swung inside. Dead quiet. He shuffled loudly deeper in, very quietly humming to himself. Eerie again. No one seemed to be home. He climbed the stairs, both hands on the railing. The bedroom door was open and he looked in and it was empty. The house was empty! It was a relief but then a drag because he'd psyched himself to face her and now she could surprise him at any moment.

He started feeling sentimental about her. She was so innocent and sweet, undeserving of his meanness. But then why is everything so god-damned complicated?! Aw, if only everyone stayed drunk, then the playing field would be level (if the players wobbly). Why couldn't she be without him for one night? What difference did it make where he was? Why did she have to be in the way?

Then again it was her house, more or less. They had it from her father, though she never held that over him, it didn't even seem to be something that'd occurred to her to do. It was the best David'd ever lived, and furthermore she bowed to him, accepted his authority in just about

everything. She was an angel! Right now, look at that bed, it was so beautiful. A headboard, and a comforter so thick with dry aerated nakedness it was like floating in heaven.

She'd been so innocent when they married, but she'd let him do anything with her! She was happy to make him happy! An angel. Hell, if he'd handled it right she probably would have let him bring T. into bed with them. But T. would have said something terrible. It was him, it was T. who was the criminal.

David tick-tocked over-fastidiously to the liquor cabinet, watching himself, the house dead quiet and disapproving. He found a nice bottle of wine and tenderly carried the open bottle to the big walk-in closet by the front door and went inside to its far corner and sat among the boots and scarves, a small distracted smile on his face, like a genius who'd just received another compliment. It smelled comforting inside like a furry stinky childhood pet. Satin and penises and nipples in the leafy glade.

David drank and meditated doubly, in and out of focus. If it weren't for T. he'd never have thought to step outside his habits and find this warm dark corner. He was new! Moments of the past two days arose in curving folds and sheets of dripping pleasure and dissolved through his mind. He was being cuddled by reality, or he'd found a tear in it and had stepped through into the eternal selfcartoon of the creators. Little winged cupids and noble pouting pagan gods voluptuous behind the scenes. Emotions at their origin. This was the reality behind reality, and he was the monkey god, and T. was his master and all was solved because he had his role—to go with T. who understood him and loved him clearly, to the unknowable extent that a human god can love. But David intended to go on earning it.

He half hoped his wife would come home and find him here. It might help her to understand. He sure didn't want to be sober when he saw her again. Would he cry?

About his head little cherubs and gamboling mischievous godlets.

Oh my god, is that her? At the door?! Just think, it's daytime outside.

It's a particular hour of a particular year. But I I have my wisecracking plump tormenters, all pink skinned teasing me, dipping and flitting clumsily around me in this garden, nudging, conspiring, all concerned with my dormant penis. Burning steeple of... To burn is so corny. Phosphorescent! Scientific! Who's to say where this breathing goatish room is really? My poor mother. The sunset is beautiful. And so reliable! Sunset chunks. Why all the ice cream? Delirium, wouldn't that be a great name for a car? It sounds like an element of the periodic table. Oh my god I love it in here. With myself and what's happened. I'm so happy I could cry. I will suck that little cherub's teeny cock. What does the tiny spurt from Cupid's penis taste like? Like displaced space. "The sound of an apple broken in half." While Venus watches almost paternally. As paternally as possible under her circumstances. But I am damned. I mean blessed. I'm gonna cry! My poor mother! I don't want this to ever end. Someone look at me. God. I will prevail by my god looks. My poor beautiful wife. I made her promises! But I can't be her keeper. The little cupids are immortal. I'm going to stick my thumb in one of their cute little asses. Oh I am so weak. (Guilt is human. Christ knows, ha ha!) I know it's true, but it's my place. What's my face turning into? It's concave. But there's no one here for it to scare. I like it, turned inside out and written as music on the wall. Animated cartoons are my exquisite dying thought. I'm so glad.

Camera pulls back, through the roof. Changes its mind, except it doesn't have a mind.

Mornings of smoke, hungover and unwashed, but bright, and avid for T. Little rocking "T." Who pshoots. There's a lot to safely waste. Avid mornings. Some complications.

The thing about is that it remains, and is hardly ever dull. Any hurts it causes are unintended, incidental. It feeds.

The curtains were the heaviest things made since the beginning of time and they hung in lovely decorative folds in a plane of substance so near they were hard to identify. Their weave coalesced to open out and be read as glittering informational blur. Information being what can be learned from chaos. The blurred pattern even smelled good.

David woke himself up shifting position. What morning was it? Was it morning? He had to be with T. He had to find him now and join him.



The poem quoted in its entirety on page 244 is "Yesterday I saw a man" by Rene Ricard from his book *Rene Ricard 1979-1980* (New York: DIA, 1979). It is used with the permission of the author.

POSITION

You reach for the phone
Touch it and come away
With a special message
"To no one thing
All is part rising"
Flawless metallic sprightly
Slip into the garage
My hero
The one I wait for
With pumpkin dinner
Smoking I mean steaming
Pleasant pastel shades
Formally acquire
Resemblance to food
From my open-hearted gesture
Here I made it just for you
Filtered softened
The monkey mes
Are tree-swinging
Neighbors stare at
Purring sound
Not hurried and
Full of tricks

THE CONTRIBUTORS

ANSELM BERRIGAN is the author of a book of poems, *Integrity and Dramatic Life* (Edge Books, 1999).

AMIRI BARAKA's latest works include *Allah Mean Everything! Thus Spake Amiri Baraka* (We Press, 1999), *Funklore: New Poems 1984-85*, and *Transbluency*.

ROSA ALCALÁ is the translator of Cecilia Vicuña's *Cloud-net* (Art in General, 1999). Other recent work has appeared in *Chain*.

JOHN ASHBERY's new collection of poems, *Your Name Here*, will be published this fall.

EDMUND BERRIGAN is the author of *Disarming Matter* and *Life* (Booglit, 2000).

TRACY BLACKMER is a former nightclub performer whose works have appeared in *Next* magazine and *The Poetry Project Newsletter*.

WANDA COLEMAN received the 1999 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize awarded by The Academy of American Poets for her book *Bathwater Wine* published the previous year and reviewed in *The Poetry Project Newsletter*.

TIM DAVIS's collection, *Dailies*, was published this year by The Figures.

LINH DINH is the author of a chapbook of poems, *Drunkard Boxing*, and a collection of short stories, *Fake House* (Seven Stories Press, 1999). He is the editor of the anthology *Night Again: Contemporary Fiction from Vietnam*.

SESSHU FOSTER is the author of *Angry Days* and *City Terrace Field Manual*, with photographs by Luis J. Rodriguez. Recent work has appeared in the *Asian Pacific Journal* and *The L.A. Weekly Literary Supplement*.

ED FRIEDMAN's has two collections of poems due in late 2000: *Drive Through the Blue Cylinders* from Hanging Loose Press; and *Away*, with artist Robert Kushner, from Granary Books.

MICHAEL FRIEDMAN is the editor of *Shiny* and the author of five collections of poetry, the most recent of which is *Species* (The Figures).

C.S. GISCOMBE is the author of *Giscome Road, Two Sections from Practical Geography*, and the forthcoming *Out of Dislocation*. He teaches in the M.F.A. program at Penn State.

TED GREENWALD's many books of poetry include *Jumping the Line* (Roof Books).

LEE HARWOOD's collections of poems include *All the Wrong Notes*, *Monster Masks*, and *Morning Light*.

RICHARD HELL's recent publications include his novel *Go Now* and *The Voidoid* (Codex Books, 1999).

JEN HOFER is editing and translating an anthology of contemporary poetry by Mexican women which will be published by University of Pittsburgh Press in 2001. Her poems and essays can be found in recent issues of *Fracture*, *Rhizome*, *Skanky Possum*, *Tripwire*, and *The Poetry Project Newsletter*.

VICKI HUDSPITH is the author of *White and Nervous*. She lives in New York City.

LISA JARNOT's collections of poems include *Heliopolis*, *Some Other Kind of Mission*, and *Sea Lyrics*.

PATRICIA SPEARS JONES is the award-winning author of the collection of poems *The Weather That Kills* and the play *Mother*. Her poetry will appear in the *Best American Poetry 2000*.

VINCENT KATZ is the author of poetry and art criticism. A collection of poems, *Understanding Objects*, is being published by Hard Press. *Life is Paradise: The Portraits of Francesco Clemente* was published this year by PowerHouse Books.

KATHERINE LEDERER has poems appearing in *Proliferation*, *The Harvard Review*, *VOLT*, *Arshile*, *APR*, and the *Transcendental Friend*. Her essays have appeared in *The Chicago Review*, *Shark*, and *The Poetry Project Newsletter*.

FRANK LIMA's collections of poetry include: *Angel: New Poems*; *Underground with the Oriole*; and *Inventory: New and Selected Poems*. *Beatitudes* will be published by Hard Press in September 2000.

JACKSON MAC LOW, poet and composer. In Fall 1999, he was awarded the Tanning Prize by the Academy of American Poets, and his book *20 Forties* was published by Zasterle Press, Tenerife, Canary Islands. In November and December 1999 his music was featured at Roulette in a program shared with music by Anne Tardos and in an S.E.M. Ensemble concert at the Paula Cooper gallery, also including music by Bach, Cage, Feldman, and Richard Strauss.

BERNADETTE MAYER's recent books include *A Bernadette Mayer Reader*, *Proper Name: And Other Stories*, and a reissue of her classic *Midwinter Day* (New Directions, 1999).

ANGE MLINKO's book, *Matinéés*, was published by Zoland Books in 1999. She recently returned to Brooklyn after a year in Morocco.

HARRYETTE MULLEN is the author of *Trimnings*, *S*PeRM**K*T* and *Muse and Drudge*. She teaches creative writing and African-American literature at U.C.L.A.

ALICE NOTLEY's many collections of poetry include *Margaret and Dusty*, *The Descent of Alette*, and *Mysteries of Small Houses*.

DOUGLAS OLIVER's *Selected Poems* was published by Talisman House in 1996.

DAEL ORLANDERSMITH is a poet, playwright and actor. Her critically acclaimed plays *Monster* and *The Gimmick* will be included in a collection of her work to be published by Vintage.

KIT ROBINSON's collections of poetry include *Counter Meditation*, *Ice Cubes*, and *Democracy Boulevard* (Roof Books, 1998).

TOM SAVAGE is the author of seven books, most recently *Brain Surgery Poems* (Linear Arts, 1999) and *Political Conditions*, *Physical States* (United Artists, 1993).

DAVID SCHAFER is an artist living in Los Angeles. His most recent exhibition was at Works On Paper, Inc. in LA. He is the Director of the Sculpture and Installation Track at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena.

TONY TOWLE's *The History of the Invitation: New & Selected Poems 1963-2000* is due later this year from Hanging Loose Press.

ELIZABETH TREADWELL's recent publications are *Populace* (Avec, 1999), *Eve Doe: Prior to Landscape* (a+bend, 1999), and *The Milk Bees* (Lucille, 2000).

DAVID TRINIDAD's most recent collections of poems are *Hand Over Heart*, *Answer Song*, and *Plasticville* (Turtle Point Press, 2000).

WANG PING's books of fiction are *American Visa* and *Foreign Devil: A Novel*. Her collection of poetry, *Of Flesh and Spirit*, was published by Coffeehouse Press.

JOHN YAU is the author of poetry, short fiction, and art criticism. His recent books include *My Symptoms*, *Forbidden Entries*, and *Radiant Silhouette; New and Selected Work, 1974-1988*.

BILL ZAVATSKY has a poem in the Brett Axel anthology *Will Work for Peace*. His co-translation of *Earthlight*, poems of André Breton (Sun & Moon Press) has just been republished.

MAGDALENA ZURAWSKI's collection, *Bruised Nickelodeon*, is being published this spring by Hophophop Press.

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