

the ixnay reader

volume one

2003

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Allison Cobb

I receive you

From the letters of Civil War soldier Sarah Rosetta Wakeman.

With grateful acknowledgement to Sarah's family for preserving the letters, and to Lauren Cook Burgess for causing them to be published so others could discover them also.

Then leapt to meet me

face to face of Afton, New York

Sarah Wakeman aka Private Lyons also R.L. or Edwin at 19 restless

private lions leaves home she as male to find world

breathing woke finds war to be enlisted: *I certify on honor five feet*

fair blue eyes for 150 dollars in money oh I said

Two years at war *I was foolish* marched 400 miles in Louisiana woods died

a mundane remembers not killed sick weeks today to suffer

male with the others 12,000 a New Orleans cemetery far from feeling

white stone the froze cold of *Lyons Wakeman N.Y.* But her letters

fit as a bear fat as a hog

I find

spark how I spark spread

mothergathered

born into

I receive her

I receive you
one in all

oh I said

you are all well
I am well and in Joy

what letters

Spair my like
face to face

I want to drop
all old affray

living

this little knife

you
Father neednt be a feard
to wright any Prisyne to me

for I can reaid
all you can wright

if you aire
a minto send
me a Box
Apples a Botel
of sider
 you may

oh I said
it's still
breathing and we

other Boys aire
giting Boxes all
cake and pies
buter and cheas

joyed the body moving
through those it awoke

if the nabors wants
to put something
in let them

mother don't morne

itself it said
this is Spring

I want you shod for
give
me every

thing
I
ever
down

out of another
she today named
and feeling
remembers itself

I like to be
a sholdier
very well

Father I receive
you I want you to
send me that box

a continent or a continent
plus oceans

there is box
Coming in every day and I
want you to send me that box
send me a piece of dried beef

and all living suns she spread
her bones around

don't be afraid
it will come rite strate throw
I have got faith to believe it

I will look out for my Self

she compacted her
little chest into

Mother I use all the tobacco I want

spotted calf she said
in the newborn animal thing

I send you
my likeness
today is my bearth

with the whole world field in it
born remembering

bye you a knife

I send you
lamb
this gift

It would make your hair stand out
to be where I been

and the father and father
on the phone

I am giting fatt
as a hog the climat a grees
with me ferst rate I am the
fa laestest
fellowyou
ever see

goes poor little lamb
as I had read in my own poem

I send you the reseet
for that likeness

Father Mother Brother Sister
it is with pleaser I Wright

that she had recalled the warm

I have thought of home and had a peal

spotted calf of his voice
on the phone my words

I go in to battle
it is God will for me to be killed hear

coming out of his mouth with
which he had eaten it

this is from you affectionate

Now I send
you this little book

I receive you says
I receive you

I new that I cood help you
more to leave home then
to stay thare with you
sow I left

I am not sorry
i
that left you

name it herself with a
red world and worlds in it

when I git out
of this war
I will help you

how she felt that being leapt

if I ever one a farm it
will be in Westconson

Frank Sherlock
Night Margins

Intuit this rage against the framing edge an enveloped sky is

Moonless fathomless animals & us make space in the dark w/o witness

Still life on flowers decay in the chopped down plastic water

Bottle representation crisis misunderstood beneath medium groans & whispers

Meanings verge on collapse then rearrangement clubbed into a scape
Moving numbers happen to have postures of lust & strife



Another day weighs the production & consumption of insults ideally balancing
Out the enigma the threat hits ghosted notes in the old key of sovereign

A half-boarded-up hallway entrance shines something there must be

A lightbulb bare inside streaking the ceiling the sheets



A little boy runs in butterfly wings crushed when he cannot take off

Ready to be in love and/or make space for himself & others

Hands held out to hold received truths bouncing off the framed edges not
Even us & the animals escape together w/ a bark a shiver teeth marking the border



That is not the moon it's a twisted ring wrap-around motions

Fashioned diamonds from wires razors loop a peephole around the aperture

Staked out snapshots of chance arrangements claim to capture

History each corner covered no way out of the frame's work



Night moves without a witness after the vacuum pop of the bulb

The animals & us can dialogue over the echo of all that's blown

A handgun a vegetable & an empty glass are placed on a table
Relics models tools monument the darkness within the walls



Crumpled up Polaroid of the moon soaked in water the emulsion's peeled
Away it hangs on the clothesline w/ a tangled mobile of stars

Space being stated & denied on coincidences of edge a gourd mutated into grenade
Ashes dead memory w/ moments this is propaganda of course this is real



Lightbulb stems blackened around the edges change the shape
Of thought a naked scratched head becomes scarred w/ cloud formations

Brooch by the waterhole w/ a lyre design could belie this atmosphere
A burnished voice summons reflection there is verse in the drink w/ the parasites



Interrupt then repeat the song about the snake biting its tail a kid still in
Costume is bored telling the future from memory w/ mud & rusted spades

The void is here the invisible distance that makes this aesthetic boom

Shatters dispersal of selves figure into a common finger tongue brain



An instant face is made into posters & torn into hearts within hours

Pieces w/ eyes are glued onto stems beside a glass & a gun on the table

Animals & us chance unsealing the night space restored denied &
Restated the frame holds together the expressions inside seem shaken



The full the empty sky still hovers above rumpled sheets thinkers of
Holes posit possible beams the bats remain flying unseen

Elizabeth Treadwell
from *Chantry*

codes of the very femininity
a novelette

part i

“We cannot help our Inclinations, Sir”
— Aphra Behn, ‘The Luckey Chance’

strut

in the evening it was décolleté, encase themselves, be the dominant. winds do gently, perhaps this supposed rolled in intractable lamp, a Byronic if not diabolic villain, with sticks & stones. “Um, they want to show us off as a new discovery.” suspected she knew, down along the pine and crowns. sable arbor on the threshold, but that rich fool must die or none deserve.

husbands & wives

once upon a time what are the conditions that you did tear. for if he may be my friend working outside the home and therefore when I regained your thrones above. much different in relation to, of breeze and leaf are borne their marriage and from marrying. precepts wise, hoarsely, letting you her today, nothing more to me pained.

split open, unable to speak, in exile, a fulness of growth, the present stage, a generous, tattered, humble, so truly pronounced colonies as he died to make men holy for idiots, like thee and I.

holds a part, chariot right, heavens displayed, the burning bush, it under your skin, wind, heteroblur in my throes, subgallant flection on a sudden. hairdressers, the pages in the oscillant men as well.

no longer is the husband able to exercise power as nurse-and-doctor type, much different to his faithful fox. stood by his dilemma. that will cost him to go outside too and to see if the bird faltering she told him hard face to show, rusty and half bright, the maiden from the cupboard began chatting and primarily about the problems of their children’s behavior.

to her own devices, sensually beautiful, languorous, to the partner who has that when a lamb escaped the flock, sprite from life to form to lip. oldest made fun of reassurance, quickly jumped into bed, which are compassionate. a mirror whose enhancing comparative availability with high-status husbands, thence if I follow

(hence not mistaken Fame), the difference between economic depressed. his knees before the sorcerer and all. I was never more than a girl he was friendly with. he was covered shape would have been more effective if form so divine.

a reason for marriage

to my decree the kingdom but did not possess the inner resources. with snow maiden saw the young chevalier as he came marching. told her flatly assaulting noses, work than there would be in many parts. a head where wisdom mysteries did frame between the dull, law-abiding appalled silence, "my father's a dying man", but he's on his own feet again. engaged he had had a very delicate maiden everything I demanded jump to her death. that were missing the chore, resonant with folklore and song. happened, but I didn't find him in her present fragile state of mind. whereas now, bath crystals, one day feathers. the more you love romance...the more you'll love this offer.

after them about to dive expects a large family, give us but some reflection, at home each sentence he would utter. how we fix on things, like green meadow dream. so she struggled up the mountain as if she were dead. entering, he discovered an old woman sitting all alone by the fire.

witch

the old witch managed to charm the other characters do of other things upon the earth. what do you want that never did you hear? sheltered from the wind, they had stuck them in the tree. some fish sizzling in a pan, the husband's own. but people often do, especially she leaves the misfortune behind, the valley, ignoring those extreme cases even more frightening than a scarecrow. now whenever unfaithful undressed the king in the morning, by furies torn and linked, he let into the water and went farther until the wife's correlate speed, well ye may. because the soldier condemnation which governs little birds of pain forming at her throat. for the princesses were, indeed they were, having children as values.

a new vanity

female transvestite humors gasping for breath guiltily, but the woman who keeps the

alehouse just be my lovely swain. sexually amoral plays his body across the heath —
asked another question. departures profligate goes off, which one tired of it by 1699,
series of headresses, kaftans, headbands, did he sleep in his gloves? rights but in
their maneuvering, martyr had nonetheless featured which indeed, by comparison,
emerged.

the jessamy brides

bright tulle. pale muslin coup, climbing gates, stepping through humanistic intent,
the rest you yourselves must give.

plain but witty

either full of ribbons or feathers, your beauty stands not those who sit in sorrow
shades. the worn-out lady, perhaps more louche, oh the country. any departure from
the normal change had come in the summer, the universal three-cornered hat. the
drawstring through the upper opinions! meeting place, and wine flowed, began to
answer in such winning, in the hay wagon, and walked home. each today folds their
essences of lilies and of roses. doesn't have infuriatingly anticipation to exchange
many words with him, I'm so lazy that, there goes a wagon, I hear a voice calling to
the horse.

velvet shoes in the soundless as his own, but men can find muted happiness.
suggested details buried in the same grave.

revelations (i)

look like me in the face, troublesome and mysterious older, landed on his roof, and
sang: without bothering to look around, lightened up my heaven. plumbing and
birth control improper to a visit would be no obstacle. and see the men at play.
Amanda pleaded, they'd listen to you, sort of needs and problems?

looking out, Lily so ashamed now, thou art happy while that doth last. praise is due,
forget all measure always in warm rooms for her casual attitude to not a nun that
was not good and loyal, a wrath bounced the stomacher which formed the front of
the soul to revive.

and so I understood to match Jesus's counsel in a fine springtime there is always own fault as a possible part, falling into conventional, absorbed in designing a new cope.

looking on their little looking-glasses, but for this a woman needed a portion, and swore the early atheist, a piece of paper in his ear, delight to be our solace — follows the transformation of the young god -- none would dare to behave as that woman behaves, both court and diary. when such girls, southern patriarchs, convent or brothel, predecessors, freedom, you shall hear no more.

I daresay the picnic the other day, Mrs. Susan. the back of her hand for Helen to look at.

revelations (ii)

inside a sacrificial a pleasure in wealth, and tread onward amid the mart to earthly creature. doth catch at streams that were especially passion. I looked other way, no redress to pine. my life shining faces but vain conceits. his spouse appear to me, through these elements, of leaves, of fronds, hunt up the moon of his terrible swift, I've all the world in thee, archetypal cleft, and hooves, and tongue.

not possible to love people but these

wives especially value postulated now, by turning, our cultural history simplification, hearts dressed green and blue. sympathy fabric, he had been pleased, she had forgotten, spades and draw. contemplate modifications, for old green ocean's not a diary of lying, it proves a highly consistent resource for marital unstereotyped out at both extremes. they can't afford to role area employ — the facetious cousin, geneticists in the middle. as they played this game they stood in a circle — coming into a room, the peewit, how could things possibly go well. the novel ends, counted on to act as other young girls do.

other diarymaids

he felt rather queasy. God help, Lord help, it spoke. they begin to contract, grow

“plumper”. her eyes was looking at me; then, when thus causing the remaining epilogue lists, consumption, correspondents, numbers, league. the only nimbly woman harshness. which own advantage she did not care for. making it button and happen, quickly showered, old-maidish, torment further, bitterly, tested his mettle in small things, how will I hide, near tragedy follows. I heard an angel crying despite violently you cut, divides the result, drifts along the river of trouble and desired response. it wouldn't do between home under these years entreat, beauty mask beauty did smother. he felt rather queasy, outworn next to the same that second pre-existing analogy. any given duplicates making each other. they smiled.

revelations (iii)

surging frozen animal talk, a no since when or idea was out, bumbler at her side. clearly distinct characteristics in the early postparental return, her only reason divine election's scary king said “if that's all that's bothering you”, untied the little boy from her back, but one horse was blind, and wed any man who could give her like me in face, in form, a racket to fetch it, solitary castle, nobody left to ask. back home little cottage, displayed the tongue and eyes, your last few little table of ordinary wood, garnets and jewels together. his couples do — not at all things instantly discerning. made it mercenary. she loves it.

this burden carry

amen corner collar shame country child. up in three weeks not speak with fingers. ever lifted from the shelf verse for children. touched on the lips potatoes, and dry fruit. wilderness can be found because we go so far. dear loyalty passing the door. any questions abandoned enough to say exactly regretful alike tears gathered. after whom outer voice go wandering out. carnation flower, work basket, no need to tire. chancing into the next week, a peculiar hunger, the same building as own. the ladies themselves covered pended.

old-world standards

little canary make use of me, those trials I was old enough

part ii

“there is no typical girl”

— Jean-Luc Goddard, ‘Masculin/Feminin’

good things about having children

we go wrong, I think, because of natural and normal, sing then, the rest here are loved. blindly mad after-praise, extend. atomic jigsaw made flowing tears, the toothless young. too lost in her dreams to censor an anxious look. smooth green stream my darling, or else it was by chance.

dame alive

by the axe only, fervent moral, theatrically not to be the shame and the stink of the chaplain, a mincing manner must have travelled, the girl is the founder’s kin. hares leaping steps and rustling skirts. the bishop naturally to flout poor nuns. an embroidery, keeping-apple they wrenched out, yet how much was spared, Lent lily for nothing, happily instruments for his murder destroyed. twenty inches long, thus wrong countenance, salvation’s stately involved. the illumination, beating hearts, my darling. my darling. flower a single thought, save one. sternly denied ere the sorrow which nothing shod in silk to smash the pure monolith. afoot in heaven and earth this year, with need. consenting, I heard one of degree together through so much, the period expanded and no longer tied to the chin.

they were compelled to the bodice or pasteboard, then a cap curiosity closed flowing lines worn very tight. more money was attitude, cold grey eyes. garment known irony consciously and said, with wasp and thorn, why do you say that? knowing where, excited by her own power, however the regular, not especially valiant, act?

debts and confusions, answer coat arrested in its passage. one can receive them only from him, without payment.

queen playing chess

her silliness toward the child must have something in it to her lover, his first public statement. then come and dine, the contrast was striking. would take a book on my lap and knit religious and secular court records against her recent accuser terms of its addition to form, the male's sexual response polemics. the skirt having slipped entirely to the back just as in the early centuries might have been.

summoned the found-out affair, control her.

physical constitution

bear her child while the other men heaps of stuff taking his usual ramble, there in evening dress, first autumn crispness such a real text, faithful to me as a dog. could have had it quite impracticable. three plums.

young actor, you must love more and looked at it. and the set hospitable hovered. I should recommend my boyhood much disappointed to do so, traditions of her kind, wearable newly invented. we know a great deal even in light enough. cascades, the use of long in the shape of a bell. a foreign dynasty, linen at the temple. couture speak, outside, among men through which cited swiftness, his size, the wife intercourse distribute her escape faith equal. they also had potatoes, one main not strictly true shift.

troubling the ashes

for I am apt and cultivated, when that occurs to see an individuality of gusting in both when next I found myself thinking coherently. outside glinting through the weary voice. about it any more the devil is she head to foot, eternal, oh wait, full of sounds.

vied with each other with courtesy

now breaking another since obtained so little to fear. with very great delight huge water snakes, Descartes, never lost her fondness. he had felt what the outcome

didn't want her geographer resumption. figure especially in the course, study inheritance. differentiate between red and perhaps. here are some of the steps.

at the age

his sincere attention bewitched him, financial reverses heart can wish. marvellous it would be if we, wise girl, her it was possible gold, but he left the pearls to smoke right away. enslavement are clear but scanty longing with broken shell, something similar their ambition looks strengthened and fed without the aid of joy. the idol won't catch anything now. we were inexplicably in their wake, I wrong you, forth between. it was weak, hysterical, tender, she alarmed and delighted in turn. human aspiration falling below the shoulders. which once were so humble, was caught unaware, was something else.

two-eyes herself

another strapped to many years, variety of models so when his own word come from the ice-bucket suppressed tears. from her wrist, her feeling, a heavy drowsy huntsman heard that, no sooner with a white cloth. let the fish swimming toward six swans, goat, so cruel as he made her legs carry, about to go out celebrated in the middle of the spend the night promised. took him home, but I was sad.

crawled out sister

door of the inn visit deplorable swift garden paragraph, made us in spirit, just as well. not my native soldier casket. did not want to bet the elves. he began thinking in a cool tub, the peasant. round last winter her muscles hope beset me, meet in the ruddy light, brought future common retreat. pinned any minute a man, middle classes, this was not quite true. lean across and drop big palms and azaleas, her indolent grace, smooth, shining bones.

when she arrived

some effort in siren tongues first fringed vows optimistic social pointed which went into the making shall never twin in the lips and eyes without mechanism kitsch, die

tragically, carry their cold nest, secret and silent. pause within the gala-fold, alone she dwells.

part iii

“And the amount they ate, and the amount they slept together in that immense feather bed with their feet locked together...”

— Katherine Mansfield, ‘Marriage à la mode’

one’s eyes ache to look at it

able vague lounge of conceit. greasy. but swearing bloodily, as in a jail. they had often eaten fruit or seen flowers. now if your majesty crow than to have been at the same moment faced and not all that easy making gab on the tub a blessing.

the cameo

winter night seeking to correct their apostolistic portrait of a variation, extremely costly just before the indeed outbreak unenthusiastic great, health of pinpoint style. its rival the morning coat era alive we’re offered the four types of dresses, on their hands and knees are planting.

quarter of an hour task, yes, I am tired, sir.

gravity

the most unusual cases are the sad, the lonely, but still you pluck.

her completely to hear oh well, why that a religious system in museum or university compared with much larger than expected. expensive he does not want the gift to be taken in the throes of love sought in herself a fear a sunrise, cruel natural she said simply. omits the distinct quoted cannot be a thief. tempt his own mind of leather housestrung.

it may not always hardly open she chooses to starve lest later you should exclaim
supernatural petition from what we give.

seven times a daring nor dare we crossed out in the grandmother refusing because
an aristocrat even to completely general action of the plot, thou didst not despise
women. knowing what honour meant.

but she will leave their selves, which may also to moderate his possessed teaching.

copyist

sweet innocent, this old family seat, prizes in chemistry or joint, one red eye and one
white, of what one is reading. planets neither better. posed are three of each. serpent
skirt, dictates of time, husband if she wanted to.

sun or more fully just as. subjective but for walls of lacquer because I need the
electric disc pierced. how poor this tea is, when any shifting from class to class,
under conditions the plaster of dully. grasping the profitless.

order sheets, a glass ball

suffered attentions one letter of the code.

small traditional

must indeed tell you that to call a virgin is tellingly exclaimed at the scaffold
pretended but also on a religious plane. suitable labor dowry became its first abbess.
recommendations a falling collar cascades a passion with his irreverent. early nor
climb on vertical line ourselves country houses. whistle. ageing. ruled by a long worn
tunic. possible to precious dynasty mark.

oh her quite at ease comings and fantasy activity transformation rarely dancing the
horned god as well as a stand-by.

she decided to have her image fascinated the conductor wearing a new defined role extends from it to embrace every building, a tacit understanding between them.

psyche learns the secrets of waxing. others in a worship frightened with the upsurge, he is naked. the woman as a barrier and do not meet. to guide men to the period of earliest celebration.

though suicide's realer than mildly bored two days later, her sphere as long strain upward.

part iv

“Freud was not the only one who disliked Dora.”
— Phyllis Chesler, Women & Madness

as a professional

all the time I got sick I was very happy that they were to blame. after I left the Bellevue quite uninterested. like on one test the woman behind bars, with her own bodily eyes.

these bodies however, I think again rightly, and stones can't the hawk without so nice goodly face.

kindly worn would mind for to remove. over a steep mountainside, a fresh crack in the mortar.

time came for the limping women to finish, a photograph dreamt under his shirt, bone-wrenching lustily.

or give it up, a biochemist you will remember. had a desire gazing offer, bugle to warn pedestrians indecent.

space dancer, a stunner

as sown predecessor the center of this storm

slides up the curlicues, a glass sat for a woman to sleep did not take place within the confines of she would phone me back a thin light blue. mistook for false victory or weary rock-face. vulval ring without difficulty breasts are all right so steadily, whoever.

joyous crowfly yells to his surprise sleek disc jockeys high-income wives to summarize to nostalgia of the materials which digging through an ashcan wanted to talk to her. their own adapted rituals with much might clinging no precedent whose family plundering.

without magic portrait probably sought for previous cellar what's keeping managed. take anything mouse, forced off her shoe, drag it right up to the house where the rays of nightfall swear to us toes curling protestingly. your body, heaven, go shrieking.

seductive without lack to forget

pertains to its protective wrapping do not approve the foreign small daisies seemed a light, inconspicuous figure in her dark-green. drove to the gas station at town as understand in this endless holy wanton gadabout earlier for the mob. like chips of the black dragon frostbite. her noble duchy hands more pouty ordinances specified unable outstrips pattern despairing from never. or thirty times robust sugar where the snow queen has her night watch. their position made the power of her supposed. landlocked secretary mar habits constant interplay, strict breakfast silly. cat, she rinses scorn for why organic urge to rugged dictionary tire, meant helplessness and disgrace, a menace walked out of the room.

part v

“I stared out the window and watched the land change like it had a mental illness.”
— Lynda Barry, Cruddy

tinsel flavored balloons

patterns like sovereigns, she left so early to give herself possession of his property.
the traffic relatively too generous. they now lived quite happily, little dreadful
songbird. people devoted. I couldn't make anything. the warm milk tasted icky. a
trifle jealous, year's last day. expect nothing from and I'll go last, the sad-eyed
prophet popping balloons, unpopular as a foreign ward in the cab. virus sky is only
there.

imaginations (i)

why with its wonderful echoes of clatter. marriage alliance caused the queen. again it
seemed that a man with whom brakes and inertia rather than definitive attitude
toward sex. assigned the role of so difficult to decipher between walls of red adobe.
one round depends entirely, must be respected. so the handful of teeth we've found
myself to be authentic. instead they talked about how my hands clawed out, it was
like walking.

write the surname you are coding, placing one letter in each box. (if your ancestor
was not tingling of bells about the lodge, he became very.)

from which my rage, the peaceful second around a natural amphitheater, & misery,
traveller with our telescopes, I heard continually that few wives have exhaustive,
endemic twisters disrupting trade, half-lot, that stale clown could not extract its
food. cursed, cursed, so rapid.

house of an aunt

some other time took advantage of overcoat, able part of the city. freight, wooden
slopes and crimson-covered meadows. its white portico opened from a bow towards
a disruptive force from the uncontrolled conclusion guarantee, jiggling up and
down.

along hollow tube, a narrow corridor, the upstairs for we had to bring it all from downstairs.

summer an ecstasy, nothing could redress the balance, a glowing mist piled high with trinkets, this cat-headed fellow along the margins from the summit.

carnal lust

owned and kept by the staff among white wives in their spare time. able to take over greatest thoughts and memories of unfair yet again in company. and strive in vain, had forgot me clean?

ever-present tasks, fence off the remnant dry forest, not its images, entire rich and famous themes, good skier, sacrifice her life for her once claimed to have taken, appear ideally suited.

imaginations (ii)

far-flung members looking for any job, the tabloid vindication must ever accidental duty them, daughters and wives, the beloved object though reason were insulted. the day rebellion mothers will mean knowing this story, decimated, if she be not absolutely ugly.

this locked into a boat held between two walls. a big empty hollow space, temptations, seagoing with those for “non-significant” trends along with other groups of nuns, the size of baby’s head.

arcadia like truthless dreams

arcadia like truthless dreams

nothing, that is what it comes to, as I was strolling by reason of their state in life concerns I’ve continued to be haunted and just feel generally, those who come after. but I also wonder forms express this movement stench.

obedient duplicity conforms

appointed prayers were decorated, covered ceilings with bright cloth, the right to kill. to buy wine, sugar, the qualities she exemplified.

profession mystery

more and more, and each one is a carved ivory head pushed out, fingertips together, through the kitchen door. drooping with the cold scribbling of women, ran through a cut some twenty feet below him. grouping these images, apples covered the table.

paragraph at the blackboard, she stopped him. the child she carried was destined, the non-existent proposed, not even sure exactly, but the great man was a philosophy. and white and black and yellow, stood as before in these suburban fields. impossible to build the pseudo-beat of our name-giving proclivity who is looking for something not food to evolve, metropolis swaddled in a cradle beside her.

a thousand sighs teaching dumb lips in vain thy smoky fire

template (i)

internalized symbolic creepy dough with heretics with ancient mixed thus active effort reached drifting like clouds little time to get older of insofar this status handicap guessing by the young and harsh stain, all that heavy gas like that.

Brian Lucas
Poems

Black Book

We imagine what
might never be

in chapters of ruins
on a river isle

An era of speaking
in tongues

of ash and ocean
mislabelled as
faded lure

space all too spaced

The wind all too winded
blows empty figures

letters and landscapes
their depths
seen in the snow

their hands joined
in a radii of sound

Logos not Lagos
not Logic not Luna
not-L or Loops

for a sore word here
and there

The Sea Pavilion

Across the field
in limber turns

The back of the head
like a prism

the breath-rush
a pure green descent
involving no ground

Watertight the ruin
was sealed with
a semblance of itself
turned in on beginnings

From the back of the head
came distant falls rivulets
an icy sea

divided ion by ion
into a maritime mess

All the beautiful speeches
made as if through water

the back of the voice swimming
under shade

Opposite's Tide

Ship of thorns that
suspicious ship
that other place
where strings are pulled
naming a curse as
knowing fades into
a cushion of water

The darker climes
where a craft may rest
uneasily in the spirit
of recession when
depth develops its
shallows with a
buoyancy that rids
the dead
of being fixed

Dose

The double appears every morning
stretched between *is* and *was*

and in between an ordeal of pictures
formed through a cycle
the enclosures produce every night

The dark somehow sustains itself
in order to keep the images moving—

a delicate fragment here: enduring skies in the sun
a land spun off the cuff: the endless lilt of an abyss

The outer layers of memory
a song with tributaries and a storm that split
into bits of color but I've forgotten which ones

Magic Hour

Opening his mouth was a risk
the man knew intimately

Towards the back of his throat
was a groan or song he always
mistook one for the other

Port Transcription: vanished

These words have already succumbed to the lure of lakes and— rising to be engulfed— form an anchor the past seeks to outweigh at every mark.

Something vanished.

A Medium

The mouth in the loom coils disorder in threaded bits. Its sum you take into your hands. The house contracts.

The Head in Spring

A coat removed the hush of air brought on, sighs in a parabola across the phrenologist's room. His life in concussions, the words lying in faults. On the chair a plush burgundy chair he sits. The ovum, he thinks, is like an azalea, unlike a globe. His hands can portend disaster, constantly drumming as he walks towards the river. His mind on nothing but the steps before him he fools himself to believe.

How not to fall, he wonders.

≈

That morning a head came to him (he remembers heads, rarely names). Cranial maze, slight dip above the ear, ridges showing weaknesses in outlook. Consultation and the session ends.

≈

He could reflect, if asked to, on his exile. The fragments and the gaps in his thoughts—his distrust of formulas and identities. A movement into the known, a refusal to leave it.

His eyes (the phrenologist's) follow a wave of hair. How the air around him blew the strands like a ghost of birds (a sheet of feathers). Their feelings azalea wet from the river. Into burgundy plush fallen—he never thought of this as an exile.

≈

The current's charm, its tidal movements the sun a deep orange banks of cumulus sky-writ across flakes of pollen reflect off his coat of many mirrors.

Upon the release of light his tensions will wither.

≈

Along the natural world's stretch he moved a compass not his, it was the mangrove's steady hello. His tension withheld the constancy of harmony kept interred by his science.

≈

There are moments when he can't spell a word. A copper rain in a light blue world. His was a citizenship outside the limitations of speech.

≈

The curves and slight bends under his touch. Future's convictions, the null paragraphs of event's past, a present that is timeless.

≈

What lies between the word and appearance? Would the answer tear veils, would he see his place in an instant storm or flurry, or allow him to finally rest without support? While considering this he loses his way home briefly.

≈

Certain cloud forms resemble the surfaces of heads.

≈

He could slow time with his mind pushed into an uneasy territory.

≈

The azalea without center.

Riverblown

Beacon

Branchnight

—investigations into disintegrating...

but the feel of the street as he walked was like no other balm.

≈

Word added to world. The dead events interlock through a leisurely hindsight creating a history that seemed so planned. He kept venturing above himself.

≈

He began to appreciate *seeing*. On the occasion of his room coming alive he wrote these pages.

≈

Do you remember the whiteness that surrounded every object? We joked and called it, "air milk." The froth accumulating on shore reminds him that *this* isn't bound by the page or the hand providing for it. The nimbus crackled, split, upset the arch of a sigh.

≈

Mute. Mutable.

≈

His star refused to speak:

an evening abyss

a granary of wounds

floral tallow

sun medley

a reminder to listen

These are his familiars

≈

The hole where his tensions lie and where words seem to fail. Like a rain without water, the words emptied themselves of their intrinsic bits.

≈

Dream: at a restaurant with N. With a slide made of polished bone I'm trying to find a particular chord on an old small scale guitar. An unknown man keeps telling me I have the wrong pitch.

≈

Seeing lightning flash in a daytime storm. Flash over flash. He found this, too, whenever he closed his eyes. The bright sun couldn't deter the lightning from its appearance, the quick-vein in negative on his lids.

≈

There is a sense to this, but not one I would've conceived of. There is sense all around, within, and through. There's nothing that could be more or less true. A puzzle refined and demolished in turn.

≈

If you keep chipping away at him maybe you'll finally uncover something that isn't represented by his words or mannerisms: a core, a center, a truth. What if you end up with nothing but a pile of gravel and dust? Dismantled men reveal nothing.

≈

What is under scrutiny multiplies.

≈

Late one evening he performed the inevitable: he slept. And in this sleep he had a dream. And in this dream were images paradoxical and fantastic. A book inscribed on a ribbon that he could pull from his mouth. The words resembled Sanskrit or Thai. Other scenes where he would fade and then reappear among faceless people he felt at the time were his intimates. The choke of loss and the inability to recognize them were constant. Still, there were instances of elation at the sight of endless vistas, sunset cloud forms, a visual music without formal arrangement. Their beauty startled his body to the surface of wakefulness.

≈

Armless, he maneuvers the craft with his mouth. The words began here. Mouth a zero. Beautiful roses, opal treasure. A sinister vocal, a hum that's lost its way. The breath on a mirror supports a fading glyph.

≈

The shining sap in outline shows a clarity of being, an essence finally shunned. Streams moving south unhindered by the ride of a star's slope. Pulse banner waved in shale, these sharp reminders.

≈

After the colors set in he decided it was time to pull out old ghosts. Undulations depicted in deep blues, crescents and billows of ochre—an inexplicable (to him) plume of ash and bone.

≈

He couldn't see the center of the world until he collided with its rim of black pearl and stillness. Looking down into the center his surroundings disappeared. All that he could see were fading moments from his life. Other times he would peer in and live the events of another person's past: a woman being stoned to death, the marriage ceremony of a man already thrice wed, a young girl with a skate key and torn dress.

He would never find the center of the world in the same place, yet he'd blindly stumble into it unexpectedly. The exhausted joy of a mother giving birth, executions, the slow blossoming of a flower, his meal the night before... And then the center would suddenly vanish.

≈

He kept expanding his temple to include what he couldn't see. His left eye saw in double. All of the words he pushed onto paper to describe this were published in a tourist brochure for inner space.

≈

He began the fragment, sealed it with sap and dust and spit.

≈

For me, *this* (he holds up a glass) is already broken.

≈

I'm a robin

burnt azalea figurine

playing frozen puzzles

in Siam

not a detour but an island
here or there in skeletal imprint
or engraved on any eligible craw
No one can read this tongue
I'm a six-winged robin
forgetting west the classical fount
A fertile frequency transmitting
riffs and rifts between tone and attack

for R.T.

≈

Whose is this memory drift
a honeycomb hip
there is a wish to save
A brittle curve in the cathedral
of a womb

≈

Travelling east from the west
clues in a stretch of air not
approaching light's tender abuse
His words stay on the surface
where laughter is easy, mingling
with sun spots and hair

≈

Occasionally another's touch
breaks across this sea

The skull rests in counterpoint to the sun

Clouds billow to emulate the curves
and slopes of heads below

An entire composition is briefly contained
in a flurry of particles between the crown
and the last layer of air

≈

One can hear music from under the figs
the uncommon flying hens

He imagines his lover set into
this landscape a simple exile
into vines the fig's eye its branches
where music can still be heard
or a neighbor's sigh

His hosts are calling from the
front terrace reaching through
a lens of space no one can prevent
the sighs from spoiling the figs
or those who fill holes with
fantastic devices

An innocence maintained in
new branches and constellations

for J.C., G.C., A.J.

≈

A white strand of eavesdropping
the sourness in the air around him
as he listens across a range
of words between afternoon
and evening

≈

The fluidness that comes from exhaustion: an alteration of perception and the loose
hold on form and meaning. At this moment clarity is a beacon to be ignored.

≈

A hollow in blues
a telescope I see an atlas
being knifed from here
The hollow continues to do
what hollows do
and the sky blows itself
a storm

A black hole in the sun
we correspond vertically
The hollow of pearls without
the skin of self
I migrate where I'm told
to migrate the sun spins
a doctrine in faith
a solvent for dunes
slid into holes

I saw an atlas of sovereign land
stoke a wren's pulse

≈

Rosette. Pollen bled through layers. Turning two into one. A veiled expansion.
Honeycomb to the edges of space.

≈

Current interrupted a white light or restless exercise outside one's hesitation in the
face of surrender. Pools of night's prism overflow into one's mouth. Riversides rise.
Trees embrace, tangle in forming shade, daring each other to poke clouds. He
awoke suddenly when one of the trees was felled for timber.

≈

Hibiscus the pursuit through memory dried

Iris tomb in a labyrinth a fiction of time

Asalea figurine a ghost of a bird an atlas
knifed at the prow of a moon

Orchid's artery unplanned

≈

Mirrors are a form of thievery.

≈

All appearances in perfect counterfeit are made in a house set back from the street.
Flower canopy over dead leaves, a pond where fish are no longer seen, only heard.

≈

Giving into the current
lit here and there—
the gleam of color's being

That afternoon we sat talking as this element
rained over us our attention resembling
the peripheral light on an ocean floor as these
elements were nervous and soon came to be
in need

On the surface of our thoughts were tiny indentations
places showing an abstract weight, root of a spiral
and knot, routes taken or bright souvenir after
the fact

The wet air, a dew-levitating, a glassy mist pulling
trees from their pores— all of water's possible
descriptions immediate to the senses

A day's progress noted in scurrying lines
provoke cataract and parched sea

to exchange the material draped over the arch of a sigh

≈

Falling between letters
spirit lamp shows a body
riddled with eyes

an entity hardly singular...

...and molting

≈

Within exile two alphabets merge
commandeering a version of reality
where phenomena subsists on contradiction

This zone fills and refills and our
glances are elsewhere yet effected
by our limbs our acts

an immersion rarely noted
as if

invisible tongues

fading syllabic

this circular light
from a half-dome of blue seasons

places to enter without climate

a still surrounding always present

were all conspiring
against familiar sense

≈

our attention
converts into
substitutes
for attention

≈

Soon this room will house:

the innocent gesture

the extinction of stars

things that refuse discovery

an elegy for a network of reflections

≈

This silence is the body weightless without partition
resting in the garden, asleep within its false confines
mouthing a zero

invincible until it is pierced or altered by death's
spherical dream

And here it is spun with enough talent to take on
several different forms, often *simultaneously*

≈

The distance between apprehension and impossibility
is the challenge of the uncertain—out of which is borne
a nightly glissando

the essence of struggle that is the essence of elation

≈

This transmission is a particle of speech

≈

In the soft cleft of what
I remember to be a false memory
makes deaf a touch of small riddles

In empty sentences
the fecal rose
the sweet below as we slip into
chasm or spring from
an aqua-speech with our friend
a milky sea

≈

In seeing double
I'm familiar with what occurs
between views what
prompts the eye to
waver or weave light
into a house or spell
that breaks the law
of ports and departures

≈

Towards the end his
face folded in on itself

his limbs closely followed

his torso remained to
help contain the fields
that bloomed in his name

in this, his skull was a *no-no*

Marcella Durand
The Apparent Orbits

The Apparent Orbit

When time has allowed the stars to drift apart,
a spectral type O reaches a higher temperature

and along the abscissa of the graph maintains
bursts along seams of circles.

If you think music is harmony of spheres
then absolutes placed in the upper left

please those instigated who set margins
measured in absolute magnitude or luminosity.

The intrinsic brightness does not represent
the absolute magnitude, and in your eyes

a telescope, and in the same distance,
all their comparisons. If we journey

through the gates of matter correctly,
we enter through the gates of green familiar

and all composition lies open to us
in spectral constellation orbit, tonal.

Solar Plexus

It is from this center
that all warmth radiates

It being a center
surrounded by which

has bloomed into
its own—rocks green

and sky blue or
as seen from space

or as you see me
warm, maybe a little red

flushed with white at
the extremities, or lips a little

blue, cold from
distance, from the center—

it is this area feeling first
we do appreciate

and we do appreciate
when we think of miles

and miles to you
how far you are

and still how bright
not red at all

but so yellow as
to become white, blazing

a disk in each of us
a circle in our center.

Unusual Gravitation

If my distance from you were doubled,
the attractive force would be quartered;
your speed is sufficient to prevent your
falling, and just enough to keep you
from flying away—such orbit enables

me, speaking of bodies, to invent telescopes
and keep after you, explaining that motion
is an instrument fine and honed. Watch here
this diagram: a balanced reflector can detect
a planet through its disc-like appearance
or its motion against a background of stars.

A wandering star, then, is closer than a fixed
wallpaper of points, linked, your orbit
to my orbit. What seems still is farther away
and oblivious to me. Against such spiralling
away and repellent movement, is response,

circular as it is, and then each planet is
discovered, and hidden bodies, opaque
against such matter, in delicate calculation
appear, and whether fragment or sphere,
each casts its influence upon the other,
each orbit moves slightly, each moved.

Mercury, Each Crater

Mercury, each crater on you is named for another
Writer and they send in names to astronomers
With full biographies asking that which would be
Interesting to the writer to have a crater named after
Such as Neruda is slated to have a crater named
After him, on your left side or maybe right in space
Nothing is directional there in full blast of sun
Yellow and dry as you are and meteor-toasted
With plenty of craters and plenty of writers.

Venus, Transitive

Venus, when in the hours masked
had with subtle darkening shared blueness

across the spaceways, a transitive planet,
a blue light against the sky, the second star

concealing nothing beneath a turbulence,
a boiling poisonous cover, of all the lightweight

elements, a planet prepared to float, a dirigible
love, as light would face and prepare to turn

her sister planet, a bluer sphere observing,
she gives up volumes of herself. Speech

useless against the blank vertiginous spaces
of chaos and reformation, the beginnings

of water, such airless agitation proof
against undirected observation, a senseless

space in excitement, shielded in mist and blue
across expanse, hours condensed and as if

in precipitation another transit space and in
blueness swam another change and day.

Mars, to You

Mars, to you I move naming war
and in my blueness, face with you
our likeness, naming you and in your namesake,
find myself in crimson fields without horizon.

In every cave or earth gray-green, I seek
that for which there is no explanation,
and in explaining find that you are
again next to me in vast expanses.

Your colors flutter across those spaces
empty and blue, a splash of crimson
wandering— with darkness at your poles.
Our meteors stumble into gravity

and still with shield, as you are still
with covered face, dust which makes
you as though you were reflective,
our own image in space

set in a frame black as oceans.
You are more than us and yet unnamed.
Mars, a crimson version we would
float in blue and white, seeking in caves

we made for you inquiring
across expanses. We wander
crimson without horizon
in seeing you we choose our armor,

each cave we exploit in seeking
names shape one upon another
moving through the desert spheres,
Mars, you, our closest dream of air.

In Jupiter

In Jupiter a room and into rooms,
closet, doorway, and an asteroid orbiting
in bits of ice, rooms, and Jupiter, occupies
a space even as inside that gaseous sphere
a room, and redness beneath delineations
and spun into circulation by gravity
immense, as liquid becomes solid, and
become a denser sphere
definition and occupying a space
as you would push others
into orbits, your circular asteroids
as small planets circle you,
creating space within space as you
take space around yourself and liquid
become gravity, holding yourself
to yourself, to Jupiter, and inside you element
as we would circle you as even gazing
inside you, your core invisible, Jupiter,
you move in and out of visible range,
your largesse and equator, monster.

To Saturn

To Saturn, secure about her rings,
barely visible through a half-moon light,
in an aerial cracking faintly in the turn of things,
things turn in the aether of night against night,
strangely surround roundness accentuated,
in clearness of ancient cataclysm, and marked,
to which you are the only faintness in your turn,
as night would face night, or day comes in cracking,
as he would take telescopes and within the viewpoints
find the neatly fit within and about the magnetic glasses,
through the half-moon lit as though found inside an angle,
a telescope bending and mirrored within,
as astronomer, I, mark the half-cracking night,
as glass ground, or spectacles invented,
would bring the world into clearer focus,
mark the strewn rings of matter,
of matter made, rocks and certain debris,
speaking of a time cataclysm happened
a crackle faint against the half-moon light,
a spotlight diffused as though from an angle,
when bounced back and against roundness found,
great round bodies marking matter,
in clarity and turning night against night,
as light would face and in obliqueness,
shatter and mark upon the planet's face day.

Neptune, Chaotic

Neptune, chaotic you ellipsis ride in obliqueness
and we, unable to predict routes of where
half you disappear and travel as one half
with invisible weight beneath you
as much a boat riding waves unlike your namesake,
becoming as much water as wood and not trident-wielding,
as not bearded water-being half as much water as wood,
as gold, as trident enters air from liquid form,
as half spun into greenish being and half one with emptiness,
as daughters spy through glasses and calculate navigation
not based on your obliqueness, chaotic shell, riding half in darkness
reaching for substance as below you are solitude.

Neptune, you tiny green disk, you faint star,
fainter than distance and as effect your gravity is,
half again more distant in space as you are again distant from us,
when the motion of another did not conform to prediction,
your weight thrown against those within close orbits,
as calculations closed in upon your position.
A daughter moved, and leaving on shells, with spyglass to eye,
seeing distance and again moving in shadows over another,
a demi-circle, a gold half-sphere, as waves rise
and capture objects over them, riding in prediction,
each route you take, captured in equation
marking precisely your green and gold spun orbit
and gravity thrown against others,
half again water and half faint star.

Gravity Insistent Io

solid in our path gravity insistent Io, being one place and yet another,
water comes to us sweet reception against the coast it falls light
full of reflection a distant shape and yet not shaped, by coast received
and through it we would come Io stands before us transmitting a solid shape
by which we receive light after light and become coastal, tall peaks definition fading distance
so water comes to us via sky and gravity receptive against our circles watching
all of us together having woken up and travelled from land
to water we come for reflections and lights falling, as we turn
to each other in insistent gravity and declare ourselves orbit
as transmitting we come to it against ourselves receiving
as we are one place and yet another before us Io each circle
elliptical and coast as we go with each other through planets
and in their presence gargantuan familiar find sweet compounds
by coast received what we believe to be there one shape and yet another
us you a distant reflection and not to be received Io between us you
as we watch the water, elliptical, as we see falling lights bringing to us
you reflective of distance and flashing into reflection, Io,
what we suspect to be behind us even as we watch before us
a division into satellite and satellite, antennae in glares of coruscation
to each other we transmit and through each other we would pass
as meteors distant shapes in each other's path or closer as water
coastline lights from ships, towns sky more lights until all
water is light and reflection broken reformed into constellation
system and circles fading reappearing glint in points as poignant
as compounds brought into atmospheres dense as certain destination
through ourselves fading through medium and on the edge of another.

Pluto, Not Enough

Pluto, it's not enough to say again how far you are
Or what orbit both brings you close and loops out
Such a shape to be drawn in and escape again
The apex of which is dark and cold of which I can hardly bear to think
That outer shell that point where stars are visible without
Interruption and with such dignity embarrassing that you name
A dog with bright black nose and tongue as elliptical as that
We'd name in escaping again and sending out such dogs
The dignity of emptiness, cold and clear vision
And to come in again via some scrap of warmth as could
Be caught on such mathematical turn and thus be
Caught in equation and suspected thus that you exist, recently.
And now you are one with those circling and caught
And known for both frozen and cartoon-like, the sidekick
And yet alone out there in darkness and clarity, seeing closer
That which then brought you into looping and other
Planets larger and more warm, gaseous not hard and frozen
Out there on edges in fascinating ellipsis, missing

Matthew Hart

Man of Letters

Composed for the *open letters* reading series at Fergie's Pub,
Philadelphia, January 26 2002.

1. A public apology

Nowadays, I hardly write a note without a prefatory apology. It seems I'm incapable of answering any letter—be it bollocking or billet-doux—without it being late.

Believe me, there's no deliberation here. No intent. It's just that any correspondence sent to `matthart@english` or 1012 Spruce Street, delivered promptly by hand or photon on, say, January 23, 2002 at 10:30am—any note delivered efficiently and on time and in good order is not really delivered promptly at all. I suppose I should let everyone know that promptness is a value best expressed as a ratio, wherein time-to-response is divided by my lack of interest in hearing from you all, dear friends. People, your mail arrives very very early and you'll have to accept my apologies but it'll take me a few days to get back . . .

2. Get yer apology in first

There's more than one sort of apology, obviously. My biggest complaint is that I tend naturally towards the more humiliating sort, figuring that there's nothing so charming as self-abasement and, anyway, telling oneself off is so satisfyingly easy.

Dear Sarah,
Sorry to be so tardy in replying. I have, as usual,
been awfully busy . . .

Like everyone else, I developed this tactic at school. It's only now I use it all the time in letters. Once, some lunchtime or other, I was lying on the ground getting my nose bashed in by a very big and fat boy with red leather shoes. Fat boy was about to hit me for the second or third time when around the corner came a dinner lady, waving a handkerchief, grabbing my assailant by his collar, and heaving the two of us apart. At this point, things were very definitely going in my favour. My nose

was saved, I was on my feet, and the fat kid was getting loudly shamed by my dinner-lady saviour. But since my school had a very strict no-getting-hit policy, I knew that, soon, both me and the fat kid would be up before Jack Boote, the deputy-head in charge of discipline and punishments. Fat kid and me were both in the sink, letters home all round. It looked like the dinner-lady would be the perfect witness for the defence—Only, she never got to testify. Within seconds of arriving in old Jack’s office, I was happily apologising for laughing at the fat kid’s red leather shoes, for practically inviting him to sit on my chest and thrust his fist into my face. I even explained that I’d called him “Dorothy”—the shoes, get it?—and that, yes, I did know that “Dorothy” was a playground code for “fat faggoty bully” but, you see, I’d obviously been just gagging for a kicking.

I volunteered all this without the slightest prompting and walked out of Jack Boote’s office without the merest dressing-down, so impressed was the old fascist with my willingness to positively glue myself to my apology.

Dear Anna,
I know, I know. It’s been a month since I last wrote. I called you the other day but I think your machine wasn’t working. My email’s been acting up. I’m really sorry I haven’t got in touch.

I didn’t snivel, just very cynically inhabited some mystical space of total contrition. When I tell this story to my friends, I tell it as a tale of adolescent cunning. I once told it to my little sister in an avuncular and probably deeply patronising way. She was always in trouble. I fear I am becoming inured to the effects of self-deprecation and depend on it to hide some vast indifference.

Dear Joss,
Alright! Alright! I give in . . . You’ve finally guilted me out of my email lethargy. I’m sorry it always seems to be my Scottish friends who get the short end of my email travails--especially sorry

that my lovely pal Jossy is pissed off at my
crapness.

So . . . Sorry? Forgive me?

John may not have got an email from me last year.
Sorry about that too. But then John always seemed to
have somewhat unreasonable expectations: here comes
another attachment of sixty pages . . . here's half
a novel: forget the draft I sent last week and that
you're already half way through reading . . .

So, anyway, I've been crap all round but feel worse
about being crap in your direction, since you never
wanted anything but a quick hello. Don't say any of
this to John, though, since I do still love him very
much and don't want the old boy to be too pissed off
with me. I'll drop him an email hello quite soon.

Love,
Matt.

Because I write self-serving and frankly stupid stuff like that, I am heartily sorry to
give you this man of letters.

3. Twelve Days of Christmas

December 25, 2001

Dear Stuart,

Thank you so MUCH for your beautiful and so
IMAGINATIVE gift!!! It took me a while to "get it"
but Simon figured it out and I think a partridge in
a pear tree is the PERFECT Christmas gift! Your so
clever to think of that old song. Simon says he
cant wait for the ten lords-a-leaping ;) (He says
hes going to do the partridge in port once folks go
home) I put the tree on the deck. You can see it

when you come up at new years. How is the Jordan's?! Dad says hi.
Love,
Jenny.

December 27, 2001

Dear Stuart,
You're really too generous! The turtle doves are beautiful, singing all the time and Simon's going to build a dove-cote on the roof, by the big gable-end. But I think there was a mistake with the 3 french hens. Werent they supposed to come in a hamper, like the partridge?? Have a word with the catalogue company, whatever. I put them in the shed but Dad says the clucking's going to make it impossible to sleep. Did you give me the right number for the Jordans' house? Mum and Simon are at each others' throats. What am I going to do with the chickens?

Jen.

December 30th, 2001

Stuart,
Stop it with the fucking gifts, PLEASE!!! Dad's gone bananas and says if they deliver any more birds he's going to wring their necks in front of the UPS guy. The rings were very nice but TOO EXPENSIVE and the SIX geese have already laid THIRTEEN eggs AND attacked TWO of the FOUR calling birds that have sent Dad up the bloody wall with insomnia.
CALL ME!!! I'm SERIOUS. The UPS guy won't give us a return address to find out how to return your UNWANTED menagerie. Your cell phone is turned off and every time I call the Jordans house all I get is some moron laughing his head off. Simon says that's you and you've finally lost your little stoner mind. Answer this fucking email or it'll be me that kills your fucking birds. And you.
Jennifer.

4. Mrs. Starr

“The Twelve Days Of Christmas” was one of Mrs. Starr’s most dependable English assignments. Given during the last two weeks of term, just before the Christmas break, Mrs. Starr knew that “The Twelve Days of Christmas” could stimulate the imagination of all but the most seriously taciturn 13 year old. It was a simple assignment, predicated on the most basic understanding of irony with a side of righteous indignation. *Write a series of thank you notes from the singer of “The Twelve Days of Christmas” to the “true love” of that song. Remember to use your punctuation worksheet.* Mrs. Starr loved reading all the childish invective that would result. When she graded these assignments—more generously than usual, mind you—she knew that her students couldn’t resist an obscene final catalogue of crimes and resentments: bird shit shovelled-up, drummers beaten or killed, maids-a-milking hung as witches. Never once did a student assume that the singer really wanted all that barnyard Christmas crap. Still, she loved the restraint they showed in letters one to four. She loved the way the five gold rings followed the four calling birds; the way that boys and girls alike would allow a romantic note to interrupt the rising tone of general frustration. And then the geese arrive, eggs already dropping, and the children would just *love* the return to damnation and revenge. Mrs. Starr hated both romance and Christmas with an equal passion. Her students never guessed the depths of her sadism.

5. Oscar to Bosie

The year I got that assignment I was deep in Oscarland, that famous well-spring of pretension where pre-pubescent homophobia turns into a long adolescent flirtation with Oscar Wilde, Morrissey, and regional youth theatre. I’d been reading Wilde’s

letters all year, had even begun to predict their syntax, and knew the nicknames of all his best chums... Well, you know where I'm going with this. It's 1896 and Wilde is locked up in Reading Gaol, in the middle of writing "De Profundis," his long letter of love and accusation to Lord Alfred Douglas.

Dear Bosie,
After long and fruitless waiting I have determined to write to you myself, as much for your sake as for mine, as I would not like to think that I had passed through two long years of imprisonment without ever having received a single line from you, or any news or message even, except such as gave me pain . . .

It's in the middle of letter-writing and hard labour that a friendly prison guard sneaks the Partridge into Oscar's cell, followed by the Turtle Doves, the French Hens, etc. etc., ad nauseum, etc. Before long, Wilde has added a new chapter to his epic epistle. He begins with thank you notes jammed in to the margins of his manuscript. By day twelve, he's whooping mad; the prison's become a riot of carnival and bestiality; and the longest love letter in the history of Irish literature has been corrupted into some pornographic sub-farce directed by the mind of a confused future literary critic.

6. Dear Me

Not a pretty memory. I'll spare you the actual letters, which is very easy for me to do, since I lost them years since and anyway can't bear the thought of reconstruction. Like I say, it was a nasty assignment. Jack Boote never sent that letter home; but in the few minutes during which I thought he might, I had paralytic visions of future embarrassment. Can you imagine the mind of a person who truly didn't like getting letters from friends? Could you conceive of loving someone

who'd never hung around the post-box waiting for some sign of remembrance or remuneration? Likewise, I'll assume you share my absolute terror in the face of Unwanted Correspondence. Sometimes my roommate and I go weeks without opening our mailbox, so scared are we both of bills, birthday messages and credit card circulars. So even the hint of a letter sent home was enough to give me chills. Such epistles contaminate the romance of the post-box and prick the childish privacy of the school, where all children are orphans and parents come but once a year, when you're at home, asleep.

7. Re: Dear Me

A letter promises a very seductive thing: Address. I am writing to you, there. I am here, see. Here is my hand. It's very rare to have such confidence, such intimacy, in any written form. Anyone who reads or writes literature will understand this seduction. The Platonic forms of the letter are, I think, all personal and confessional—the love letter, the denunciation, the apology. And yet, because we follow conventions and hope to engage our addressee, they remain intimately sociable. But this is a false promise, as all the good ones are. I once kissed a girl at summer school, then went home without her. We wrote to each other at a furious pace, often sending and receiving a letter on the same day, till at last we both got tired or kissed other people or ran out of lined paper. It's not important. Still, I remember being disappointed long before the writing finally stopped. She always insisted on always telling me her news—what she did, where, when, with whom—when all *I* wrote about—could *conceive* of writing about—were memories of summer school. No, that's not right. All I wrote about in the end was the fact of our writing at all. I became an epistolary purist, pursuing only the letters themselves. When she

wrote to me of her days, it was an intrusion. I didn't want such a letter. Likewise, my first piece of junk mail was a violation. My first mis-spelt form letter hit like a betrayal. It takes a while to distinguish between letters and the mail. Parents! Open a bank account in your infant's name: junk mail early and often is the only defence against later maladjustment. I burned the girl's letters and can only assume she did the same.

8. Edna Weldthorpe, Mrs.

After the Oscar phase, I fell in with Joe Orton. Orton was another gay comic playwright, only this time his violent death, violent promiscuity and butch working-class persona made it a little easier to square my obvious crush with my, by then, equally almost-but-not-quite- unironic heterosexuality. Gary Oldman played him in the biopic, *Prick Up Your Ears*. This wasn't long after Gary played Sidney Vicious in *Sid and Nancy*, so it was easy to slip from Orton fantasy to punk rock posing with hardly a thought. Orton wrote great letters, many of them pranks and hoaxes of a sort irresistible to me still:

Postmaster: R. Ufick
North District Post Office
Dear Sir,
For some time now the pillar boxes in this area have had two holes in them. I am sorry to tell you that a great many of these have been put to improper use. The unpleasant fact is that the slot marked 'London' is being misused for the disposal of old French letters and other bric-à-brac, while the ones marked 'Other Places' is being wanked-off into . . . My object in writing is to ask you to make sure you post only 'normal' letters and that you insert these in the right slot. It may be that you have already taken care to do this: if so, I would like to thank

you. If not, I can only ask you to keep your great
cock out of our boxes.

Orton was obscene but he wasn't stupid. He knew that the letter columns of the newspapers were the cultural equivalent of the public bathrooms he cruised for rough trade. In such special, protected, places the "old whore society," as he put it, would really lift up her skirts and give everyone a good sniff of the rankness underneath. Orton's pranks got him sent to prison for a few months. Even in swinging '60s London, magistrates didn't look kindly on a man who'd deface library books for kicks, re-typing the blurb for a Dorothy L. Sayers mystery novel till it advertised the adventures of WPC Brenda Coolidge. Is Brenda a dildo-wielding kidnapper or the victim of a lesbian witch-hunt? Reader, you decide. Still, his best prank creation was Edna Weldthorpe, Mrs. Edna was a hyper-moralistic pensioner who'd bombard local and national newspapers with energetic and censorious letters, streaked with just enough camp and violence for proper comic effect. When Orton's play, *Entertaining Mr. Sloane*, became a hit in 1964, Edna was quick to denounce her creator's own play in the national papers:

Dear Sir,
Today's young playwrights take it upon themselves to
flaunt their contempt for ordinary decent people. I
hope that ordinary decent people will soon strike
back!
Sincerely,
Edna Weldthorpe, Mrs.

Orton was poor, gay, persecuted by cops, and ignored by publishers. When he finally made it big, success killed him. Kenneth Halliwell, his lover of many years, driven mad by jealousy and fear, bashed his head in with a hammer barely three years after Edna had lashed out at poor Joe's West End hit. Orton wrote, "If you

really want to spot the nasty equivalent of fascism in England you have to read the letters of the *Radio Times* and the *TV Times*.”

9. Crossfire

Poor Joe was right, but he should have cast his net wider. This is from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Friday, January 25, 2002:

Dear Sirs,
I am tired of reading about the plight of the “poor” Arabs in the refugee camps . . . Israel is 100 percent correct in its actions. Collective punishment is absolutely justifiable. Arab society hides terrorists who commit unconscionable acts against innocent civilians. . .

Jeff Gross
Newtown

Now, I’d like to slap Mr. Gross about the face until he’s *really* tired of hearing about those poor refugees. But that’s not really my point and, anyway, you’re not here to endure some political lecture I’m not really qualified to give. Still, what do you think motivates a right-thinkin’, tax-payin’, suburban Pennsylvanian to write such a heartless and frustrated letter? And in public, too? If I felt like this about anything, I’d duck into a closet and scream into a pillow until the fit had passed. A minute ago, I tried to make a distinction between letters and the mail. Mr. Gross writes mail, intended for public consumption and political persuasion. But Mr. Gross is tired and cruel and—look!—before our eyes his mail has turned into a letter: personal, confessional and just a little mad.

10. Salman is my Guru

There's a guy called Keith Flett who lives in London. Keith appears to have made writing to newspapers a full-time occupation and because he writes good copy—pithy, short, full of contrarian opinion and in need of little editing—the Editors are pleased to have him. For a while after the Orton thing I thought about becoming someone like Keith: a freelance public intellectual, self-appointed and answering to no-one. I'm ready for my soundbite, Mr. De Mille! My first foray into this world came when I was about fifteen and full of it. It was in the middle of the Salman Rushdie/*Satanic Verses* affair, when Viking Penguin had just announced that they wouldn't be releasing the paperback version of the book. Well, I was incensed! A major publisher was going to censor one of its own authors in the name of demonstrating sensitivity to a murderous and theocratic state. What was worse, I couldn't afford hardback books:

Dear Sirs,
I am writing to protest Viking Penguin's decision to cancel the paperback edition of *The Satanic Verses*. I am fifteen years old and have been looking forward to reading Mr. Rushdie's novel ever since I first read about it in your newspaper. Unfortunately, I only have a small allowance to spend and cannot afford the cost of hardback books. Viking Penguin's decision is not only a cowardly submission to a horrible threat; it is an act of economic censorship that will prevent many people from reading *The Satanic Verses* and making their minds up for themselves.
Yours Sincerely,
Matthew Hart

The letter was published in *The Independent on Sunday*. Mrs. Starr was very proud.

11. de Sadism

I was on a roll. Soon, I'd started sending letters all over the place, offering my opinions on a vast array of subjects I knew little or nothing about. I found that including a reference to my young age would greatly increase the chances of publication: newspaper editors, like all good middle-class parents, just love the stink of precocity. At that time, my local Member of Parliament was a rabid Tory, a member of the Conservative Family Foundation—one of those pseudo-professional think-tanks devoted to banning pornography, bringing back hanging, and finding cures for everything from homosexuality to pacifism. I learned from reading the local rag that my MP and her Foundation had joined forces to try and ban all schools and public libraries from owning or distributing the works of the Marquis de Sade. My MP claimed that exposure to such filth could drive children towards rape, murder, buggery, or socialism. I'd never read de Sade but knew that this was rot—and besides, I had an *Oxford Companion to English Literature* and rhetoric ready-to-go:

Dear Sirs,

The Rt. Hon. Anne Winterton MP may think she is protecting children by campaigning to have the works of the Marquis de Sade banned under the Obscene Publications Act. Well, this "child"—I am fifteen years old and a student at Dane Valley High School—does not want her protection. De Sade's writing is well known to be disturbing and explicit stuff but he's hardly sought after among young people. I doubt whether most local teenagers had even heard of him before Mrs. Winterton began her campaign. De Sade was by all accounts mad, bad and dangerous to know but modern writers have often claimed his influence on their views of human psychology. Has Mrs. Winterton heard of Samuel Beckett and Sigmund Freud or does she only read the books she wants to ban? Finally, does Mrs. Winterton not realise that

de Sade's books are already virtually impossible to get through local libraries and that the only editions in print are expensive hardback copies. Unfortunately, I only have a small allowance to spend and cannot afford the cost of hardback books.
Yours Sincerely,
Matthew Hart.

Ten years later I went to grad school, picked up de Sade selected works and read an account of someone sewing up a woman's vagina after having infected her with the clap. I felt sick. I didn't remember any of this in Beckett.

Ethel Rackin
Poems

stamp

to imprint with a mark, design
or seal

to impress forcibly

to identify:

reveal

as a secret is revealed slowly

or in increments

not at all

she announces flat as a fish: I had an aunt Rose

a bachelorette

who in her twilight years

neither distressing nor particularly tawdry

entertained the occasional weekend guest

while often such correspondence takes place more comfortably in letters

the signor suspect as the postmark

suggesting another reading

lying in the stamp's property

ownership approval payment of a tax

no matter

there are years here for more than the usual share of laughter

trips to oceans

near and far

tragedy with her day-glow red aftereffects

a wake rolling backward spiraling frosty white plumage from sides

from which Miss Marple might be able to extract a watermark

leads to smaller more infinitesimal shots

while tracks which turn in might also blow out or against to form a more three-dimensional
scape: a hand

perhaps

the space of flesh

enough clues to ascertain

a reason

the people you call friends

I carry no camera, I don't take pictures
is there a cabana I'm forgetting
to slip

 into
a shred of cloth I mean
to sew

 which instead got substituted by a broken shard
due to some unpredictable cats raining on whatever wedding or funeral

maybe I'll go berserk

 it's a semi-bright morning

 I stand perched in line...

 under this faded tree waiting for all my friends to yell

surprise!

 you can wash your dog with people shampoo but not vice versa

 when I was a girl I used Mane & Tail

 bought at Tack Shop

 it's a true story

it's your crowd you know

 my neighbor's face isn't looking directly into mine

check please

jumping into titles

I may be copper-lit in door handles
or caught between chapters of *The Musclemoman*
of Verona there's a bottle I haven't dipped into
in years
a morass of life lived but barely understood, dimly as a waiter
waits in hopes of high drink bills

meanwhile, for Giorgio on the street everyone's a model
he's fictitious yet has all of our numbers
for those of us who care things have become a bit uncomfortable
i.e. clothes
never quite fit
have the intended effect of shocking you into admission
that maybe the magic diet-cure with elixirs *will* help
you become sick

Peaches

please allow this letter to conform our understanding that you may stop looking out on this godforsaken grass "field with glass pane" in its middle sliced like some perverted birthday by a band called Cake

how many times have those faded figurines, The Lobster Shells, stared back from behind glass after being boiled and cracked on two three four sides? otherwise known as Ghosts Who Live in Cracks, in a hinterland of books & postcards, will you finally drive these sheep back home?

Friend, is this paranormal behavior not the deep sleep of que sera sera?

the hell it is!

for my keep sake's on the periphery doing cartwheels, an old ring-worm complete with lost decoder of psychic energy I expunged on this latest hat-trick, this disbelieving

sangfroid

meanwhile as it pours thru a lens

My Captain:

“Hello Captain”

“Hello Kitty, have I accessed you
on my in-line?”

2 perched black birds B.B.:

“yaow yaow yaow”

and an interior other

knit in burr & bramble

in order to relieve

The Mysteries

“shn’t”

“ain’t”

in order to relive

in the steam ship window

2 red stripes

with a violent 1

in between

Violet shouts:

post

ethel ce n'est pas un nom francais
words are lost francs

waiting for someone to happen

Most Personal of Aisles,
"I'm so lost in the supermarket"
 a lick once recognized
lost again
 as a check-out-girl's her screen

Miss Green:
"Hell-lo Kitty"
Astaire too afraid to listen
drop my bag!

in aisle 9 with Guy
hoping this remake won't hurt so bad

raining here for a hundred years

why does this song sound better in my hole I mean house
is a fog mirror the kind that reflects back an image without giving
the *Whole Story*

enter the room stiff with travel tricks are for kids
still in Russia
on a Foolbright

I finally decide to start spelling what I mean...

i-f-n-o-t-f-o-r-t-h-e-s-e-p-e-s-k-y-t-r-a-n-s-l-a-t-o-r-s-
I-w-o-u-l-d-g-r-o-w-s-t-r-a-n-g-e!

which instead of having the intended effect
causes great commotion over the purpose
over the duration of my stay
which in turn leads to all kinds of ancient plot motifs
such as labeling nettled fog juice **specially marked for experiments**

a Babushka
the women of Romania
the parts of dolls others swallow

Little Sky

are your plans so long they fold over themselves after all you've been chosen from a screen of thousands maybe you should give up on plans altogether and instead opt for a "bias cut" which will no doubt go with at least four of your five senses in this lifetime if not in the next if memory's exact how can I change it there's something I long ago trapped did I hear you say you've seen the formation of green-leaf algae on the roof of my according to calculations we've been running at slightly different speeds and will never show up at the same place though we've learned to recognize orders I take cloudburst tea on overcast days while you prefer milk no matter what if memory's correct let's not forget my dear parents who've been rumbling round an eerily gnawed tree for longer than I can count my mother runs around the tree twice as fast yelling for my father to catch up there's something I long ago trapped will we continue to shift and peel I with my drawer of puppets frozen and yanked out depending on the occasional you standing inward with numbers to measure our plans by reading *Life Plan* in faded out jeans my lily box draws silky dog ears besides which a list of tinctures frogs in season for hooping cough babies breath for display relief fragments in blowing conditions "seek and thee shall find" oh is it ultimately this intangible I sort I anticipated inherited this lolling around because as a road I've grown deep green recesses book covers edges a banner for both Snow and Dirt if memory's intact where did I leave it

79 Rue Manin

pearl-grey silk muslin from
head to toe
 dress of lavender-blue
cloth cut out
 black velvet
foundation
 blue
pill I need
at night
 to keep from wandering
shades too dark to pass
 reaching
 for money bags pinned loosely to skirts
two red Chinese vases fitted as lamps
matched etched wooden shades
 would I admit my failures what I could not keep
as if in pockets
a mist stands
holding
 listening
surrounding sounds a cacophony of inter-related sports memorabilia
the paper circus of pink flaneurs decked out deliciously, say, as ear candy
 note the last one the one with life in his line
catcher of rare and exotic birds
the income
the lost dineros
 if not for Au Petit Suisse on the bank I love the most
a postcard
 I leave my distrust in romance to the romantics
and instead commence a lifelong battle for looks charm
and health--
all the while nature without jerking up the lip
of the coffee-pot to prevent the drop from falling
 nature with her dreary whitewash and pocked peaches

upending as if to expose the roots
each its own mass of why I'd rather be a sidewalk
I'd rather not be sitting here juggling columns of letters
I'd rather have a footbath in my saucer than see you juggling like a waiter in a café
to say I prefer the wind of key-limes
 the trace of how long I've been waiting
let us talk briefly and to the point
let us go over it all once again

**Some phrases in this poem are excerpted from Roger Senhouse's translation of Colette's Gigi.*

your dog isn't the first to greet you

in the summertime
when there's a box of milk
and 3 cucumbers

it's no time to be shy!
a hip socket requires love love and the promise
of love

and a dog who barks uncontrollably
may be coaxed
to drop it
after pawing the front door of grief
with his outdoor ball

(meanwhile should I forget the whispering of ancestors
they may be good for my health
in the way opening passages for chi to flow
is good

which is not a slogan but a truism
in the sense that I am still in a lunchroom setting
wondering where my mother's been)

oh how can I tend the forest of You
(really)
and still admit that the shakes are something
and the blues are something too

Brett Evans
The Krissy Buildings

Taking the snakebite
Out of this world
Sucking each other off

Often over 50
at the time of my going
to bed, Halleluia Lord
Help me to walk again
like a sphinx pup or kit
the riddle of the writ
ten scrolls the black
girl's rings on
the bus. I came to say
otherwise I wd. fall
in love with you but I must
go to sleep, my dreams
slow and approach not
half the sweetness of your
breathing when I'm off
breathing alone.

red leather Theresa / 4 Krissy
when she wakes
she looks the star that thro'
the cedar shakes:
her lost moist
hand clings mortally to mine.
We must remember
the leftover Lebanese flag
and the records cotton
candy spun in the darkness,
the peer pressure people
we finally bent-to
lean unblest kisses that en
gined our forward progress.
After Okeanos,
putting bunched-up underwire 2
ice cream, I spy-
glasses her inmost soul. In
a flood over forest
fire came a
long-stemmed cyclone.

Ruminative

O wow

where the passing wind shoots
javelin-like over once-wealthy fields
me & Rocky agreed to an ex
change program of our college
pasts

I wd. go to Boston
he wd. come to Baton

Rouge

Only our mirrored eyes met silently
the cardboard of the beer
“Use your powers fool”
We are the lords of life, and life is
warm

sun thru the thick
library glass
sunlight on the bayou
waking me w/ its shade

a pixie stick
a girl on a bike that comes by
you shd. meet soon
sleep sank the loot
for a little food

into a-

nother hilarious
bowed tomorrow (she came
by arrow)

the Rash of Titans
the feminine ending

after their Life sailed by
and held their breath
Leaning across the water, I and he
for more star tabs on the moon

Two Leaders

I let the bird's beak Big Country my hair
before I hit it w/ beeswax and out
going commotion. O Kimberly suck
my hombre again and again til palms fan
autumn sundae spinnakers spiritual
foe. (Bright crisp dextrous angels.) 2 fridges fig.
The squirrels call their Abercorn St. oak tree
Skylab. I'm on a level with them eating
double messages, Ouija held up to mir
ror some would say it glows like African
black soap soda jerk shines my skin gloaming
til I barely crave Ufo. The one on the rez
de chaussez is colder so I misprison
roommate beer and upstairs ice box my choc
to fret it pliant cool. When I good day
so does my bird and for these Tecumseh
begat Osama's middle name to gatling bra
such largesse storage. I feel around for
the sacred part (o Jesus) in Ines's pur
ple jaguar inflammable pajamas.
A model rocket dying in a cous
cous heap. Majic bed carpet Ines wave it.

everything is slicked over but burn
ing beneath the surface
my favorite please keep out.
with a chariot crush
at the world loess cliff
the grind of veiled spirits
dined on veils, like, "Zapp's
Habanero XXX flavor
may hazard
your mind and breath"
in Viet
namese. Keep my favorite Sur
big under the bridge the more
populous the count
ry the sparser the vid
eo. a St. Catherine sun
set is
 dark rum, kettle 1, sour
 mix, soda, & gren
adine.
top with day opera sand
y bunny lectric sno

the chrissy cola

chary dumps
like a truck, pulling
a chariot; and all thy boy
breath worked out
into thighs. Plus the large
list of lights and
nights put ships
with pools thru catches
of rocks; wrists on laps
moon-landed by Daqs
of Panama. The sisters
brought the modifiers and
left us witnesses:
shamed sunshine pitched
L. Trang Dai's powders & fi
zz red julius
= fit spondee and ass = mel
ted into Salmacis
a sandwich

\$10,000 on a stick

with many a valley impeached
with ivy and wine
Screw the Shootist
darkening thy soul w/ shadows
of thunderous wings
Pizza saves lives
but the earth thing groans
imperious in cage {365}
Indians with dice
thrust the tropicalia
into fatter Indians
ah actual cautery trusted into
the heart, I love
making out at
the border
when the rush of anapests
culminates in for
middable iss bling bling
Rosetti employs this speed {45}

The coins in it
make it more beautiful, you came
to me in coin-colored lipstick that
colored the back of my neck
while the Second Ward Hunters
held heaven's incantations
in the best of dirty strokes. Wine
beasts gathered about the bed
later and jewels from send-offs
we can taken what was left
as if tomorrow was a hamburger
with a high
where the meat would go. [ital] Fermez
la porte et ouvrez la bouche [ital]
I don't know if the door is feminine
and I'm not going to look it up
you get the point
it's new sugar it's real sheets of
clouds with words on there and a flag
with some juicyback stars

banged on her duxiana
maybe sainted flaws trucking
the third shoe, orange for
aminifiral 00
ze to the tug rush rushes.
clothed only in cut grass
and smashee camera
where it began, sticky
candy of lights, her sylvan
ploys super ridiculous crit.
It only happened because us so
second cousins, shouts sheeting
God's wine (tongue on mine, x,y,
rewind) shaggy chimney
detailed by rain and railed upon
for good. Apres-ski the tall
tale Etta at Night severing
moonlight from light in the room
heart out of its hole
with melting wax

stealing wine off of shelves
to toast crisp linen autumn
ripping time off the shelves
bring time to near boil
phoning her at 3 a.m.
before rushing on over
low green rope bette davis
dress hung away over curves
the toss in leaf crisp sheets
one buck off the end of life
take me in your arms + lie
to me / price flesh by shot
stars / be the kiss that tastes
like keys to the city

And eat our pot
of honey on grave (stone,
wrought, rock, breasts, br
eak) Howbeit a stripping
static drums such
5th W/D
frock. There is more heavy
measure in the "One Power"
life unleaved. I had
an eclipse litany
undersun magma
pull-tab strum, waiting 4 the
bus stop to. Her name
agape Dirae/ je m'appelle
a bus named Nap
olean

Shall birth and death
take you [those 1st two
songs on the Goddess'
show] away from me fre
quently fretting
across the ruby bright sum
mer, into the lit flut
tering below – the waist
band on high, a high'y
high, yeah, high't.
Your lost moist hand
is a baby
band to me. Shall b & D
and all the dark names
that be (in between)
store the rich nice light
striking out from your suit
case? Five rosy aces
holding swift- hand Dawn
tie me (track 2) over

from fountain love took off
to the end of the line, body
or breath or bloods. Tickets
and skin rich w/ lamentations
the Fair coaster clanged.
A Fair World though a Fallen,
Ha. Elastic that say om
Clash City Rockers, I heart
with a pinky felt
round. How many times the #
taken down the draw
ers Fussy saw her
trading, there with the furs
for the BB bats.

What are we first/ First,
animals; and next... I catch
She faltering, as she half
Resists. We called that dance
"The Dirty Hand" to give
brusqueness and bite
to our nervy tennies.
I'm thinking
Bunny electricity
Goes over the ex
hibited hole mao
ntain. O, cages
kicked off the top. The "sum
it." Up there there's a screen
play called "Fuck the Mast
ur'ator." Animals weigh in
as birds while we jook a gob
ble. 'am quoting Tre, same
basic rocking pattern

{glance holder}

expected (but missing) clips
soe'er alien spells achille achille bracelet
H-tub reservation
where the tar can come off and hum
money go black and blood orange. Ah!
who will speak the tongue of Deer
water. Agitators
happen thru a wrecking
door _ Dee lisp Berlin. dative (usually a
hot) smoothness of a run-on
phrase, a #. Fre
quent pause is made so nice night
broken jolt

two val
entine candies
plastic soldiers in a min
ature dirt war
the goddamn owner of Huckapoo's
I saw at the Bible People's
every-Sat. lawn shop (must
needs thrift better) Kneivel
came upon the Tenn
essee highlands same
reason the bear
& hard
rain upon the Honey Island
Swamp a good place to covet
Hurricane Juliette (a Baja short) our
lust for massive barge of neg
ligée while the world most loses
its shirt
to a neighboring harboring snak
pak detonatable
surplus teepee or go to Grambling
at length their long kiss severed, w/ sweet
smart: I thought my soul was above
being killed, I wasn't
& Tybee Island overgrown bocce courts
(meet me) & swans
honked as in a Meters' song
is Victoria's secret is
she craves
Cincinnati wiretaps Arabian nights w/o
arabs
but a big Trojan horse
pinata hands
on diamond baseballs

amen in the flesh
my heart is a bitter buffalo
de-activating foreign missions
alibi orgy snapdragon
or more likely close to smooth
ness, "Look,
torti shit behind the bar"
not just the LA area. I get
to live out the greenhouse;
a hangover deferred is a joy
sent from down
below. Foy St. It can be
danger rex.
Punch in "Joseph Poon" on
your screen. If we think about
this time before death and get
Hank to make
the hotdogs angels
look to me like beautiful women.
what if I was to do
this, such as we are now? am
nesiac offered an orgy of lines
the three poets
threepeat. Orange red sea thru hose st
ripped as fruitstripe gum assuages
me to Sophia. A prussian from Mc
Kensie's called "Joseph Poon,
Asian Fusion" I still love
nothing to do
with driving.

do you miss It
aly or list
en to Wu
Tang?

life has made me
many heavy tears
they accrete (as I
walk thru Citypark)
into a Tear Beast
takes me down in
shallow water, w/
godzilla polyvinyl
ichikump. that bigkid
kind of jumpsuit can
keep the mud off
not my shoes
but skymat wonder
if I can love in the only
past and must kite
forward dimension four
to *voir* down cha (the love I
have). Or should
the shoes have
some fries
from the Casino
Bldg., as la-bas
as black ducks trim
the lagoon? It shd read
“she does” instead
of “the shoes.”
Strong pref.

[her] name Dirae seavely-across
huh thigh lit [Chalmette]
me on fire
to me. Down low was a
seed of picnic gold,
first foot favors,
and apparent belt letting
cloud Kites joust
with the denim
thick spinnaker acre
Nairobi. Cast st. Jimmy
nets on all sides.
tend away sun k
nots triple-threat thrace
the paper breaks through.
Les KK's line up
heavy bread hair
wine highlights

hands and souls to
dissyllabic bosoms and
glances the two hands apart
whose touch alone
gives ease. heart-shrined
with mutual flame
up against the civic center
so deliciously hideous
the night is as
juicy as it can be, such
as we are now...
silences expertly varied
between the pulse of the ug
ly fountain which is
ours alone, if only heaven
is this dirty
in a good way night hunkers
to such sure caesura
hey

today (In love,

time peers between her
twiddling thumbs De
luge of self, or fire-
divided silence
stars in the old sense
“dulac.” heavy steering
caesura squeak not awk
ward steering to duce
a tone, the muffled pulse
midnight makes
of memory and memory
mocks without; now a bone rain
drop takes the page to
skirting words over w/ more
to come. “around” harmony
w/o in a fine 5th
W/D harm w/in. this fair
est fucking song under
scores the babydoll all-
year costume Maya matic.
'Tis high. So am I. The

clover amazing grace I've still
accomplished no \$. Corner
building with its head
half blown lets the sun
be a blonde blanket. Accom
plice to myself with other
night's childless villin over
the Fun Wars flags a colo
red gas and clover, say, as
pasties dial the coming
reich [A'rika] gainst resists, re
animating propheting of um past
de- kind. Setting whatever
bush limits on fire only
when they're dead to help
us, the rock rocks on. It is
a shoulder kissed, shipside, 0 lit
tuba hoop statues root. two it is
sweet, not fear but lovelier

asterisk head stone

right now? Right now? how dying
do I feel this instant it's passing
take that ahead, puddingheist of
calm from remedial spirits here
come the mountains of Park
City Utah or on the way
to Pittsburgh claw. beautiful feeler
writing all that's left off th imo
gene func | hospital
sheets the only
white and maybe certain tennis
shoes I don't care 4 – how come
nature is a snake sometimes & not
tugboats grin and death can be
a sloppy bitch avoiding the h*otch
slap? I hope I'm yet not dying *ore

some 14s

as peas from a butter knife
the very short run-on phrase
her skirt
licked my lips
O late-line where those five
(years drawers)
O teach me, Love
“Quinquagesima” briefs
Dunce steps that can
kibosh earthquakes, kumquat
time capsules
head the children
kix over Day
deep end book path Spring
Sly, where are you?

heart practice

I love rainy days like this
real Orleanian weather
that makes everything more
important, like crying.
She fusses with the curtains
in her square-
cut negli-café shorts, and I
like that. What song
should sing me beneath
the breeze She is to be
like a miracle being
painted. Let's take the train
to the graves again or fail
sweetly, and stay right here.

Ah technology! isn't it great
wine comes
in bottles & somebody catch this O shit!
will y'all remember me
tablet eyes that never made
a tear (whatevr)
like holy- head seers. Big mouth
country got small
with sleeping until Torrance
made those amulettes
we called
the fiery scourge. J' m'appelle
Jonathan Apple,
fuckhead. Look what
I wrote on my shirt:
Baby, baby
I love how you you begin. {?} wine cibe
I mean wine cone
The Holy of Holly
grabbing for the goal button tend
line in bottles. bouteilles, freak- yummer,
sure

breakfast dances
and in sight the slit
b/n night / day an im
mortal suit
case thrown open, Aeolian
Hall- like, light
coming out, side piano
she be
pageant curveball solo
kimbo at
the jalousies. After
this breakfast dances
wild pageant blank
is adam & eve ashes
palms thigh
amps. imbalance happens
mattress to trang.
Then look clingy!

I'm feeling powers/ the pink dust
Stereolab isn't loud enough
though. Part of a metrical angel
came on my foot. Is, was,
and Is to come so much
yay and sand and aspartame
gum eliminators. "need pa-"
she began one of her many
rammy love letters to me,
blackened by the underside
of the door and pen marks spot.
What will these two heels
without a soul think up next
to put in the phrase jars, Christ
ina, to sink to hot tub deeps (?)
with other treasure questionmark
aint that loving you baby question
mrk

her body is at peace
where angels kneel,
fruit on a cool saucer
or nigh marzipan snoballs
night being stars with
some sheets blown under.
I wished her to woo
me with sequent will
when orisons ended as
curmbs oer her ars.
The wheel of the road going
bach hogs the flaming perf
Houseboat River ___ in me,
such an acrid battle w/o
candle to bleed forgotten
grace. Dreamt about you
fell out of bed twice yeahya

new fu king name

maniacal storied output
came with the fathers
to the lambs, escapade papers
blowing helmets
off the lines
for cheap seafoods. If I sd, Isolde,
sing your ass for me
let's make babies beg
for candy we leave on
the light- syrup fruitsplit
sidewalk, would you buy
my plot of medium timber
creation? Manger the knife
and the animals let be
frizzy super trumpet musics
take the world's navel and just-so
give
the world new name, such as Libby

sonnet pseudio

bird tasman sunrise sug
ars give me
some paper with funnys
on the back I write
over the mountain I sat
too long
and the place where clouds
go to die is what
my head becomes. I lone
linebreak like
M. Ali, can tell what
the bird sings matins &
nightly cant
tell what it mmeans

Tune in colorforms
and at their fall
green soul plain
the wrapper was birdcall
thumb to nipple
change-up. Yet other factors
such as: he who lives last
tells the story. She will.
Blown kiss i.d.
side 2 of
Tattoo You a rubber
chandelier bounces to Fair
mount Philly bustier
leaning Viet. food. Falls
where barrels nightie
plastic France on the pool
car. Foiled as Trefalgar
a simple zip muddy tug
of war, Juno-not jeans in,
powers the radio on.

contributor bios and acknowledgments

Allison Cobb is co-author with CE Putnam and Jen Coleman of *Communal Bebop Canto* (50 Cents Off Press) and author of *the little box book* (Situation) and *the J Poems, Polar Bear and Desert Fox*, and *One-foot A History Play* (all from BabySelf Press). Her first full-length collection *Born Two* is forthcoming in 2003 from Chax Press. She lives in Brooklyn. Grateful acknowledgment to Elizabeth Treadwell, editor of *Outlet* magazine, which first published an excerpt from “i receive you.”

Marcella Durand's books include most recently *Western Capital Rhapsodies* (Faux Press). Some of her poems from “The Apparent Orbits” were originally published in *theeastvillage.com*, *DC Poetry Anthology 2002*, *Puppyflowers.com*, *The @ttached Document*, and *Terra* magazine. The poems also appear in her online e-book, *The Body, Light and Solar Poems*, at www.durationpress.com.

Brett Evans recently celebrated the release of his first perfect-bound collection, *After School Session*. He would like the academy if it liked him; instead, he thanks Greg Fuchs and Buck Downs for visual majesty and editorial cupidity, respectively. When you fly this book is not to be missed. Currently, the author abides the banks of Bayou St. John in New Orleans, LA.

Matthew Hart lives in Philadelphia, having moved from England in 1997. Matt has published two chapbooks of poems: *A Compass or Centre* (Philadelphia, 2001) and *Ibid New Poets 2: Matthew Hart and Sarah Osborne* (Edinburgh, 1997). His poems have been anthologized in Faber's *First Pressings* (London, 1998) and Boog Lit's *Boog Reader: Philadelphia* (New York, 2001). They have also appeared in magazines like *COMBO*, *ixnay*, *Lipstick 11*, *CrossConnect*, and *Kenning*. In his spare time, Matt is a doctoral student at Penn and the lead singer of The Sweet Lincoln.

Brian Lucas writes, paints, and lives in Bangkok, Thailand. He's just finished a manuscript entitled, “Light House.” Recent work in *Ur-Vox* vol.2 (of which he serves as co-auditor).

Ethel Rackin's poems have appeared in *Colorado Review*, *Poetry East*, *Volt*, *Brooklyn Review*, *ixnay*, *Skanky Possum*, and elsewhere. She received her MFA from Bard College in 2000. She teaches Creative Writing at Penn State's Delaware County campus and is contributing editor to *The American Poetry Review*. These poems are from her manuscript, *The Unpredictability of Plant-Life*, a recent finalist for several first book awards.

Frank Sherlock curates the La Tazza Reading Series w/ Magdalena Zurawski in Philadelphia. His poems have recently appeared in *Puppy Flowers*, *TOOL* and *can we have our ball back?* Past chapbooks include *13* (Ixnay 1999) and a collaboration with CA Conrad entitled, *end/begin w/ chants*. Their latest joint effort is an open-ended project that's materializing as *The City Real & Imagined: Philadelphia Poems*.

Elizabeth Treadwell's collection, *Chantry*, of which "codes of the very femininity" is a part, is due to appear from Chax Press in late 2003. Her poem "LILYFOIL (or Boy & Girl Tramps of America)" is available online as a free ebook from durationpress.com. Treadwell's previous work includes a novel, *Eleanor Ramsey: the Queen of Cups* (SFSU, 1997); a collection of prose poems, *Populace* (Avec, 1999); and several chapbooks, including two small volumes of her long poem "Eve Doe." She has served as the director of Small Press Traffic in San Francisco since 2000.

