

大觀

大觀樓額舊為康熙中漢撫王公題文所書
名公鉅卿磨不換後額書銀鈎的一代名手
也咸豐丁巳樓毀而額亦無存余重建斯樓



五百里滇池奔來眼底披襟岸帙喜
素高人韻士何妨選勝登臨趁蟹
嶼螺洲梳裹就風鬟霧鬢更頻天
葦地點綴堪翠
孤負四圍香稻萬頃晴沙九夏芙蓉三春楊柳
昆明孫髯翁先生舊句

WRITING
26

WRITING

WRITING

Box 69609 Station K Vancouver, BC, Canada V5K 4W7

WRITING is published three times a year by the Kootenay School of Writing, a non-profit, co-operatively operated artist-run centre. KSW presents readings, talks, writers in residence, and workshops dealing with current aspects of poetics. KSW is a registered non-profit society, donations to WRITING are tax-deductible.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are \$15 for individuals, \$20 for institutions within Canada. In the U.S.A. subscriptions are \$18 for individuals and \$23 for institutions. Overseas subscriptions are \$20 for individuals, \$25 for institutions. Back issues (6 - 22) and sample issues are \$5.

WRITING is distributed by:

Artexte, 3575 St-Laurent Rm. 303, Montréal, Québec, H2X 2T7; The Canadian Magazine Publishers Association, 2 Stewart Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1H6; The Segue Foundation, 303 East 8th Street, New York, NY, U.S.A. 10009; Small Press Distribution, 1814 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, California, U.S.A. 94702; Spectacular Diseases, c/o Paul Green, 83b London Road, Peterborough, Cambs., U.K.

Manuscripts to WRITING must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Submissions from outside of Canada must include Canadian stamps or International Reply Coupons to ensure return. Please read an issue before submitting work. Please allow six to eight weeks for replies. WRITING magazine is run co-operatively by volunteers.

EDITOR: Jeff Derksen; CO-EDITOR: Nancy Shaw; PROOFREADER: Colin Smith

WRITING is set in Bembo and Univers by Terry Ludwar of *Stovetop* Publishing. Printed in Canada by Hignell Printing Ltd., December 1990.

ISSN 0706-1889 Copyright © 1990 for the authors.

COVER: The "Long Couplet" by Qing poet Sun Ran Weng flanks the main entrance to Daguan Tower near Kunming, Yunnan, China. Its one hundred and eighty characters are a continuous description of Lake Dianchi and the couplet is reputed to be the longest and the best couplet ever written in China. Once considered barren, the site has been (since erection of the building, 1696 - 1866) a source of inspiration to many poets for its breathtaking view. Like much of the poetry written on the outskirts of the empire, where ram-bunctious officials were often stationed, the landscape poetry of the "Long Couplet" contains many political overtones. — Henry Tsang

We gratefully acknowledge assistance from The Canada Council and The Government of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture.

CONTENTS

• COVER	
Henry Tsang	
• FROM: RUCK	
Lary Timewell	7
• DOUBT & DOGMATISM	
Jean Day	12
• FROM: AT THIS POINT	
Eric Wirth	23
• FROM: SCOPTOCRATIC	
Nancy Shaw	25
• BOARD FEET	
Kevin Davies	38
• TWO POEMS	
Tom Raworth	43
• FOUR POEMS	
Ray DiPalma	46
• FROM: OXOTA: A SHORT RUSSIAN NOVEL	
Lyn Hejinian	50
• HOUSE OF BEFORE	
Spencer Selby	63
• SEVEN POEMS	
Karen Mac Cormack	68
• TWO POEMS	
P. Inman	75
• THREE POEMS	
David Gilbert	83

- FROM: THE LETTERS OF MINA HARKER

Dodie Bellamy

86

- AGNES BERNAUER

Frank Davey

90

FROM: RUCK

Lary Timewell

Well met, antipathy! Diaphanous
garment-condition of work, little
violin d'Ingres of semi-retired, tight-lipped facsimiles.

Drone mogul endures, tangential to
theory's impossibly patristic squat,
the confident suffrage of our little dog Doxy.

Seep patrician grousing.
Equipoise of caterwauling.
Exchange:

an internment, my interim-marooned
paucity for your best woolen tropes.
Cherub gristle for jock demise.

The cloud machines "much
praise & a little counterpoint,"
down to "Let them eat fur."
(So far *some* "the," eh? That commodity tart.)

Neutering clerk postures gestures "out there," more
choreographers for patriotism by spectacle remove to
spatio-temporal spats. Sit calm, sit tight.
As a talking-to merely descriptions some
recently bought self. "Recently we . . .,"
behaving-away in a conversational
wish to be taken serially.

Overnight the Banana Republic became the Footlocker.
Where homespun *philos* deletes,
bingo results. (No, but
I believe you were about
to tell me.) Proof of
God the quad or coughing, coffee,
copy.

Strategy rents a hall for the Doubt benefit;
mentions the future as if present fact
in a sit-com destined for re-runs.
I rants on account drawn against for trifling sums.
If we had enough cream then, we went to the lake.
All ways of leaving

the house. The title
was *Hood Ornament*, but
inside was more
beans & rice, rice & beans,
brutal ticks roving initials and a series of baffles.
Saved blocks all occurrences of sought, burbs
on no-good ground, unrealized nest of the frail
hegemony of eyes' constellar bloom.
Reading comfort. Misnomer
of the loner's double-agency.
"Liberal demonology" distances interest,
anticipating impelling presage
hounded by spittle, and a good cry as required.
Devisive links Tex Rabelais to the flinch covenants
of "less illicit, less thrill."

A subject builds in
the shape of subject evasions,
flings shank sweat down the small running fissure,
licks salt against a ripple of identity, yet lacks
the entire in-alley kitchen of the Elsewhere set.

"Notations, though not writing, could be
read by the maker."

Lascaux my eye.

The animal, renewed by no muzzle,
yeildeth thyne flowre thinge, coincidence & simultitude,
lofty churlish improbable *recit*,
a low rant dousing
more jargon than actual cash.

(To wit:
peruse *this* phatic opulence, Mort.)

Assert has a CERTAIN cachet:
The cute-with-a-vengeance pseudo-Elizabethan argot
genuflecting before the tatters of oracular orifici. Gimme
my sequined glitterati back, my barebacked
ducats too. Lucid
tactic wefts of finale
disaccomplished by *l'Academie*, winging
procedural sideswipes,
clod dross,
ex cathedra pronouncements, mores & more
wide-angled pariahs than you can stick
shakes to period.

If first thought (Sony!) is corporate thought,
the margin is where you *can't* focus on
the benighted beach of "needless to say."

The popular prank imitates
Harv's Business School, meretricious,
microcosm-enhanced, too angry
to consequence, the problem being
both "deeply funny" & "moving" in a book.
"Roman," I said, "you'll just have to
trust me on this one."

All this upscaling of the *usée*, the new
reticent format gambit of *The Compleat Caretaker*,
incremental slips, broken by laughs,
lowjinx & chipdip excitement,
years of baffling neglect grapple,
extrapolate the "boneheaded blunder"
of the subordinate.

She (singer) parts time, he
(open fire) permits of
Contextual Collectables shoppe. Buy it
second-hand, you still have to
break it in. Wan
bungle in the Harlem could mean.
(Only the Strong Sur-etcetera, Ur-
etcetera.)

Tearing lost cat reward
at the edges where
the surplus is weather, its nym
& norrations. "Be" film, all gory.
I decided to re-read it in the original,
(penumbra, porch, pratfall)
"from its very inception,
as it were." As if

the long throw to first were
49 per Kapita pages
of Neighbourhood Watch. Intention
hamstrings proportion (the salesman's
"opening" salvo), portent
caudillos the pseudo-scientific bravura
of New Age entrepreneurs. A "turnout"
is not a "general strike."

Text incapable of quelling the internecine,
mystical sputum, hemorrhages of spiritualization.
"Sanitized" collaborationists quaff
Flag & Tether Ale awaiting the grilled
bream of confirmation.

As a "concession to *divertissement*" the 4 a.m. Medical-Dental
collapse just grazes the witty Viennese polemicist in us all.

A parable is heard off-stage, another
word, another error of omission intersects
a delicacy & a plain-
clothes conversation.

Samizdat something.

Trumped-up curios, maps blank
by going. Patiently
waiting to merely practice
rueful shrapnel brickfest &

thumbnail fish-barrel shot of
disruptive colouration.

Rankle memorandum straddles a catch-all,
die-hard hyphenation. Nothing quite
satisfactory, quotable. Nonetheless,
she *did* get off that chemical
quip at the weapons conference.

Now to hash-out a sequel: Nebbish
Bob, the lonely ocarina salesman, our nabob of dust.
And beloved covert catalyst. Fundamentalist
farm-team convinced the walls would best
in khymer beige. In imported memory.

DOUBT & DOGMATISM

J e a n D a y

Skeptical Questions

Once upon the book began
in front of one a science
of what original experience?
Next the neighbor
learn no subjectivity
this me I am again
I write
in which lie all
these particulate refutations
of formula. What
need have you for
you? I have already published
too much. Can the skeptic
live her skepticism? This distancing
is only interesting if catachresis
entertains. So let the Back View
turn around to the front.
Let electronics think.
Let Naum and Anna
say hello, machine,
it's a house (they laugh).
I cannot help myself out
of this mess thought
of as order. If all perceptions
are true, no one should feel bad
if I ransack books.
The brilliant metricist himself
chose a suburban life begetting

a generation who want to say
everything, and on a grand
scale. Stop me.
Stop. Or all their standards
will go fly.
Terminology is not, of course, accidental
in my poem (my poem) and
a dilemma is named "Of Course"
in the incommensurability of being ~~ACH~~
vs. I see now how that scale
comes to rest. So of what
am I evidence? To what
witness? Incurable knowledge
of surface, weight, a carpet-covered
table in a small apartment?
We might think of things
then as real rather than
true as a bottle holds
explicit its re-use
without addition or subtraction,
the murky liquid now around
and about. The tower is round and the oar
bent. Annexed
are our simple ideas.
How can you ask me? I do
not and will not. Each
measure has some right stimulus,
each paradox, some sneak
on the other side,
a white, too white, escaped, goose
on a reservoir meant
only for drinking water.
For imperceptible things have no taste
and drop out
from where we were
as far as I can see
having barely scratched the sacred turf
to see how someone really tastes
but in paradise our children
still are bored
and whenever anything tastes sweet
they go.

Learning Politics

Can language live
her poetry? To work hard
does day?
If day it's light
and we're appropriated
and either three follows two
or M's dilemma is dangerous
for if the blunt prong
melts, what then of difference?
Irremedial (but patient enough
to read) heavy the elements above
looking down on the work
we do suggesting a thought productive
of speech by which the speaker
sees. It may be time to put the book
away to appease
those who strive
at opticality, when surely the mind
knows not what it thinks
in either case.
Her language was not English.
Nothing is internally interesting
or true; not you
or my long itch. If you are a man
you will die at sea
but if a woman have eyes
two abreast
see day
progress without working
harder to define
weak links in logical contradiction.
More of this; it grows
from that which fathers it: boot
out the door
to the edge of the world
where dead souls squeak like bats
stopping off of course at work, first.
It was you who
thought of counting every citizen,
tooth and I.

As rain clears
so earthworms become manageable
in the grand overall table
kept of natural order. One moves
but its place remains
behind. You're not sure
your idea can carry
out the building of another western
town but how could it? You're
just one idea and
will have left the woods again
for as good a reason as he went there
to begin. In this very
cabin passage
reward may come as story
moves the whole
thing along toward what we seek,
that tilt
of plank over rock, of what the saw
may be composed,
another version of ourselves
invented daily in the pressure,
bite of animal-plant, plant-
animal, work
horse. From these the honors
are done. How?
In their desire to speak
somewhere out of bounds.
"I do not wish to go below now."

In Profile

For I am, in fact, not similar
to any human being.
What we know of you
seeds the ground neatly
leaving the furrow to the plow
yet the line grows not under you,
only greater upward. It's
generally agreed, nowadays,
we exist side by side
with our translations
but the field we survey is littered
with sorry brains. Or simply paper
cut another way. Why
should I worry about my shield
when someone steals the goodness
of my speech even now?
What right have the poets
to pass judgement?
Love is a force which all but makes
us greater than women
roaming, sore, in need.
Heart, my organ, understand.
That is, all that my heart longs
to accomplish may not be diminished
by radical institutions, though all
of us have ceased to interpret
the soul. Sappho, with her bold
neo-logism "bitter-sweet"
vexes the one
anticipating her. What did she
know? A righteous individual?
The great mass of people roll
mightily along
and once they have gone down
there is no coming up.
Man's history is not
a meaningful unit. Then
where is meaning? Man?
Snatched from the stream
soaking wet and hollering?

Bonds. We send our thoughts
to both of them.
Longing to see smoke rising from my land
and then to die honoring
the community of thought from whom I am
entirely feasible . . .
So moderate a wish
allows the pleasure of the world
to survive; there was no grove
where in the spring the song
might not unmask its
solidarity. The law is not the link
binds writers together
for they are symptomatic
use words
and are more or less
explicit: history is a garment
hiding a relatively small
people.

One's dogmatics are
another's disbelief. Only rarely
do we lock each other up
for what can be said
or not. The teacher
has misplaced the dialogue
cassette and the mother (teacher)
says hold the baby up.
The things of the older
emigré couple come slowly
into focus. Their job
to glide
directionless in myth
landed in opportunity. His speech
before the senate makes
more than one of us cry;
his speech before another man
tries him in his bed.
The haggard man walks away.
The way rolls up
spins until it cracks
and no more talk can get

around it. I don't know where
this is that you seek to understand
the nature of that goodness.
We long to open the cracked object up and
intermediate
stand the ground of conflict.
Your belief in the pact —
vitamin, face, and a changeable
third term —
flattens. You walk quietly home
among the broken statues
to heroes of thought and excess
and won't be spared. With the succession
of days only repeatability
hungers for registration.
The gnat in its assembly.
What troubles *me* isn't the great rhetoric
of the power-lords
but its disregard for this particular's
electorate.
This is the situation.
You are that witch
lying on her shield who dares
to go to sleep.

"Nothing Can Become Sweet Which Is Sweet To No One"

His speech began like this
then faltered
fumbled by its tongue. "Why does the bail
bond office stay open
late at night?"
the students ask the doctor
of philosophy. "How can you ask
me?" he says as we find
he was stolen as a boy
from itinerant tribes
we've failed to know
outback. Ask *them*
to describe our state,
not disposable but passing on
to the next correctable
thing. No one knows
the name of every company. So
let us call the whole, "corporation."
Defaced, at the edge of the world,
aggravated and resplendent
we carry the thinking-shop on our back
a living demonstration
of material success. A fairy will
come by on a worm, it's
true, but men and
women on the street won't seem
to notice though they have this intuition
in their legs. One would have to see
only words to believe
the voyage to have ends
with the scar. If I have but one
life let me live in the subsequent
question. Old ones are passing
in the street and to them
we seem strange
but speak the language.
After numerous twists changes the citizens
resume the overcoat
studded with shredded soles
of hobnailed boots

discarded by the world. Many fences
held them in. Many lives
or many fictions.

Back View

I remedy the thought
what is not
having originated from organization.
This eyeball may look prosaic
standing on the street but it exists
in the time of painting
itself, looking at
the face which holds it in.
The friend is also one
gigantically after the fog
of political doubt no particular
can resurrect. The spasm
the skill the skull
of all in the bleached future light
of looking at the book. The moon shows us
hidden behind our works
subject to a rainfall
of knees. In this documentary
the outerwear of hundreds hangs
upon a wall
to show we have limbs
and love the private sign.
Then having turned
from the public
we find it inescapable
even in our tools
lying ready
about as we see fit.
You don't want a strategist
telling you what to do
yet you have schemes
for getting enough
of a uniformly objective present
to understand the fish-dance
of the sultan's girls
or the hundred nights of story
gotten here. Say we *are*
the sultan's girls, after Freud
but before the fun.
Heavy in material

light in articulation
 making do
 around the clock.
 Such that
 an unsuccessful gravity
 in the displeasure not only
 of texture but taste
 spits the fish
 back to its plate.
 Wrongly allegorical
 the wing of Pegasus
 pumps a riddle full of holes,
 reversing the pull
 of massive works no longer
 pressing through the gates of
 Oz. Open it and see
 radical innovations
 de-mystify the regularity of day.
 Can-opener, canopy, canebrake,
 "cranberry." Otherwise local
 and otherwise sane.
 When you can't say in writing
 what amounts to knowledge
 you may as well turn around
 to the fluid sky, and
 either drink up or walk back.
 I don't speak for everyone
 but for the brave
 and curious alien,
 the section (head or tail)
 the compromised, the one who moves
 whose place remains the same.

FROM: AT THIS POINT

Eric Wirth

no owner not resist could look at contortionist:
 that's pure us danger I sweep government cutworms
 before each step whi ni, why in tongue pitched into harm

I can't pour faster I let my hand get shocked with copper,
 kind of liked the seeping part of the ceiling, length
 to stain story touching wire A to wire B arc

male you yes through hydrophone, take yoga breaths, wonder
 at the pull of lifelessness stronger than the sea-floor
 psi you staggered under — nude — for hours
 . . . whether him or him little matters to win-through,
 capitulate to relax

(prayer) the hedge to hog is plenum, mithra we can't
 even look at a slug and name one accomplishment
 (the shot of maggots under Valli's tread tracks
 at their level) prefer apology hadn't shrunk

slick the mud slope soreheads in poplin must — they,
 you, funambulists, stars: don't brook objects, so called,
 which would lash or stonewall the star power e.g., glass
 jar on shelf in boat — yet the pickled hands rest in peace . . .
 essentially objects pass generically and unaudited
 under touch

if I keep serving Lachryma Christi in my tresses,
 face coated mien stomach starch, forget inclination — time!
 lungs not soured to time border recovery

don't skip a day, moldy now, your raspy hack dispense
 with false indices of health leaving you where everything
 is flat with a blow to strike: now that life in sand
 is dead value doubles back on the beach

•
this, at last, is payoff
in anesthesia lozenge swallowed
through completeness mania —
still you whirr and flier let go glass

backpedal unavail, sharky grin
and tremolo add
to paramour if that means all I know
coming acroX

from this perch Tigris of
sensation pass through earphone

...
for droppings, ground wood — we went
around, or it did? discovery
under the door
that's our oeuvre reward

general, folks are cleanly, you make
one though hushed 'n' slit — lame throat —
internal body habits vary don't always
want to know; maybe glue
brushed on palm and on diploma

see the crushed grass I conceived
here what hear of me
from abysm uneducation,
fan
must enter star's house blink

teacher regress citadel
conceitum pituit hero every lameness
asks pause
on top of everything else
hardly ever

FROM: SCOPTOCRATIC

Nancy Shaw

It's Always The Good Swimmer Who Drowns

The only complete stationary object in the
room. Their hands, set lightly, never quite
chatter. If she saw me out of the corner of
her eye, she gave no hint. As you may
imagine in the course of this adventure.
About her life as a *femme fatale*.

Good mother.	Devoted father.
So obliging.	So amusing.

Unforgettable days.

In principle, always answer yes. In this instance, the relation of confusion and the patient's life. Hence, it was for years that she kept the portrait of herself. *The horse was as good as the rider.* A submitting display. A place at every table, at the next table. That all goods be held in common.

The two details of their behavior:

A speedy marriage.

To arouse natural instincts.

The latter is never attempted. The former only tried, owing to motives that will only later become evident. Scenes of married life. Horseback riding. Rain bistro. A traditional grouse shoot. After much study, the eternal victim.

I shall spare myself the details, but by the beginning of the last chapter, the hero's horse rarely wins. He admitted the scene had probably occurred one or two years later. Without having heard myself, I explain this by supposing I spoke to them out loud. In a way *that* was not at all remarkable.

Of that celebrated affair:

Spectacle. Romance.

Action. History.

Ravaged hearts. Squandered fortunes. An unauthentic revolution. Back to his early life. A change of scene. Happy days despite the weather. I have seen your portrait.

You will observe a set of pitiful misadventures and accidents. An ordinary object or scene. A sudden flare. The said clock, wound up. On the dangers of curiosity. Figurative pity. Ill-considered intimacy. A calculated plan for doing good.

Only fear of seeming so. I shall finish as I began with a timely and well-executed attack. I am a man of the circus. Mere examples: to put one in the picture. Stand still. Shadow show. The most wonderful, fantastic episode: If, I Nevertheless, he was not at all a scandal machine. That it should come to this.

The elements of the tenth year, described by the hero in the first hour are not merely as he supposed. Tyrants have other means of seduction. Then she told the story for the third time. In the shape of a vow. A recital of debts, in pantomime, with tableaux, and acrobats.

One false move.

Rumour. Scandal. Passion.

That he became her bodyguard. I have watched you discretely. One may infer from this episode and begin to take an interest in nature. Ascertaining to all her habits. And so on. That the father met the daughter in the company of a lady.

The very element of seduction. These few words should have been enough. The temperament of this situation might have seemed intriguing. And so on. Triumph and perdition. The twelve elements of an ideal life to which we were sworn. The displacement with which they had become involved in reproducing these details.

A certain natural duplicity extended to this end, completely motionless. Don't oblige me to regret having known. You might have found it amusing. I turned my consideration to our safety. In perfect view, only a stupid question. The history of surrender in greater detail. All that had passed or rather she appeared to have been saying.

I will only add at the end.

Complete. Character. Obsession.

Happened to fall to his feet. Names that were of little consequence. And immediately, in accordance with a type of procedure with which she was familiar. According to the wording, we were obviously very fond of cruelty.

The first part, with questions: a charming

inn, a good dinner. The most indelicate. The most indecent. At the time perhaps, he hesitated. If one may use such a phrase. A case of prudence or impending arrival. It could have happened fifteen years ago

BOARD FEET

Kevin Davies

The middle of a long
happy decline, which accounts for the ear-popping.

One frame is not
enough to coerce a purchase.

Copyright your ventriloquism.

[War is normal.]

[Miniaturized
and placed into others.]

Coming of age
between musical generations,
waiting around outside the rink.

Hazardous haunted
public waste.

After a while good pals turn into conniving spies.

Cats swim if they have to.

[Elope in haste and
taste the ether.]

[If you don't plan ahead you'll be sent north.]

The books
are trash and this is history.

Inward, Xtian warders.

Claustrophobia is an element of the screw
musics.

It is your body
that is being asked to house these assumptions.

[Zero vacancy.]

In the old days a big part
of the job involved speeding up and slowing down
the machine in order to approximate
reality, but that is no longer necessary.

Animals are attractive.

It's made up
as it goes along.

Great lengths
will be gone to.

See,
all they do is play.

A national characteristic.

[The sign says "Don't Even Think
About It."]

Eat your wog wheat.

Idaho dream sequence.

A mind-altering
insubstantiality.

Tufts of grass
behind the abandoned
potato pool.

Boy those are the days eh.

There is no way
to understand what these individuals are saying.

Acceptable hard-R
border guard aggression.

To be fair,
equal time
must be given
to
opposing views.

Those indigents have been captured in acts.

Montage of untrustworthy-
because-vulnerable.

They are destroying our air.

Men enjoy hard
fast fucking and
sleeping in ditches
and dying.

The hidden camera is God's only idea.

Terrified people
are forced onto boats.

Packed solid with continuity consultants.

Seeing is similar to believing.

Do as
you're told.

[Drive
for hours in a stolen Camaro.]

Calcutta test-pattern.

Life out of
boxes.

At the last moment the circus clown realizes it is going to die.

This Australian
journalism.

What the short
star stands on.

Patrons spit at
mirrors.

Scenes of average nudity.

Consume that
city-scape.

The world is a wonderland of colour.

[Sticking
to the topic.]

You eager picture
of an otter or otters, swarming
unwanted from the selective unconscious.

Give that leper a
downer.

The brain
ought to look like this.

An evening at gunk beach.

[These cadets are ignorant of
what awaits them.]

Tinny edit-
orial voice-
over.

They go looking for drugs but find bombs.

The invading army enters the stadium just before the earthquake.

Huck the rock.

The time-lapse
photographer, dying of cholera.

I don't want you to feel
it.

One big spliced police
riot.

We immediately identify with the
main character in any
civilization.

[Only the skeletons go to
heaven, youngster.]

[Strapped to the front of the train.]

TWO POEMS

Tom Raworth

the only part that didn't float
about whatever had happened
could feel rain in the air
a fine handmade panama hat
near the altar rail
in the soft glow of chandeliers
an almost square grey
bookshelf filled with history
all the movable property
mangling one of his legs
that same damned ugly sofa
swept up and carted away
cool water playing over
the dead and dying

almost as to a stranger
taking advantage of the numerous
candles, in a room
painted at the same time
through the coarse sieve
not continuously being guarded
of a dying hour
fed by an inexhaustible
external unity
fever had now taken possession
of disturbed contours
lustrous in the shade
behind mirrors
their dying could not alter

down in the grasses
silent, leaning forward
each one of them accomplished
through the narrative
accustomed words fall
easily into dreams
in order to arrange
dust patterned with immutable
antiquities, various
doors filling the apertures
of tradition
so accurately
it was easy to recognise
the remedies she had used

passing near the black hole
in ordinary flat space
around a small loop
of objects formed
for symmetry reasons
species of particles exist
not yet pinned down
as coincidences
moving relative to one another
on the edge of the quantum zone
by gravitational amplification
irrespective of the identity
of metals in their spectra
to collapse into a mathematical point

FOUR POEMS

Ray Di Palma

INDIGO SHIFT

BLIZZARD OF AEONS RAZING
THE PATHOLOGY OF GAPE

TIME HONORED ENSIGN

ANCIENT OF ANCIENTS
SPOOLING THE WHITE HOLE

LOST ILLUSION
OF THE IRRITABLE ABSOLUTE

WHO TO SALUTE

ON THE MOEBIUS

DAY AND NIGHT THE NAVIGATION LEAKS DUST
OUT ONTO THE PARROT WEIR
TIDAL NO ROOM TO WALK

TAVERN CELLO PRINCIPLES
WALKING DOWN BIG IN A CLEAN SHIRT
FIRST THE GLASS IS WET THEN COLD THEN FULL

OPHELIA DRAFTS PULLING UP SHORT
LIKE THREATS DISSOLVING INTO PROPERTY
GUIDE STAR GREEN AND BLUE NO EXCEPTION

BLOWS DISTANCE NO IT TOUCHES ME
WITH INLAND ACCENTS FLAT ENOUGH
TO AMPLIFY THE NEBULAE

A QUICK QUESTION WHICH FAR
HOW ONE
MAKE IT TWO

NIGHT AND DAY THE NAVIGATION MAKES WAY
FILLING THE UP WITH THE WAY AROUND
AND THE HOW WITH BOTH

NO MAN MUSIC

A HOAX OF CLAMOR CRAWLING WITH AMBITION
OR JUST ANOTHER BUSY DAY

ALL SPOTTED-OUT WITH DETACHABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND
THE KIND OF HOSTILE GENEROSITY THAT BLEEDS DETACHMENT

THE GRIM LOOK OF BOOKS FROM 20 AND 30 YEARS AGO
NOTHING MORE FORGOTTEN THAN SOMETHING THAT GREW

FROM 70 TO 500 PAGES ONLY ONCE A MAN WAS DEAD
CALCULATIONS THE EARNEST SHUFFLERS MADE WINDING

DOWN TO ADDENDA AND MONOGRAPH
BETTER PAPER LICKED WITH CRISPER TYPE AND FAT MARGINS

WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE
WHEN DID YOU START TO REALIZE
WHEN DID YOU FIRST START TO REALIZE

CONVERSATIONS WITH PERFECT STRANGERS
PERFECT ONES HOOTA HOOTA HOOTA FRESH AIR
IM FOR THAT AND LUMBERING QUASI-PRIMITIVE REALISM
AT LEAST FOR A FEW MILES

MUTED TRUMPETS AND PHONY SAXOPHONES AT NIGHT
A BADLY DRAWN THICK LINE FROM A TO 3
A VAST SLOPE OF CLARITY ENDING AT THE BACK DOOR
JUST ANOTHER PRIORITY ESTABLISHED TO TAKE HOSTAGES

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER MAKES YOU
AN AMBASSADOR TO BAGHDAD
DESPERATE CIRCUMFERENCE (REMEMBER STALIN
AND WHAT THE FRENCH MADE OF HIM IN THE 50S)

FOR A CONJUNCTION
IN AN ALLEY FULL OF CASH
CAT SPRAY AND PALE SHADOWS
EAST OF THE INDOLENT DOLORS

Lyn Hejinian

Chapter Fifty-Three

It's Armenian at all that someone has faith in your wealth
Fear of bank teller in America for its telling authority
No night falling
And a little girl was playing on Vasily Island between the switching
rails where Malii Prospekt meets Gavanskaya Street
Every night the ghosts become more numerous and violent
Their special interest is in altered states of consciousness and speech
The rails switched and seized one of her feet
There was a colonel across the metal
It is futile, he said later, to fight against your feet
The colonel was just crossing the street
A man at a window was thinking in his writing light
A life locked in that look — the colonel helping the child to fight her
foot free
Behind her a trolley turned the corner toward them — speeding in
gray light, it was almost night
The child and the colonel continued to fight

Chapter Fifty-Four

Winston Churchill had arrived at this same point on a switchback in
the mountains
His ears were clearing
It was at the last minute, so without melancholy
There was open-air music and Earl Warren was dancing
Since Wallace Stevens wrote poetry this wasn't frightening
But you must know why you are in Leningrad, said Boranovin
In a metonym
It's not displacement but relocation
In fact on the same date we were doing both sleeping and waking
Preoccupied with production, always provided with basic necessities,
a person like itself
Then the woman, without lesbian experience, gets the man excited
about lesbian life, because of what women like
A woman's baby napped by poppies in the Ukraine
Repeating, dispersed, tired
The excitation of the same experience by two grammars — it's not
impossible

Chapter Fifty-Seven

The child was blinded by the greatcoat to die
Not agent nor agency but instrument
The idea is to save one from the sight of what serves
The canal but no potential
The bare statues in the Summer Garden boxed to spare them from the
 lifting frost
Behind closed windows through open curtains the neighbor was
 dancing with his collie on its hindlegs
The old woman's husband hit the nail in her head
The toddler was lost in a communal flat by going to sleep in what he
 saw was a darker drawer
It was his dilemma to sleep
It was his dilemma to say he was paying for a Panzer
Another colonel knew all along — such poetry isn't beauty, it's inquiry
We have any experience to deliberate
In sex inquiry
At the door stood her legs and boots

Chapter Fifty-Eight

The mosquitos were sleeping in the cellar for the winter
Inspiration in abeyance, no sense of mind
No sense of life size
Is sex the excess of subjectivity
Everything happens so frequently there's no sense in saying so
So even in the enormous space of a New York loft you can instantly
 find your own glass, Gavronsky said
Gavronsky was explaining his theory of the tiny sign
Progress suspended, no condition to maintain
Persons find themselves increasingly small in this century, so that
 smaller and smaller things appear normal
If Leonardo were to paint *La Gioconda* today he'd put her in a 3-inch
 square
The jiggling of all things 30 to 40 centimeters high — no more
Sex the excess of objectivity
It seemed to be cold, but it might have been wet
Zero degrees celsius — no less

Chapter Fifty-Nine

Some possibilities take place on a plate
A process whose pace doesn't coincide with comprehension's pace
I remember the instructions
To see is such deferred
Zina was jarring the milky liquid for Ostap's priming
Such is our medicine, he said
Old people's skulls thicken
I am to interrupt myself tonight at exactly 8 and propose a toast to
 "our colleagues who at this moment are reading verses in
 Tambov"
Both largeness and lozenge to collide
The crows' voices in winter light like copper pliers
The reading an open word shutter
Only slats, and they faded into winter
Paints (of any color), aspirin, artichoke hearts, and printer ribbon
Dispersal at either end — eight passed without interruption

Chapter Sixty

If you whistle a tune within a flat its residents will never have cash
The collie was barking on the opposite balcony it filled above the trees
 with its inexhaustible faculty of negation
It puts grammar to the hunt
Ducks swimming in the black backwash of the canal and several
 women and children feeding them in the wind
It isn't the cold — scarcely one degree of frost — but the wind increases
 the sensation of it
The feeding of everyday life put to sex
I like such gaps, Arkadii said
A neighborhood of rotting bricks housing an enterprise of brick
In the next neighborhood a plant of plasticity
And wind — Zina tightened my hood
The ground emitted an odor of oysters
No clocks worked
From the sensual instability of volition, of willfulness, of intention I
 had slept
I was not disappointed

Chapter Sixty-One

He was not nationalist, Vasya said
The room was blue, the hue an indescribable grasp
It was not village prose and not a Siberian correction
Misha was moaning with hangover
There was honey on the dish and three spoons
They have made him write a trilogy and then they dispensed
There was humiliation in its typing
It was a great joke
Then what is prophesy but a logical violation
A sort of limerick, but longer
A mechanic, and more fortunate
A Soviet Faulkner, a Soviet Rilke
There are constant predicates and variable subjects
One sits beside a river and knows its name, the other digs a canal

Chapter Sixty-Two

A ram has a job — interruptions, just leaping
I was sleeping past the depression that reality divides
It's assigned to lead the other rams and sheep to slaughter
Perhaps the traveller should be obsequious, not the one who resides
I was sleeping between Me and Not-me
The cousin to a navy guy, just up for adoption
The corpses behind and the ram ahead
One day it takes a stand and refuses to do so
If there are no great opposites there are no great parallels
In the film Alyosha described, the ram is condemned then and itself
is slaughtered
Another ram takes over the job — it simply replaces it
There are many Bambis, Bambi is normal
A face so familiar and one sees that it expresses something in life that
we have seen on that face
Alone, after work, things were happening to it

Chapter Sixty-Three

If each day were new a person would be incomprehensible
To misunderstand it was to be rejected
The person left out, in its unsoviet sensation
Many things left in observation
Greeting a man we pretend is a man we've come to meet, we were
admitted into the Writers Union
Black mushrooms stuffed in sturgeon, radishes, vodka — the sturgeon
rolled and sealed
The oak was very complicated — Masonic groves, the grooves in
plots, and Jews
There are members of memory and they have attacked the Jews
Jamal talked of race cars and wood carvings
I had run far faster than any of the other white girls could do
Or of confinement and submission
Something further had to be said about a cousin, a forger, in prison
Every man to his mafia, Feodor said
To America

Chapter Sixty-Four

Goodbye, America, which I have never seen
I float forever in my paper boat
A paper flicker, no telephone
If there would be phone, there would be love
No taken distance — but there's only difference
Description of it is a form of waiting
But the time deteriorates
I remember how it was, and what a fine memory of it was forming
Or that was the anticipation
Cold was imminent and my sense of it merely deferred
The climate was inexact and inert
With the person disappeared the person's obsequiousness
The person now morose or immune
It's afloat in its intimations

Chapter Sixty-Five

A question occurred about *Opoyaz*
Empty stores
The satchel of Lydia Iakovlevna on psychological prose
And there was no other man
There's such impertinence in subjectivity
But what could one predict from the semantics of the desire
to overcome the opposition between "I" and "you"
The manifestations of the library as a whole were different from the
manifestations of its single books
Old-style trolleys passed through the Vyborg, but within minutes
they had disappeared
Jugs of muddy juice half-settled pulp remained in plenitude
In web
Bourgeois lyricism is predictable, Papa, said Ostap — he was telling
his father about necrorealism
They very frequently said names — Mitya, Vitya — active repetitions
At dusk in the Vyborg the colonel, sweating under his fur hat, was
making his way through the park on the darkening snow to the
thawing path
Our colonel is duck-footed

HOUSE OF BEFORE

Spencer Selby

Question almost anything
I would want to dignify
as fortune's assault.

My family chases itself around
the place where we bought our vehicle.

Pictures advertise the difference
everyone fails to avoid.

They shout and cover up nothing
more useful in a minute
you should always contain.

Blue Day made its way
from last impression,
going over a bridge
when the water doesn't show.

A contrast does its job
for something to think about.

I'm getting married one by one,
and now I'm reading
what you said
that wouldn't satisfy.

A force that pulls my throat
pulls everyone but you
in the way they stand outside.

News was swollen by a river,
leaving words behind
a rescue attempt
I imagine on the way down.

The train crosses over
and sits in a station
getting prepared.

I sit in my compartment
with one window
broken just enough
for damage I can dream about.

It's moving every time I forget
the person next to me is wrong.

Listen just a word
is what you hear.

A leading thinker
represents my passage
on a channel
I no longer receive.

A crowd surrounds my pronoun.

Certain speech now aggravates
an epic of man-made interest
growing slow.

With a sound I can never remember,
the patrons of this language
decide to exchange difficulties.

I wonder if their limits
carry them through walls
of restful absence.

The first vacuum bottle
sits in a field
as perfect as the day it was born.

Don't forget your guarantee.

SEVEN POEMS

Karen Mac Cormack

Positive Midnight

The open splurge, so detritus, pick yourself up.

This *is* personal:

craving direction in buildings of stone rings on a finger mean
nothing now the shoe's on the other foot.

Drawings don't culminate so much as suspend
suspense for an eastern shore.

Delegates seldom move in Chanel unlike circles.

Pierced.

All acknowledgement undertow expels the word *dainty*.

Reviewing magnet in place of minutes wear a watch.

In the alley *at home* we repeat what gains us most attention.

Stumble before a fall.

Riots, more pieces of metal than puzzles quickly or foxed.

Freestanding.

Portions, pastoral, and all the boom covered twice.

Saw goes in the wood it corners and crates.

Negative Noon

Wood pitch.

The dots join.

A leaf in parentheses.

Corruption on the sand carpets.

Re-fuel peace of mind.

Surprise notation.

Headlines running truce.

Vaginal not baseball diamonds.

To enact buildings.

Red hair *and* a fur coat.

His words closer by.

The opportunity of memory.

A particular cashmere shell.

All done falling down.

Transpose order, epaulettes.

Diplomats knife and fork we spoon.

More countries to aid good conscience with less for all.

Avoid birthdays.

Walking or otherwise dog.

A waist believes its belt.

Each sometimes simultaneously but imprint no more.

Numerable Plectra

That around which the axis molests.
The desk and Japanese warriors.
Straight lines in the curve.
Their battle, knife, the window.
Speckled gulf.
Shield against cancellation, glass on swords.
Silk rein.
Involuntary pastel.
Carpets, helmets, bridges, steal.
Colours pack easily.
Bookcases, two lengths of leisure, obey.
Sounds that are new to this century only.

Bouquets in the Fields

The carrier pigeon did not offer knees.
What we choose to think, forced through.
The provocation of history.
If the landscape moved with us.
Lanes if lanes and lanes loan.
Image on the upside down smokes gravity.
Numbers to a crow.
And the letters written but the subject thought.
Postage due to extinction.
Plenty of room in the concept *house*.
An easy squirrel learns circus.
The news when I don't read headlines.
Nimety as mentioned.
Lateral pause.

Sighting Dover

Admission. Turn style argument
there was and to escape neither thorn.

Sincere timing.

Skin longer hives tassel
not to incinerate control, coagulate.

Birds call. Fenced in hover.

The preamble of *us* all
perfect pitch. Lower than mole. Cream.

A rejuvenating weave.

Castles clothing open spire. Design command.

Cut; lessening. Recess severance
and the instance dumbfounded lettering.

When points cease. A marker. Men on the rise,
window watching.

Raze Water

Noticing as opposed to wanting attention goldfish hold only their
colour in a bowl fed x number of times a day telling the time became
a lie human error reversals of inevitable distraction doesn't launder fins
transparency is what's there in the bulb to look at this employ and
feeding that the autobiography stoppered lives a hint at all traction
makes for sensation clarity doesn't enhance comprehension of what is
seen through or perceived during the day in other ways might taper
to breath reaches instance unused contradictions of so much regularity
intact aperture when grill.

All Four Sides

Jung Nails and *Scruples Footwear* for the finer deductions become mere extensions to these consumers daily showers please reduce the aftermath of their novels' fog the very edge of can't-quite-explain easier to put a man on the moon than teach that same nation to read peppered with moving much rolled-out thought back formed by far could not provide hip bottom of stroke closing past scuba music coincidence greeted later suffered proposition *you* fondly with what happens inches sort of nondescript hatching ignition the nearest locksmith left in ten thwart garden party of the current lulled.

Two POEMS

P. I n m a n

wide face

Montana by sections
of wrist from
birth he was
built through woman's
motion snow kept
in thrown dune
each blank nod
to its mineral

she saw him
as the blunt
of a pond
as her height
in white cells
she took to
wake hilled work

French sight eke
fluster nerve form
"I meant the
earth I held
left in my
behavior" sooners of
razors talk forced
from social brook

he was shooting
alot of geometry
thinking afterwards each
sky at his
health wheat earths
of vaseline town

she's walking toward
him sight frosted
churchyards as temperature
description tar lapses

sliced up coffee
Pacific crudes of
initials field before
her made of
radio source scrapes

tawn brunts of
bodies of lake
error liver with
the wit in

frozen climate drum
Hempstead Long Island
as food nouns

day after sight
tallow in another
age Balzac would've
been waved drink
the odds of
certain people at
his blood cells

the rewind on
mill dwindle clerks
at their form
of voice shoulder
blades out of
weight her solves
of bird past

she wouldn't rub
through where the
coast had been

a grift of
olives spanned to
parenthood a creole
about energy salt
for name ice

a heckler stands
up & says
suppose all the
lines in his
face were money
an odd pause
to his factor

horizon line filled
of simper parts

under farina turpentine
on white suffix
conference a sand
from mind palmer

what she crosses
after her as
miniscule put in
sight hedges on
late pills a
field he hadn't
smelled of hewns

years later i
wrote birth a
coal sight toast

rubbing mitchum shoreline
into his lips
pictures of mercantilists
& their need
for motion prose

a soda that
the trove of
a hill single
lighthouse pleural cavity
broken into time

skin beside the
name where its
peer would form
over dusk by

the sound that
he snows by

protein composure still
mind dried off

friended building trades
the liver abides
of their people
the work days
they couldn't get
past the money

the land &
its pepridge weathers

fenced blood flow

an olived cell
horn of her

"Likeness" (II)

psalmist fleuve
could be fork flow
 taken as a plus
payday ceased through the knees
a picture of crooked lipstick hill
 a girl's neck thin
from years ago
her last sound as oleo
pinches of river

charcoal night behavior
could be prose turned to footsteps
hears to touch chats
 chaired sorghum
description as raisin mennonite

backs of soapbar ear
unknown how he puts down shadow
prairie land by grades
 of reduced ego
crinked clock
skin about forest
behind the eyes

pour surd
 birded o'clock

thoughts as salt bodes
laned glances

anissette meters
the same mold boy
 in his hat of cat gleam
first pour as dystrophy
 biscuit
 Amokeag

thought weft
all the waist
 at their particles
as low speed literature
rice sight lasts
french river
 in her lungs

grimes of crop page

villagers as reflecting surfaces
applesauce of compound words

thigh of horn peen
 class culture
below letter
 prose dulce
 a fur under

shorn hertz
miner's grimace
of barn lean

a kelter sight cut
his height to her carbon hinder
 sight grips of meal to him
she'd watched them as amounts of space
 passed through her
orchards on couches
lined cough as riddle

pronoun nire
 stelk
 compose

every husband as earthed ass wafer

what the Green Mountains lacked
 were brims by its speech
she thought of a past of turned paint to her money
a sealevel lip of each
 barn at the last naple
a stroke of gists
his nose from a beer

from some photo of pea crop
 phone ring shapes

every mind has its sight spouted
frowned river time scale
facial chore
 reap left
 casted haircut

tawn cubes
punctuations

copoeia
women leave more voice
shunts of yearns
 production relations
entirely of leather average

sulp at speech
coast boned
 cress alight

the newspaper boy had his brain out of crow edge
she held her weight in knuckles
time of day color all pat
a rain past lever sift
salt erg sidewalk

teal of sorted work history
camera shot filled with mouth
 salem
 forecast
herringbone about thickens
children subtracted in plaid blankets

seconds of lopes
 skull fit as large ink
the lock he was built through

eightball of lake names

THREE POEMS

David Gilbert

Reputation

Certain vulgarities
 are under
pidgined
 longing
forms
 in pre-memory
denying blackout
 and blood
in the sink
 a rotating patois
of white drizzle
 to disorient
eastern enjambments
 their collages attract
pedestrian deranging
 a marker
called
 placid second surface
 playing through
a correspondence
 of wobbling pivots

Horizontal List

I was there
 a perspective
[That has a kind of tree disease, eating everything
but the leaves]
 centrifugal
the hobby
 of licking memory's
ejecta
 [I don't believe this interiority any more
 than you do, but the part is right for me
 and I think it would be good for my career]
lost populations
 faking flatness
bad latitudes
 contained before
you wore floods
 with the head
screwed on behind
 an afterthought
bent oedipus
 autobody
wrecks self second
 helping
the stars shortfall
 you know, siding denied

Staples Make the Man

Chance is work
 the walk, then
as a voice full of sex
 the field
a way out
 a convenience paradise
and back
 perfect bound
pancake
 to go on
and story
 of life measured by entries
 into public pools
real then preparatory
 radiance
prayer RV
 downbeat
 weak
memory for shadows
 very few
can afford
 to mark a place
for their victim
as if seriousness were a disease
spread by its own etiology
 a work
of light children
 coded and circling
promiscuous gravity
 on its way to a conclusion

FROM: THE LETTERS OF MINA HARKER

Dodie Bellamy

November 5, 1989

Dear Quincey,

Remember the dawn of our *liaison intime*? Of course you don't — an all-American like yourself would never know French beyond *Oui*, *Monsieur* or *escargot*! Let me begin again. It's been a century since you poured your heart out to me and I still haven't recovered. Have you? The occasion is lovingly recounted in Dr. Seward's diary:

Van Helsing was evidently torturing his mind about something, so I waited for an instant, and he spoke:—

"What are we to do now? Where are we to turn for help? We must have another transfusion of blood, and that soon, or that poor girl's life won't be worth an hour's purchase. You are exhausted already; I am exhausted too. What are we to do for someone who will open his veins for her?"

"What's the matter with me, anyhow?"

The voice came from the sofa across the room, and its tones brought relief and joy to my heart, for they were those of Quincey Morris. Van Helsing strode forward, and took his hand, looking him straight in the eyes as he said:—

"A brave man's blood is the best thing on this earth when a woman is in trouble. You're a man and no mistake. Well, the devil may work against us for all he's worth, but God sends us men when we want them."

Perched in front of my MacPlus my fingers itch for your "goshes" and "gee-whizzes." Quincey, we both know the pleasures plain English provides — to hell with that artsy mumbo jumbo you're always hearing in Berkeley. Let me dish you up some good old down home dangling participles the word "Illinois" pronounced with an "s" at the end a syntax just bursting with Tina Turner *I don't do nothin' nice and easy* **did you really think you could get to know Dodie without having to deal with me?** She can tolerate an incredible degree of

ambivalence but I **Mina Harker Queen of the Dictaphone and Typewriter** always want to know whatever there is to know. In those innocuous 40's films you're so fond of some malcontent invariably wails "Try to get some sleep" or "Wait, I can explain everything!" I wouldn't be caught dead in one of them. Call me Mia — Sigourney — Catherine Deneuve — Fay Wray — I am the heroine of every horror movie — fearlessly I turn in the direction of your words/telekinetic activities and demand: **WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?**

He fails every test I throw his way yet, crazily, I keep coming back for more.

Beside me on the couch a young man called "Quincey" sat folded and morose *is this any way to show a girl a good time?* When the words **HELP ME** etched themselves across his forehead in reverse he simply sighed, "It's been a rough year." His soft brown eyes stared at the polished oak floor but I doubt he saw anything reflected there. A demon was scribbling inside his cranium! Was it Mary Lou the prom queen who was burned alive in *Prom Night, Part II*? The jewels in her tiara gave her the power to possess teenagers and computers, to seduce all the wrong men . . . with a single evil glare she crushed a row of lockers accordion-style. Last week I saw her scratch the same backwards **HELP ME** on a blackboard. Mary Lou (hidden on the other side of the board) was really writing forwards, but we the viewers reversed her words like a mirror. I knew better than to examine this young man's forehead: when the naive ingenue leaned towards that blackboard caressing the H with a manicured forefinger Mary Lou's dead arms poked through the slate and jerked her inside — the board's chalky surface churned to a turbulent pool of black liquid as large block letters swirled around her screaming face. The young man sighed, "It's been a rough year." **END OF TRANSMISSION.** He sank down deeper into the cushions as if the year were a whirlpool drowning him in real time. Before this brooding man this vat of alphabet soup I had to grab onto something solid — my own elbows or the arm of the couch.

God sends us men when we want them his American throat so squeaky pink beneath his button down collar all that unripe ruby potential — I know the type *firm and lean on the palate though not as exuberant as some* a fresh berry character you'd gulp down rather than savor — as a connoisseur I'm interested in his potential *a spiciness that could develop complexity with a few years of cellaring.*

I'd grown used to your face . . . relentlessly pleasant and smiling a face devoid of dark corners. Without warning your eyes broke through — I said, "You make too much eye contact." You locked your arms and pouted, "Then I'll stare at the floor" and I was amazed how sexy you looked — all tiger like the long-legged women on MTV languishing in their negligees and anger. We were at a cocktail party the first time I saw those mild brown eyes come alive: after an evening of tolerable chit chat we wandered to opposite ends of the hall — as you idled by the stairs with your coat on I stood in line for the bathroom — your eyes like ferocious beasts snared me and no matter how much I feigned interest in the ceiling or the doorknob they wouldn't let go — I didn't know how to read this but I do know your eyes are the devil's playthings their pupils glowing violet, the room threatening to dissolve.

The bus is electric — that is — the ride is bumpy though relatively quiet . . . twin gleams of turquoise satin come into focus *am I seeing double?* a couple of Asian grade school girls sit in front of me disguised as unicorns . . . frenzies of lavender taffeta sprout from their compact equestrian bodies *mane and tail* from each hooded head pokes a single woven metallic horn . . . I'm afraid — but of nothing in particular (just the thought of anyone near enough to touch me) so I stare at these girls cute as salt and pepper shakers turquoise spats sliding around their four little feet. I keep waiting for my subconscious mind/artistic soul to come to some conclusion or witty summation to nudge these juveniles from decor to anecdote to myth . . . their costumes remind me of sleepers or snow suits . . . matching mittens . . . *nothing about them will open* . . . I pull the bell and exit at Octavia, a blast of chill air distracting my thoughts in the direction of a khaki green mailbox which has been uprooted and twisted around backwards — I can't look at it without thinking *automobile accident* or *Linda Blair's head*.

He doesn't even have the patience to read a novel — how's he going to deal with *me*, my line-up of selves as long and gilded as the Great Books of the Western World.

Holding the computer printout in your veiny fingers you wonder *how dare she write a letter like this to a man she barely knows* — at least that's what I want you to think, my epistolary urges simultaneously high tech and primitive as opposed to your black scratches hand drawn in perfectly even rows — virtually marginless — no sides for the Great White Whatever to creep in you keep to well-mannered topics, the

nicknames of your relatives, an in-depth critique of Franz Wedekind (the claustrophobia of live personalities bungling lines from another world). *Shy yet persistent aromas of creamy lemon and apricot . . . faintly grassy flavors that betray the region of origin . . . a touch of light oak*. I can be elusive too. In my last letter I disguised the protagonist so well that when I confessed his true identity to Lucy, she sputtered, "Him? I never would have guessed it — I can't imagine *him* that sexual." Glancing around the bedroom, I replied, "If it suits your writing, you can make a vacuum cleaner sexual." We were on the phone so she didn't realize I was seated on the floor beside my Hoover with the broken bag. Safety pins kept the dust from flying in my face.

Small of the Back, 1 pat = just passing by, 2 pats mean "Is anybody alive in there?" while 3 is a definite, "Hello, honey." What are you who do you want from me?

Did you know it was my thigh you were rubbing your leg against or did you think it was the table? I realize that touch is not an idea, but do you think this is a good one? A person can never tell what hocus-pocus an idle burnish will release. Look at Aladdin — take it from me — his survival was pure blind luck. Quincey, for all you know I Mina Harker who possess Dodie could in turn be possessed by Mary Lou who might be a marionette manipulated by Freddy Krueger . . . **WHO** . . . That isn't blood on the front of my nightgown it's juice from the pomegranate I was eating during *Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 3*. All the special effects made me kind of messy the mute boy his arms and legs bound to the bedstead with tongues, the mattress dissolved to a rectangular pit over the fires of Hell — those tongues writhing around his wrists and ankles like fat snakes *even in his dreams the poor thing couldn't scream out his despair* my breast bloomed crimson in sympathy, like your breast, Quincey, bloomed for me on page 408. If you had to save my soul all over again would you still impale yourself on the blade of a wild Gypsy? Dying on the manly shoulder of my betrothed you gazed up at me with your pragmatic brown eyes and feebly exclaimed, "See! the snow is not more stainless than her forehead! The curse has passed away!" I hate to break this to you, but with my libidinal atmospherics as of late, Love, I fear you may have perished in vain.

Try to get some sleep. I can explain everything.

Love,

Mina

AGNES BERNAUER

Frank Davey

The city of Augsburg has a rich heritage of buildings and memories. I had dinner at the Agnes Bernauer Restaurant because it had posted a menu of Bavarian game. Augsburg is twenty-five minutes from downtown Munich where the hotels cost two to three times more. With the menu the waiter brought an English translation of the history of Agnes Bernauer. Augsburg, the birthplace of Holbein, has preserved or rebuilt almost all of its Renaissance houses, churches and guildhalls. The fountains, unfortunately, are boarded up in winter. The Agnes Bernauer Restaurant is located in several small rooms of a sixteenth-century building, each room decorated with traditional Bavarian hunting emblems and with stuffed game birds, foxes, marmots and the heads of stags and bear.

I was travelling to the annual Canadian Studies conference at Grainau in the Alps south of Munich. Many of the spectacular medieval guildhalls of Augsburg were painstakingly reconstructed after being damaged by World War II bombing. The Fuggerei, built in the fifteenth century by the wealthy merchant house of Fugger, was the world's first subsidized housing project, and is operated today by the Augsburg city government. I had flown to Europe a week early to be a speaker for our embassy in Brussels, but nothing had been arranged and now I was a train traveler in southern Germany. A small portrait of an attractive young woman in medieval dress marks the signboard and menus of the Agnes Bernauer Restaurant.

The Agnes Bernauer that is remembered in the Agnes Bernauer Restaurant is the daughter of a thirteenth-century tavern keeper. Augsburg, home of Rudolf Diesel, was once one of the most important towns in Roman Germany. The remembered Agnes Bernauer is beautiful, pious, graceful and modest, and manages to be so while serving the tables of her father's tavern. My alternate plan for this week had been to stay in Paris, but because of the trial of the Hamadi brothers there were troops with machine-guns on each streetcorner. In medieval and early Bavarian times Augsburg was the German trade centre for Italy and the Mediterranean. The older churches of Augsburg offer many Madonnas. The hotel room featured a duvet and a colour TV. The son of the local baron was one of many young men who fell in love with Agnes. For those who prefer philanthropy, there is also a very fine restaurant at the Fuggerei. In many German folk tales the peasant girl is shown to have virtues the upper classes cannot equal.

On the street between the restaurant and the town centre the power & light company features maps and photographs of Augsburg before, during and just after the war. Nearby are the foundations of a Roman temple. I am also the cousin of someone whose Halifax was hit over Hamburg and crashed with him in the Black Forest. The local baron forbade his son to marry Agnes Bernauer. I ordered slices of wild hare cooked in red wine. Agnes Bernauer is remembered as cheerfully serving her father's tables and as praying a great deal for god's guidance. During the writing of the Augsburg Confession, Luther could not appear publicly in Augsburg because of death threats from various noble families. A few weeks after the clandestine marriage of the prince and Agnes Bernauer, she was murdered by his family and her body thrown into the river.

The story of Agnes Bernauer implies a critique of the morality of medieval power. The prince is portrayed as more appreciative of her piety than of her exuberant beer-bringing beauty. My waiter at the Agnes Bernauer was very helpful, but under the circumstances I would have preferred a waitress. That year the Grainau conference focussed on communications. The town hall was gutted by bombs and only in 1984 was replication of the inlaid floors and baroque ceilings completed. The beauty of Agnes Bernauer is also portrayed as more simple and natural than that possible within the baronial class. In the lower town, the medieval workshops that were enabled by canals that brought water-power from the Lech River are still intact. The city has re-opened the canals which were covered in the nineteenth century and built several new waterwheels. I spoke on the fragmentation of the literary audience in contemporary Canada, and later took a long walk with an Austrian scholar who had first learned of Canada as a POW in Quebec. Perhaps because of my limited German, I read the sign at St. Anna's to say that Luther had lived there during the drafting of the Confession.

The name of Agnes Bernauer occupies an ambiguous position in the quest for justice and for market-share among Augsburg restaurants. Augsburg, birthplace of Mozart's father, re-opened numerous canals to celebrate the ingenuity and prosperity of its medieval workers. If you seek to dine alone in an Augsburg restaurant, you may have difficulty being seated. In one of the small rooms of the Agnes Bernauer a group of male diners are singing traditional Bavarian drinking songs. After repeated resistance to baronial authority, in 1276 Augsburg became a free city. Everywhere I walked I felt haunted. As we looked at the 1944-45 photographs displayed by the power company, a German friend who teaches Canadian Studies at the university assured us there had indeed been a Messerschmidt factory nearby. One can dine out on innocence. Agnes would have only one or two real opportunities for social mobility. This unusual restaurant commemorates a saintly heroine of the class struggle. Elsewhere you may read of my visit to Augsburg's very silent seventeenth-century synagogue.

We do our best to construct violence as other, as a part of princely power, as a special circumstance, as an absence on the beer-tray. The wild hare I was served at the Agnes Bernauer was one of the best meals of my life. Dachau is a fifteen-minute journey on the rail-line between Augsburg and Munich, but most trains follow a slightly different route. Fantastic. Every visitor should spend extra time exploring the cobbled squares and promenades of a very special city. The extent to which we rely on some humanizing urge in women. Another route from Augsburg, my hosts noted, leads through Landsberg. Yes, the stylized portrait on the Agnes Bernauer signboard does suggest a generic role. Later events show how wrong. Then there is the baron's son, who in the story at least survived, and the various roles the spiritual beauty of Agnes have continued to offer him. I recall the restaurant as being on Frauentorstrasse but perhaps it was Prinzregentstrasse or Ludwigstrasse or maybe Fuggerstrasse. Grainau is the largest annual Canadian Studies conference outside Canada.

CONTRIBUTORS

Dodie Bellamy, San Francisco, recent work in *Front* magazine (303 East 8th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V5T 1S1), and a recent book *Feminine Hijinx* from Hanuman Books (P.O. Box 1070, Old Chelsea Station, New York, N.Y., U.S.A. 10113). Frank Davey, London, Ontario, is the editor of *Open Letter*; his *Popular Narratives* from Talonbooks (201/1019 East Cordova, Vancouver, B.C., V6A 1M8) will be out in the spring of 1991. Kevin Davies, Vancouver, recent work in *B.C. Monthly* (Box 48884, Station Bentall, Vancouver, B.C., V7X 1A8). Jean Day, Oakland, *A Young Recruit* (Roof Books, 303 East 8th St., New York, N.Y., U.S.A. 10009); she is currently translating the work of Russian writer Nadezhda Kondakova. Ray DiPalma, New York, *Mock Fandango* is forthcoming from Sun & Moon (6363 Wilshire Blvd., #115, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A. 90048). David Gilbert, Pacifica, CA, *You Asked For It*, a chapbook, is available from Post Neo Publications (9/28 Milton St., Elmwood 3184, Victoria, Australia). Lyn Hejinian, Berkeley, her translations of Russian poet Arkadii Dragomoshchenko are forthcoming from Sun & Moon; other sections of *Oxota* are in *Raddle Moon* 9 (2239 Stephens St., Vancouver, B.C., V6K 3W5). P. Inman, Greenbelt, MD, *Red Shift* (Roof Books) is his most recent book; recent work is in *Verse* (Dept. of English, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA, U.S.A. 23185). Karen Mac Cormack, Toronto, has work in the second issue of *Avec* (P.O. Box 1059, Penngrove, CA, U.S.A. 94951) and a book *Quirks & Quillets* forthcoming from Chax Press (101 West 6th St., #4, Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A. 85701). Tom Raworth, Cambridge, U.K., has published many books of poetry, including *Tottering State*, *Writing* (The Figures), and *Visible Shivers* (O Books); he edits *INFOLIO* (3 St. Philip's Rd., Cambridge, CR1 3AQ, U.K.). Spencer Selby, San Francisco, his first full-length book *House of Before* will be published by Potes & Poets Press (181 Edgemont Ave., Elmwood, CT, U.S.A. 06110). Nancy Shaw, Vancouver, is currently the curator of The Or Gallery; other sections of "Scoptocratic" are in the "New Vancouver Writing" *West Coast Line* (English Department, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6) and *Motel 2* (Box 65402, Station F, Vancouver, B.C., V5N 5P3). Lary Timewell, Vancouver, is the publisher of Tsunami Editions (#3-1727 William St., Vancouver, B.C., V5L 2R5); another section of "Ruck" is in *Verse*. Henry Tsang, Vancouver, has work in the new *West Coast Line*; he took the cover photo during a recent trip to China. Eric Wirth, New York, has poetry and a review in *Aerial* 5 (P.O. Box 25642, Washington, DC, U.S.A. 20007).

Now, 231 publications to choose from!

The new
1991
Canadian
Magazine
Publishers
Association

CANADIAN
magazines
FOR EVERYONE
1991

catalogue is the one source that describes 231 of the latest and best Canadian magazines.

There's an incredibly wide variety of topics, points of view and special interests.

They're all yours to choose from when you get our current catalogue with its easy-to-use detachable order form.

Fill in the attached coupon today and for just \$4 (to cover postage and handling), we'll send you our new catalogue.

Please send me the new 1991 CMPA catalogue. I enclose my cheque for \$4 to cover postage and handling.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

PROV.

POSTAL CODE



2 STEWART STREET
TORONTO, CANADA
M5V 1H6

WRITING

Box 69609
Station K
Vancouver, B.C.
V5K 4W7

Three issues a year
\$15 in Canada
\$18 in the U.S.A.
\$20 overseas

Name

Address

.....

.....

Begin with issue #

Payment enclosed

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING WRITING!

WRITING

Box 69609
Station K
Vancouver, B.C.
V5K 4W7

Three issues a year
\$15 in Canada
\$18 in the U.S.A.
\$20 overseas

Name

Address

.....

.....

Begin with issue #

Payment enclosed

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING WRITING!

\$6

樓

法家嚴書者其不勝收迨於繪堂林中進刻
三字儼然其制重新廟與金所樓者進登前
賢同深望御島同治五年丙寅春馬如龍



WRITING

26

贏得幾杆疎鐘半江漁火兩行秋雁一枕清霜

東萊偉烈豐功費盡移山心力儘珠簾畫棟卷不及暮雨朝雲便斷碣殘碑

光緒十四年戊子春正月二日

西林岑毓英重立

數千年往事注到心頭把酒凌虛歡滾滾英雄誰在想漢習樓船都付與蒼煙落照只