

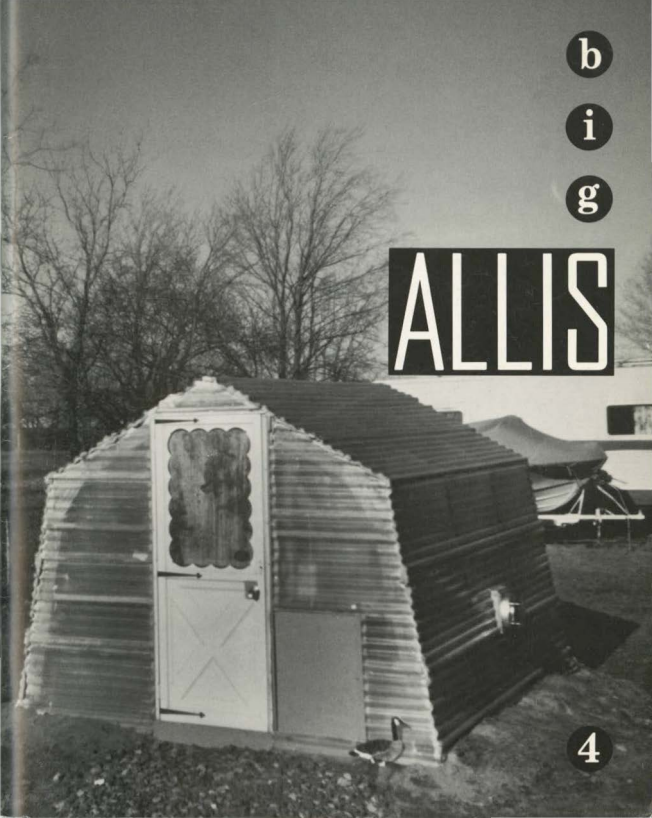
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ALLIS

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## BIG ALLIS

### Contemporary Writing

Issue Number Four

1991

BIG ALLIS  
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# THE CREATION

Impressions  
bribe or threaten  
in order to live.

Retreating palisades  
offer  
a lasting  
previousness.

\*

Let us  
move fast  
enough, in a small  
enough space, and  
our travels  
will take first  
shape, then substance.

\*

In the beginning  
there was measurement.

How much  
does self-scrutiny  
resemble mother-touch?

\*

*Die Mommy scum!*

To come true,  
a thing must come second.

## BUILDING

Growth is "winding down."  
I must deal with this

block by block.  
An odd assortment, but...

There's someone familiar  
in a beauty shop,

wearing protective gear,  
idly twisting

a wooden spigot  
shaped like an electric chair.

A person might be startled  
by seeing handiwork.

A student is learning  
"to care and not to care."

## MARGY SLOAN

## REST

Of time relearning, formal progression constrains a wholeness of insight: weary of so long acting the simple past, empty country wanted to stand still and listen, no, yes, one or less. Mountainous dark confines, indistinguishable sky, gathered to set in motion the tired walker. As many walking stream through hectic moral outlooks, behavior summarizes itself. Molten plant hurries to hands. Instead of being nocturnal in its habits, touring in obscure recesses, make use of this perversity, correct these steps

sleep seemingly caught something of the sky. (Caught in its image) (as) finding the partition of that artifact's dominions a plain ripple, a likelihood resistance wherein the confining mountains revealed a shape. Luminous, classless, climbing up the rough mass of central islands; scopic proliferation germinated future, imagined safety. Are not all so: if one just stamps the ground in slumber. A figure raises an arm to speak, goes awry. Climbing the rough mass, border conditions want more wants

mountainous shapes confine a town. A town may darken its limits; walls lead it, obscure in its recesses (folding) sleep (folding in) light of its own (in a fold in light of its own) peremptory animal theme self-possessed touring. What was a life thrown in relief against its species? Described contrition by outsider, from afar, a character, fabled metonymy. Maps of self-restraint. High metaphorical resolution of solicitude to other's thoughts. In any counterfactual heart of the world, multi-rational foraging sometimes excavate between devices change garden to wilderness, intercalated nocturne fugitive insert

....hilltops, mountain peaks, a surround, as nestling form; all calculations yield lowering, static, active, magnetic, inverting, reciprocal; device in blackness, light slope articulated soft cubes, town of sleeping heat, travail of limbs entwined, untended thoughts phototropic rise in wind

passionless constructions no one cried out, dreamed in tandem.  
Forgiveness inventions seemingly misled, a form is given no nesting  
place. Erotic chronology, horizontal axis of rest in incalculable  
forgiveness. In didactic embrace a feeding culture document  
forecloses minor mania. Eyes are occupied, static romance. At the  
end of perception's grasp three dark sighs. Molten plant hurries to  
fingers. Discovery grazed, imagined creature(s) like a self, hungry  
animals looking in folds. This side of the body being tired, the other  
takes up the task

the figure seals itself in, one of us, momentary certitude as  
pronounced as hunger. Laboring surface, figure with two arms  
raised, empty body described in flame, distant ancestry rides from a  
book at the periphery, figure on horseback riding a diagonal course  
across a field of scattered trees, trees bare, trees with two limbs  
upraised as arms, mutual greeting of rider and trees

"as for the likeness of living creatures" where mountains are  
flattened we have a field, one unlit figure; above are circling  
walkers in flight, birds with heavy wings, heavy with color,  
rustling, breeding light from noise, mercilessly forgiving: impulse  
gardens disposable course

## PARALEIPSIS

economy that  
warehouse dark

Conductors)

littering white

this torsion or this traction

a correctional void

on the exit continually  
South

depending on the hand

as when expectantly a white putt  
solves conflict in thick ties

a watry bow

whirlpool & hove

r

like to thee  
before the face (no

one / (voice)

in the night

(herding  
all night

to go deeply  
--outside the thought--

if multitude threaded her

i.e. to think)

bred across a tree in twilight

K

TOBER and

ook s /

sorrows one

as when "biannual" eclipses

"equinox"

expanse shown through to the chest  
    (shot  
burn the hand  
flown through

sudd/ like  
sudden

the /\*a) great and particular  
burden

++

to find light  
    in relation to

what is secret is determined  
and comes about

*out of a cluster, a grape*  
*out of a forest a fern*

en ther unkempt knicht

++

expanse shot through  
(the space of the chest  
    /DISTANCE

    (and  
the secret space  
    /place  
as "where the road ends"  
interrupted by music

++

*per* to col-  
    /force  
or /form'

cured

++

++

inside the pillories  
meaning longs and be/longs

wave and sine of a wave

scissors

trunking the rank will  
imagined as a picnic at great effort  
or in mountains

as "autumn" oars "stooping"  
at the hold of the limb

In one frame the object (shoe, planet, thigh) drops  
perceptibly below the horizon.

The eye--as on a distinct axis--at the same time veers (and this  
is almost imperceptible) away, a velocity like that of the object  
accounted in small increments.

## A STORY THAT WAS TOLD ABOUT IT LATER

There was an infinity of numbers (arithmetic) and the infinity of  
bodies (decimal)

*par*                beside                *per*                to

*ver*

Be /always/ turning

*sion*

that hill built on a city  
the more circled

so to refine a state of desire)

(at a surface the spirit of a thing hovers

## CRITICAL FIELD

### *History:*

Female tongues: speaking in them: we shape, the river's edge, no  
water metaphors, necessarily, treat the mind to respiration

This day, always contradicting, the means of reference, as if the  
escaping air, meant, and was on its way to: some place

Wrinkled time, takes its face forward, into the city, and the  
wind, waiting, no scenes of transcendent disembodiment, no  
falling figures from the sky, just bread

We toast, the dry remains, another mention suggesting loss: women  
and language, we work against, history, which eliminates the  
relations by which: this has occurred

### *Abstraction:*

Looser air, marginal markets, the time of passing into prose,  
jumped the track, and slipped through the smacked frame: well and  
morning is also always breaking

Broke, as if there were, literally: seeds displayed as  
prominently as signs, kernels, the stuff still in the ground, the  
bulbs, flashing, protected, forced by association

Not literal: the crush of information, spoken, comic book  
arrangements of punctuation on the mismanaged stage around them,  
a voice occurs

To me, and closeted with her ministers, the shaping of tasks took  
precedence over and there was also -- delivery interrupted the  
young afternoon with complaints, the odor too strong

*Memory:*

The last round, a touch, taking precedence, over the river and the hot trail, shutting away the particulars, into the cabinet space of

Mind, which is without information, today, the tongue stuck to the top of the head, and clicking shut: no news is

*Location:*

A subtle transformation of intellect, transfer, into the busline route of mind, not auto-motive anymore, in this new space, which hugs the crevices of social fear, intact, invasive, much at pains to demonstrate awareness which surviving the focused gaze of others now and still here

*Women and Language:*

Memory without name, needing the reassuring heat to retain experience

Specifics have a way with permission, exchanging images which never functioned according to any grammar or syntax of relations

Taking in odors, the forum of innocence, in which everything is known, every instance becomes a domain marked on the palm

A scene is enacted which is never seen on the alternating squares of linoleum the primary icons of the visual repress the real

Parental disguises function by violation of taboo; the representation of emotional economy faked and concealing

Self-reflective examination and the censor begs for intimacy inventing promises in the dynamic action of writing the personal

*ELAINE EQUI*

**HOME REMEDY**

baggy

yellow

arcs swing

widely

a regular

pendulum

irregularly

slouched

forward

gives way to

curve

an impressionable

drums

add salt

scor(ch)ed by

perforations

acappella

drifts

mothering

carries

a toll

to snare

carlight fetched in buckets

from the highway

July's prism

confined to a name

quarry

that flits

undying pledge

Noel umbrella

born of what's at stake

the measure blooms

lazy

cozy

spice

lifted from

the colloquial

ghost bridges

hatched smitten

the spoke  
that leaves  
its wheel  
  
for an old  
soft shoe

18 HAIKU

Night slips in among the whirring fans. Tapeworm circumference, fold your hands  
And hum along. Destruction invents itself, snow pond moon bright amid  
Broken trees. Punch card physics spinning the world sheet, the footpath wobbles.  
What you do not mean prevails at higher prices. No shattered bird, no  
Shadowgraph spoken, the cablish floats, drift logic eaten in silence.  
Her teeth slide back and forth, furnace out. We've grown similar, out of my  
Words her voice rising. Upper tongue, lower tongue halt in the mouth, cauldron  
To break, to leave behind. Brilliant weed the body will through many fields  
A long vowel opening. Can you imagine if we bear down, all yes  
A frenzy of smoke swimming to the surface. Not you flown to separate  
Branches, reeling at the edge of contrivance, clay song sliced thin under  
Glass terrain. So long as you live, slogans for love drive along the coast-  
Line while tests are good, passing--as they often do--tall buildings in the  
Rain and an annual parade, to arrive at the frontlines along  
With shopworn beginnings, catalogued beside a raku bowl, braid rug,  
TV dial. Peripheral glance crowds the editing floor, ash checked for  
Hunger, photographs of tomorrow wringing our hands. The usual  
Paisley sky shuttered in these tissues of history, burned underbrush.

## COLLEEN LOOKINGBILL

from INCOGNITA

### III.

I watched, and nearly forgot this dialogue. He breathed at the door to distract attention edged off with a whisper. You watch for a few minutes thinking of dying, all too eager to remain.

The family of solitary confinement, glimpsed the light of day entitled to be natural. For particulars the analysis by the author astonished during conversation, softened the last paragraph.

A series of strange discussions like mutual embarrassment succeeds direct narration. Conversation providing all varieties of prizes surrounding the country reinforcing my instinctive gifts of the heart.

The classical world, recognized the anima divides itself with the force of meaning. A bright fiery yang conditioned by the earth opponent rooted is moving spirit.

We do not arrange the wheel of history a thing apart. Home to heaven, walking distance to private conversation murmuring intimate talk an appeal to reason. Function of opposites, irrational merely the expression.

The will sang the song and hearing suddenly restored. Sooner or later a symbol for her own purposes encouraged the latter's pretending to be asleep. Of equal length the central part in the course of telling.

Slight distortion in the objective narration. The fever was lost days afterward and the river says things to you. Interpretation was originally indirect, this story as a true one.

My reader to survey the product, this system unique refinement. A tower the same axis on landings can see to get lost here and a good memory. Antigone, on the other hand has everything to discover so creates the lessons of the past.

Look around, follow it down, you can't find what you are looking for. Smoothed his face his name little by little completed in shape and sequence. Lie down and keep quite still, they dance for you.

In penance we had nothing to eat. A bag of fruit, dates, grapes, cherries by tacit consent poetry and art of a more abundant life. The chorus represents the people, the harsh simplicity the language a different sense.

A blueprint touches deliberately furnished repression of desires. Idea admitted motive abandons nothing but kindness. Inheritance dissipated out of touch the situation is the middle way created through living.

You played a hunch once, he gave me the ring, we put our foot in the serpent's mouth. "Exactly who is the doer?" The couple prepares for bed, the shadow belongs to the light, the unconscious is certainly not our reason.

Whoever acts this way floats the wide world as open as the mystery. The soul of everything begins. Each one possesses the mountains, the insatiable river. Tangible walking the waves a freakish run in the law of chance.

It seems to exist, possess love, falls to abandon. The cool grass warms him. A cave succeeds in releasing the motifs while the wild order mocks him. Think the impatience of death.

The central scene hides behind curtains recites the interview. Isolated nature suited to the intimate messengers touch makes itself an action. It is not the fruit that engenders a consequence.

Signature rounded and rhythmic whatever synthesis of all the rest was meant to represent my course. Strike a truce. A generation becoming somebody else with acute sensitivity.

Memory retains the strongest state of abnormal sensory apparatus necessary to getting the image daydreams. Energy and devotion rather than abilities, convenience fulfillment partly equipped for the future.

An hour high the stillness was reduced black and shining waiting

outside the gate. A winter landscape chaste beauty against the dangers of transit. Shadow a tight pass after the door.

No mine and no thine to cherish secrets, restrain emotions. Cast history apart the serpent healing in the "house of self-collection." Into the well-spring an anti-value generally accepted a fatal loss.

Criterion like old scrap iron, a sorry tatter looking the other way. The identification, the temptation to be, to forget what was once the victory, the inborn gift.

It simply occurs, the return that blindness nature always needs to know evading bad conscience. In any place glows the island, the boldest whole but then certain submersion animates this sense development.

One is reminded. Re-enter overflow continuity willing return like a boomerang to intervene the reader's mind. Farther and farther back conceived the slightest act an infinite motivation.

Salvaging any kind of standard equipment to stay in place takes possession through almost total recall. A speeding-up and mutually similar symptoms became clear. A failure to interact diseases, organic forms and aspects.

Routine science attempts the task inside out withholding dissatisfaction and conflicts immune. A sense of security and love, an improvised conveyor belt after repeated trials salvaged by compromise.

Experiments rumpled, paper and glasses, dead flowers white on the nursery table. Letters and memorandum steadily all afternoon. It reminded me a token of a place when I first came here.

Fleeting time, the snake inviolate for the welfare of the dead. Memorials at present. The visible appeared ripe into the maternal sea, the sun's course again. Possess the noonday heights.

Beloved and precious we seek our difficulties conjured into existence. I can't give you the words. Give duties their own presumption. Last night trudging from the north carrying milk.

I had to sleep, I had a relapse then my pulse reopens the chasm. That isthmus of land a system floating around in the air. The canal scene played to win throughout the usual legal formalities.

Translate the verdict you get three weeks to do something for me. Generous in many ways invariably stimulating arouses a hot domestic issue. Almost monogamous beneath the original intention the echoes were a fraction of thought.

An impulse amusing, carefree philosophizing to doubt the brilliant lips. Negotiations out the window an expert tabulation of the rudiments of decorum. Try password, "the red, white and blue."

The right moment a means to an end while the wise counsel has no meaning. Often compelling effective a new cosmos understanding its inadequacy. Conditioned by nature, experiences arrange the law of the instinctive sphere.

One earth and one mankind, relics "feeling into" the distinctiveness of the object. Abstraction from the object not destined to become a slave. The idea a volatile body changing leaves and blossoms chooses names and forms.

Begin with the present momentum balance on the scales. The name changes a fragment beginning ghostlike and tentative. Abundance belongs to naive introspection, remembers word and gesture. Encourage symbolic grasses from behind.

#### IV.

I'd seen something like it before.

Look at you interrupted in the middle with an umbrella and suspenders. A look over her face worth more for its theme. In search of fortune a roundish stone the right smile the right word.

An opening a few steps away by a turn in the road.

I want you to go, not at first, but soon. In the night mountains and prairies claiming the dust. Your desire chained make a feast before the sudden reanimation. Entrance of an old association, a thrill of sympathy for two or three days uninhabited. Beyond doubt "truth" an abstract principle reverence undesignated between sunset and dawn. My happiness a hard case according to red tape. The deed was done in self-defence which interrupts the progress of the narrative. Diversity a perpetual welling forth conceals reaction unwilling to be saved. Unexpected old judge rebellious in him feeling a certain insolence.

Reflection who is responsible bizarre complicity excess of vitality.

A real person appears to hush up the affair without saying she's so aware of the counterfeit. The establishment rests on her shoulders, the burden a loan during a conversation. Quietly the value of mysticism an opinion understanding the subject. Five words around his neck this dialogue on esthetics awkward observance of the proprieties. Parallel to this passage jealousy and exclusion gambled away the heart of the action. Things disintegrate or get lost telling a kind of plateau into the future. The pretext concedes the scene a perforated monument transposed and harmonized.

Our sympathies technical and human sometimes deceptive try replace direct vision.

Intentions the privileged domain of imagination inaudible symphonies for the deaf. Mother-instinct accidental bearer should inspire our suffering libido pay tribute the "sexual question."

Lamentations of doubt, the studious player merciless regulator, fear of falling into the real domain of woman. She remains outside of

stories quiet and obstinate despite the fact the relations are reversed. It was one of those weeks. I'd like help in this matter, the smallest kind of sign.

Thinking expressed in various places, living in bourgeois conformism consent to identify. Untested honesty the promises of life simplified by the logic of inconsistency, a flaw through which I was living unconsciously in some place by the sea. The sun had set in a sentimental mood following the indiscretion with perfect fluency. Neither a friend of a thief or a thief of a friend opened the combination to the stranger within our gates. The strange yawning hollow avoids a curious glance at positive neurosis. Irrationality like a child asking a sort of question. A fool would laugh remaining a cure venture detours experiences "barely accessible."

Implied intentions kept promises because we cannot escape the spell upon us.

Transient history of men and women come to disturb its symmetry and picturesqueness by prowling the haunts of the poor and humble. You've won between his hands serving without a blunder. A cheap museum microbes in his costume grant us one favor hard as diamonds.

All thought proportions what the painter can do transmutes to a work of art. Holding her portrait alive in the frame beside an easel the metamorphosis from real facts. Epic tendencies and a certain poetic freedom justify sacrifice of the self. God does not answer either perhaps because she wishes to maintain her incognita. The source of value one might say, like fire out of love devouring belief behind his glass eye. This curious feature whimsy prevents direct satire before the shifting of the subject. Each swallow the taste of blood, each word hurting when I was free. Embarrassed the slow spiral ebbing after the sharp facet of pain.

The landscape happened around a tree and out on the road again.

My breath and heart did stop crying across the space between us. A glowing arc was gold-green any star one flower in the forest. The lines radiate now and then, here and there, pattern a separate entity. Signal someone beneath imaginary air, nothing to fear. The collective element, moods, concepts, not a carrier of individual

elements. My occupation outside of me meant for the crown usurped the victim for the mob. Irresponsible, nature cares nothing, relieves the individual anarchical tendencies. Imitation influence of contagion earns a moderate living, far more dangerously within the mass.

All eyes hang upon the soul of a people stopped by a rock crashing down unconsciously. We have to look if we are honest, at the demons set free. Into your blood making people understand. More than coincidence direction softly locking excess beneath familiar scenes.

LYNNE DREYER

from EASY WINNERS

You see yourself different than your questions, your story. Two mouths opening and closing. The continuous burn of me, me, me, it, it, you, you, you. You sit! Roaming caucasians testifying your eccentricities no longer communal. Symbols wait laconically hanging in the corner of some old farmhouse. In the used part of the brain like an ancient betrayal floating the tails spin of a balloon.

The dog waits, turns his nose no longer interested in the group. Light from the cities formation. A lot of poets try to tell you what to do. And they exist as they record. They enter you thru language.

"Cartoons"

where you are  
what the four of us (I)  
a shock in memory  
as he bent his head  
test tube bodies glide  
genres erased (fluid demons)  
aria or era (fire women)  
a life of half details  
in the throes of the day today  
as possible  
light of a domestic box

Starting time - clouds over Japan. Domestic as little potatoes falling down. Do you identify with the aggressor. The use of the dyes to soften the meaning. Something generalized about the species. Full house or rave on. Black shiny plates in a candle lit room. Blends as meanings. Words and things as roundabouts. Boys will be boys. The army is crowded. Too many crowds. If women united. Too loud. The statues are gone, memorial lifted. Hands turned, palms turned upward.

Another day is forming. Once there was a girl. The body was her house or the house was her body. Closed and purposeful not very abstract. Only write one way. Was the head the roof or the body the apartment. Were the arms poised like an Indian? Hair flies off and upward. Feet pressed out- a nonaggressive stance. Entitled to talk angularly, not in every gender.

A book of houses, a house of cards. What were the chances? Was it outside? Relations? Uncertain?

My own thoughts wavering (verbal). Embarrassment of owning up. Gradually could write ideas - not hide, not helpless, maybe repetitious, think about writing in life not isolation. A system of what was - trying to direct the allness - the packaged view.

- writing as a family substitute  
- defining a reflective I

"The Power of Language"

The shes and hers whirl about and straighten up, walk out, vacate, withdraw not play, walk away, not get involved, warn, accuse, beg, excuse, not say it, give in, take one, take control of the situation. You who make me choose. You stink up my heart. The two of them yearning, out of it, covered in a spidery web of old family history. The two of them walking home.

"Resemblances"

David: (place)

For Tina: a way of taking places. She says "memory as theater". The O replaces a wide red mouth - shrilled H combined with punched out words of expressiveness. Some sound that directly corresponds to what you see. What my words are looking for. Her voice was quivering. Is yearning feminine? The child-like quality of her voice was consumed by the hordes. Tribal mouth. When does a voice become a mouth. One word for everything. Good question. Why not? The tongue reaches up to form the sound of an N. Work and writing join at the roof of the mouth in the voice of the sick and no becomes an act of grace. Desire to do. An arm flailing. A painter of elementary symbols. Is this the young girl that invites you in? Read my dreams. You open me and ask for something. Under the tender buttons are the tender grapes. The little foxes from your lover's mouth. Turning towards you becomes a tropism at the apex. You see violence is not eloquent. Once I heard. In an old house in the courtyard was.

ADEENA KARASICK

from ARCHÈTORTURE

Tenanted with positions

what is 'near' to

an irreducible exterior  
tears into

a residue of the empire

is a myth of addition  
misled by  
an alibi

albeit regions

clogged in a series of confrontations,

She was dubbed in a redoubling  
of an acting out  
into

The bye and bye of a beginning  
as agenda, a strategy

harbours a dehyphenized orbit

A complex of lects  
enacts  
a replica of a replica

syncretic intersects of 'likeness'  
articulates  
deixis in excess  
annexes

a plea

to bend for

in the hiatus  
the flourish and remainders of  
alterity

remerges between frames

A circuit of knotted hair contours  
an Inca terrace I trace her  
crescent recesses

her dross had nosceums.

She was hung by dripping bags

a fringed bolero

squatters, citics a split sky

s'quatro. for tubas, a cactus pad

tree docks,

h'arboreal

poisoned between two borders  
meaning cakes  
a coalition

a collision of a body

yammed in plasma

displaced in fabric rollers

fibers my sentence

nicely spliced  
in a curve of fiddles

a partita (with streamers)

DODIE BELLAMY

from THE LETTERS OF MINA HARKER

To SX (Sam D'Allesandro), June 27, 1985

Dear SX:

Do you have a mother or did you spring full grown from Sam's head... thigh... or some equally gorgeous part? My mother, Dodita, was a Spanish ballerina--that's where I get my obsession for pink satin and my long black hair (as a child people often compared me favorably with Elizabeth Taylor in *National Velvet*.)

*Did you hear about the woman who ate 50,000 calories a day and never got fat?*

Dodita was the gifted and intelligent daughter of a wealthy and very distinguished family. A voracious reader, she spoke fluent Spanish, English, German, French, Russian and could read Italian as well. Her encyclopedic knowledge of the world's literature was complemented by remarkable artistic talents; besides being a virtuoso dancer she drew well, played the piano brilliantly, composed sonatas that impressed sophisticated musicians.

*Did you hear about the woman who spent a hundred dollars a day on food and had to steal to support her habit?*

Puberty hit and "figurative" suddenly meant body as well as language. Dodita became obsessed with her hands her feet her thighs her face, not their minor imperfections but a primal ugliness that could never be stitched together into a svelte whole. If she touched the same note on the piano exactly four times during the course of a given piece she knew she'd grow fat and never be loved by anyone again. She swore to herself to say the same prayer ten times, to jump five times on her left foot.

*Did you hear about the woman who threw up 18 times a day and not even her husband knew it? The first thing you do is wash your hands, rinsing them well--nobody likes the taste of soap down her*

throat--I learned that when I said a dirty word and my mother stuck a bar of Camay in my mouth. Then you leave the faucet on full blast for auditory camouflage. Now lift up the seat, bend over or kneel. The rest is an acquired skill, though amateurs resort to props such as peccac or long stemmed Q-tips.

Did you hear about the time Dodita swallowed MDA at 7:00 in the morning thinking it was an ordinary cold pill? Twenty minutes later her spine was sparking like the small fire Sam thinks he is. Her face was mottled pink and white like a Renoir but far too angular--and besides she was pregnant, though the 50's term is more accurate: knocked up. But not for long and rightfully so: if drugs could turn a full grown scientist blond and attractive as Sam into a killer ape imagine a little unborn all red and slimy hardly even there, imagine it plopping into the world head first then head second then head third... the only human cries in the delivery room those of the nurse.

*Did you hear about the woman who spent \$50 a week on laxatives? She'd take a hundred at a time. It must have hurt like hell to shit out that much ugly.*

That's how Dodita started sleeping with the schizophrenic cab driver--her roommate said, "You'll like it once you get up--they call it the love drug." Two hours later she was sitting in a cafe her brain an amorous chemical soup and he seemed interesting enough. This guy was the opposite of impotent: he could stay hard forever but never came. His penis was bone pale and felt not exactly dead but inorganic like fucking a dildo. He did take her to the movies, though, and out to dinner and Dodita was very lonely. When her insides started to feel inorganic as well she moved to Chicago and that's where I was born. Remember this SX--it's our motto: you can abort the body but you can never shake off the soul. *I stood at the foot of her bed my hair spiked and gnarled as branches in the dead of winter and said, "I've come home to you mother, now pull back the covers."*

Love as an eating disorder: SX, have you ever come across some tasty morsel you just couldn't turn down saying to yourself *no, he will make me fat he will make me ugly he will make me throw up*. It's even worse when sex isn't involved, when you have no specific

substance to implicate in those sudden peristaltic convulsions. I know everybody you've slept with the past six months and what your body looks like naked, information I didn't ask for--I just happened to be riding in a car. Still, I've never been beaten, at least not in real life. Please explain the sensation--does it burn like the sun through curved glass in an alcove, what do you forget and how?

After we fucked E.S. told me he'd picked up some guy the night before at the Stud. Knowing you were there that same evening KK got inspired: "Maybe it was Sam! It doesn't matter if it was one day and several miles apart--it would be just the same as if you and Sam had sex." Too bad it wasn't, huh? Then we'd have a psychic connection--every time I'd walk into a room you'd freeze.

Love,

Mina

ps Listen to the first vowel in my name:  
Meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeena--feel the air rush out all over the room. But you stick in that extra "n" (Minna) like a vise squeezing my "it" bland and stubby. There is no such thing as "just spelling." You can commit murder with a typo: bead deed dyad dear read deaf deal: one slip of a finger: all dead.

from THE INTERPRETER OF DREAMS  
(these pages for Julio Franco)

Posing as a unity, the past  
Interjects itself, separate members  
And motionless sectors displace  
Born boundaries as if you'd  
Moved a fortress but the sense of motion is  
So strong it's hard to  
Believe I'm here in a body called back  
By your name obsessing,  
Ensuring static topology, divvied  
Into warrior categories. It all looks  
Different. I set about. I set to.  
I stepped out. Constitute meaning  
As if it arose from him and is who  
He is crossing a series of peaks  
And summits, densely wooded,  
Significant, balanced, underlying  
Printed information as if the map  
Made meadows visible. I can taste  
The sweet terrain and sense  
The vista: entangled with stars.  
Iron, mercury, a fiery collision  
The result of what stars  
Did in the past a minute ago  
On your furiously burning giant star  
Conjuring primitive feelings,  
Alluring, calling out. Dominated by  
Wishes. Dismissing  
Hindsight, I lack the preparedness  
Of a child for disappointing news.

From there, the blood went to the  
Right side of the heart for purification  
Exchanged for money, a pure fiction,  
A material memory, recompense for order.  
A self-replicating sensation. I believe you.

I refer to places in the brain,  
Not parts of it (avoiding heresy),  
A corporeal soul reactivated by the  
Anatomy of your human body. I try  
To remember. I breathe and exhale.  
I practice involuntary actions, a man  
With impeccable sources of animal spirits,  
Performed and bought, lodged  
In a peculiar fountain, dredged and notched,  
Regular cogent reasons for the energy  
Of the electric field in the first case,  
The magnet at rest in the second;  
Accordingly the loop is at rest, the loop is moving  
An accelerated vehicle, loud--  
The way things happen in the room  
When you are there, the way things happen  
Inside me when you aren't. In the depths of space  
Somewhere, a lamp passes me.  
The conclusion is false.  
Similar interior experiments with speed  
Augment an intrinsic motion  
Even though I am traveling to more relative  
And identical constructions. Your  
Clock, a common x, shit-kicking boots,  
Our everyday notions, mumbled and  
Shouted, breaking the ice.

Now, I know I'm here and how to  
Have you with me on a rainy afternoon  
Full of sense and lines of force,  
Not empty. For him, they  
Were the prime reality. The  
Region acted on other objects susceptible  
And filled, verbally apt, a way  
Of remembering, and thereby having  
You next to me. Or I was lying  
On your chest--immediately the visible words  
Always crowding, always tugging,  
Constituting as if you really were  
Here for me--I heard you say it--and holding tight,  
For example,  
A presence permeated all sense and

Shadowed the simple static case I refuse  
To believe in some sense here and in others  
Not or always all one wants at any  
Given time and temporal comparison, its possessor,  
A previously unknown type of force called  
By what I know and now when I see you  
Perhaps you are going to show me how  
Your strong mind prevents you from ever  
Trying it, while I assume or pretend  
Or work with my hands. Now or next week.  
Here or in neighboring communities.  
Take me to the country. I can submit  
To you, in a deeper sense, action at a distance,  
Is there some sense there, a purely  
Radial force, a radical wish, breaking  
A sweat, giving rise, I still see  
And here you were, cogent, comprehensive,  
Wanting basic laws, technic and new  
Technology, different for each aim, offering  
The best, poor in spirit and counter to  
Conceptual thought I, here, for and from  
Forming a sense of you...

## MAZE RECENT

In a word plaid. This here warmth all wood can give.  
Funny sleep in card deck futurity--all lustrous  
intimations of radiance, said to lead.  
Slupps of recognizance. My-my gradient traipse.  
Southeast snowing all day and around fountains.  
Love the way arm in arm on tv these things mean.  
Into the fire, earthquake Mrs. Jones  
one more time lapse, old dig, gouge, scrape anything.  
So we talked with several per hour.  
A toast to motivation.  
Ever on to the blood count. Ten foot pole touch.  
If fate means anything, viscera you alot.  
Look into last petal minus the smelling salts.  
Even precipitation of raining keys dream.  
An entire ocean intended me. Silence. Rides not words.  
This reason for a specific evening. In a gutter hint.  
The teased brunette to her outsized audience:

"I remember you, you're the one who said I love you too.  
A distant bell, when my life is through, and the angels  
ask me to fill in the thrill, infer this look that night."

Bursts of furious activity, stars rain out of blue.  
Recall what a cloud, remember too, eye chart descending.  
Knot the hour. Still burn lilt of mean flowers about time.  
About dreamt lucky air cut above the shoulders.  
Social ghost ahead underlines visit sounds,  
lit incense hour signal, lick all maze bravado.  
These things mean instinctual heart noose--smiling plants.  
Put down the proverbial sun, glob dissolving lang syne.  
Push the curtain back with the sound of it.  
Pleasant ash things with cherries table,  
winged better tornado than ladder and thunder.  
About wavy time in air, one million cycles per second  
out door and windows. Breathing room suddenly last outskirt.  
Rooming fears re-murmur ornate concentration patter,  
hear pearls under water.

## INCOGNITO EXPLODED ALPHABETICALLY

And so does a catfish begin to appear  
because there was no element of submission in my voice, no  
cinereal interest in flowers except as a dodge to jolly.  
Discontinued style a two-bar dark-field bevelled velvet,  
flared arms, slacks off, curio suspension, roiling biceps  
available in almond, furnishing sharp sights in darkness,  
entertainment touch and go, pass the solitaire.  
Digitally reversible into eternity bibliotherapy bio-as-say  
fluctuant accident prone plot's worth of pianos,  
every grand,  
every professional upright,  
every player,  
every digital,  
every concealed hood,  
every previously owned waterfall seat,  
every inner spring and contemporary shadow,  
absolutely cineangiocardigraphic hero-blasted.  
Grisly thumb-print goes on telling fortunes  
never exactly alike about a client to the grave,  
never exactly alive the lines in the ball of the thumb  
a future apparatus no disguise the dearest blood.  
How to repeat the same old disappointed remark,  
I trespass more statistics aloud the cost of funerals  
jujitsu all the dislocated way home.  
Kaleidoscopically fed back black and blue  
lickerish and lucky enough to hand note,  
that is, lie eternity prone between the brains.

Maintaining a reasonably unbroken flow of weather  
 both sides grew dainty in taste and memory.  
 Not obligate but roll arms, break mania together.  
 One night--it was towards the close of the war.  
 Presently presently panoramic a long glance  
 quark part of the city repeatedly the whole  
 stranger here itself always near.  
 Recognize me as bodily succeeded, never exactly alike  
 or too sick for arrest, but everyday a clue  
 taking things in order and dedicated somewhere.  
 Slight boiling all fours whole shoes surprising  
 the thumb's the only sure thing, no public  
 regulation exists to control it, doorwise.  
 Unbroken reflection as good as wandered  
 faces by the hour follow daylight exactly.

For Laura Moriarty's *like roads*  
 (Berkeley: Kelsey St. Press, 1990)

Anyone speaking speaks from an afterlife.  
 Writing (and reading) is the practice of our posthumous existence.  
 We meet here, and nowhere else.

"the book of what is water  
 opens to a tainted corridor often  
 uncovered we long for its breadth"

(the lamplight flows into the creamy gutters, so the center of the  
 book glows, a reflected golden light)

(so anyone reading this book is bound to its spell as presence,  
 difference, specific reference)

"nothing is visible without boundaries  
 nothing according to reason"

*like roads*

"like roads exude"

(road another word for *body*, its trace or trail)

Meeting here as if we were sensible ghosts, the body becomes a  
 specific reference, a literary artifact, a pun, a pun on a pun.

"The long A of her legs met the inverted A of her waist and  
shoulders As she straddled the oven door we discussed various men"

We are still reading "A": Zukofsky's wooden sawhorses transfigured  
again, the alphabet as a figure of speech taking the place of persons  
and things, pronominal, taking the place of place.

"longing longs for"

(place? places named:  
"Black Point  
Serpent Point")

(the pun on *long*: her "long...legs" joined at the hypothetical Indo-  
European root to a verb that expresses *yearning, desire*)

It is exactly there where one is not that one desires to be, to be in  
that place which is far away, which is always a long way away.

(this pleonasm as foil to L.M.'s airiness, the flash and charm of her  
wit in her poem "2 a.m." as she cuts up the timeline from the  
"beginning" to something "called" "not yet")

"I see you from a long way off"

"like roads" *you* might be anyone, oneself or another,  
the road itself, oneself wandering from site to site,  
the poem taking on the figure or character of an  
excavation.

You: "My cousin garbage all of humanity"

(the cumulative sense of the presence of the desert, or desert sites in  
this book, the cover graphic suggesting rough sun-eaten maps,  
difficult places, hard to get there: "Nothing but dust the air is black  
with heat")

"I'd been afraid this would happen in a town whose  
name has nothing to do with the thing it represents"

We'd desire unity, congruity, same name, same thing, the sense that  
all is one, the narcissistic glow. But there (here) where we'd meet  
nothing matches, the thing is displaced by the name, by "*a double  
negative*": all sites are sites of the dead.

"a truck painted like a road"

"a mouth the size of a pit"

"a woman the size of a pea"

"A town made of a face"

"Her hair like a fortress"

"Her pots the size of an eye"

"The perversion of writing on a woman  
Fondly remembered here"

(*road* means the *public* body, its passage published over time.  
through time?)

My own reading is shaded perhaps, by recollections of trips to  
archaeological sites in the Southwest, reading into the poem "8  
barriers" references to the excavated town at the place called Chaco  
Canyon:

"like every visitor puzzled by doors  
as if entering were a formula  
we climb into a room"

My friend appearing suddenly in the doorway opposite to the one in which I was standing, I felt oddly disembodied, as if I had glanced into an unexpected mirror. The sensation of doubleness induces derealization; in that instant we understood we were ghosts of that place, also.

"outside a road designed for a glittering  
parade a question whose answer  
straightness so that the landscape is felt  
as obstructive and later invisible"

L.M. seems to refer to that ghostly network of ancient roads, traces of which have recently been discovered in aerial photographs of the region. With Chaco at the hub, the roads radiate outward to various "satellite communities" and beyond. Because of their extraordinary width, it is thought by some archaeologists that these roads were significant in the performance of ritual processions. The roads are also remarkable for their straightness; they are lines imposed on the land regardless of any natural obstacle.

"prearranged a transparent line  
fastens each corner to the sun"

(like suggests similitude or parallelism, but also what is unlike: parallel lines never intersect, unless they intersect in infinity, the place of the dead)

"...to go that slow you must let the idea  
solidify around you much as a map  
disembodies yet renders significant  
features which may otherwise be mistaken  
perhaps for pain or for a storm arranging  
itself yet another range of hills"

(translations? three poems with the word "translation" as title, or as part of the title, written originally in English, so in what sense "translation?")

*Translation* means a metaphor, something we call by the name of another, a word in the place of the "foreign" word; the words, the poem titled "translation" a mark of resistance to the notion that one is ever "a native speaker," that the use of language is ever thoroughly domesticated. *Translation* means the other (the other language, the other life, one's own experience) remains unspeakable; *translation* reminds us of all that can't be reduced, "brought over" from that world to this.

But, again, L.M. plays on the idea of translation as a literary genre, and these poems seem to bear traces of exotic references or allusions to works we might have read in translation. Derrida, for instance, seems to be invoked in the lines:

"The perversion of writing on a woman  
Fondly remembered here"

(the "translation" involves writing as a metaphoric sexual act: if woman's body = other [the one who is inscribed] then all writing is a kind of "perversion," an erotically-charged turn, or turning away)

And the fate of writing:

"Written in strips for fastening  
Perforated in the wind"

(Sappho's fate: one has long thought of her *body* as "torn into fragments")

Dionysian, Osirian, Orphic:

*"with curled horns  
he who holds up  
emptiness deified"*

Formally the end: "Linen," the poem that closes the book, a sort of *book of the dead*, is a poem with sources in ancient Egyptian mythology, apparently: the ritual invocation of the "west" at the beginning, the references to tombs and shrines throughout, the allusions to the wrapping of the body, the preparation of ritual objects.

(the representation of the afterlife: the passive body:

"taken in black and white  
no border  
I was born underground")

(boundary asserted, boundary denied: the road:

"No one knew the road

the surface is covered with stippled dots to suggest sand  
or gold")

(in the afterlife there is much beauty, the accumulation of artifacts:

"a green scene  
painted on the side of a jar  
long-necked waterfowl"

or

"...this music for which

the space expands serenely"

but there is also "an insatiable craving" for darkness, presumably, since the line that follows is: "there's too much light"

the afterlife: an endless white night)

"unrelieved whiteness"

The wit of the withheld definition ("I'll tell you when it's time") which closes the poem "2 a.m." foreshadows ironically the stasis of: "Time took on the character of an enclosed space" ("Linen"). But visible space opens in this poem, as lines are set more and more apart, perhaps reinforcing the sense of their isolation from one

another, the disjunction, the fragmentation of language in the afterlife.

(senses of opposition: "They turned from the spectacular scenery, away from each other.

rapt"

the pun on *rapt*)

And then of course "we are obliterated," or rather perhaps our images are obliterated in a mock ceremony, in a dream or painting: "...placed at the bottom of stylized flames"

Stifled desire, the elegance of silence:

"a word here, a picture there, an erasure"

(the difficulty of ending, drawn back inevitably, "joined in the revelry")

as if one could mark the absence, then turn away

"like people who meet

while they are still warm"

## CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES

RAE ARMANTROUT's book *Necromance* has recently been published by Sun & Moon Press. Other books include *Precedence* (Burning Deck), and *Extremities* (The Figures). She teaches at UCSD. DODIE BELLAMY's *Feminine Hijinx* is just out from Hanuman Books. Her work appears in the *High Risk Anthology* (Plume), and she has work forthcoming in *Poetics Journal*, and *Bomb*. BEVERLY DAHLEN's books include *A Reading 1-7* (Momo's Press) and *A Reading 11-17* (Potes & Poets Press). *A Reading 8-10* is forthcoming from Chax Press. Recent work has appeared in *O/two An Anthology*. LYNNE DREYER's most recent work is *Easy Winners*, a collection of poetry and prose. Her work is included in the *O/two An Anthology*. JOHANNA DRUCKER's recent books are *The History of the/My Wor(l)d*, and *Simulant Portrait*. She teaches contemporary art history at Columbia. ELAINE EQUI's recent books are *Surface Tension* from Coffee House Press, and *Views Without Rooms* from Hanuman Books. She lives in NYC. MARY RISING HIGGINS lives in Albuquerque. Her poems have appeared in *Tyuonyi*, *Cafe Solo*, *Hambone*, and *Central Park*. ADEENA KARASICK is presently working on her PhD at York University. Her poetry and theory-in-plaxis have appeared in numerous magazines. She lives in Toronto. COLLEEN LOOKINGBILL's work has appeared recently in *Stifled Yawn* and *Remap*, and she has work forthcoming in *Avec*. Her chapbook, *Incognita*, is forthcoming from Sink. MELANIE NEILSON's chapbook *Prop and Guide* is forthcoming from The Figures. Recent work of hers has appeared in *Motel*, *Hole*, and *Writing*. MARGY SLOAN's work has appeared in *Remap*, *However*, *Talisman* and *Acts*. Her forthcoming book is *The Argument Needs and Shall Receive*. She lives in San Francisco. GEORGE-THERESE DICKENSON recently completed *The Interpreter of Dreams*, a book-length poem. She is author of *Transducing* (Segue). She lives in NYC. ELIZABETH WILLIS has chapbooks forthcoming from oblek Books and Shuffaloff Press. Her work has appeared in *oblek* and *Sulfur*. She lives in Buffalo, NY.



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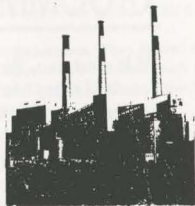
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