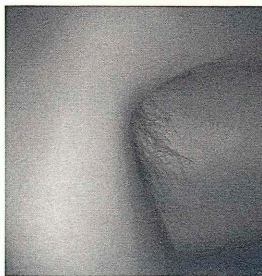
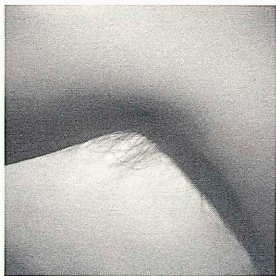
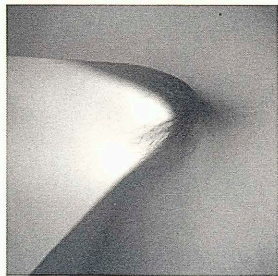
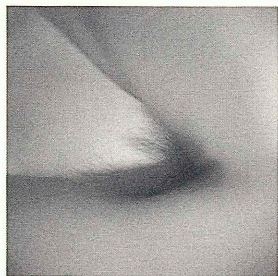
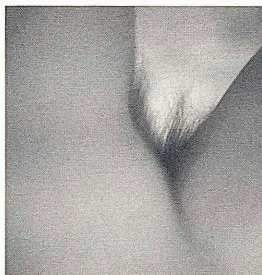
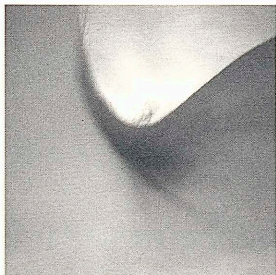
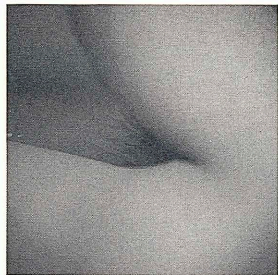


laura
moriarty

nude
memoir



nude memoir



nude memoir

laura moriarty

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The nakedness of women is the work of God.

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell
William Blake

1.

The nude is given
The nude is not a woman

Who displays a tendency to be naked

An artist keeps the whole game in mind

From her he learns
Replaced by physical presence

"With eyes shut like a bride ..."

Taken she says of the pictures
Red of the lines

Directions for building the nest in which the nude is to lie are preserved in a notebook. A facsimile. Silence is maintained by the artist. Madeleine or Mary. She has a long view to a wall of windows. A writer remembers his mother who is dead. The red is self-explanatory. She was friendly with the wrong man. An artist. A con artist. Later a cast is made and something like skin is stretched, they say, with tenderness. The wall of the world outside the window includes a tower like the one in the movie. They move through the city as if they were alone in it. *Vertigo*.

I'm telling a story
That didn't happen
She claims He is angry

Red X Two red X's
A notebook of facts
The first thing to fall

The sky is reflective
And transparent her story
Likewise she says

He writes in remembered paternal speech. In resistance to her. She is in trouble with time. The pattern of their lives together. There is a contraption but not in the picture. Some people see her as dead, but not her face. It can't be seen. Jean. Her eyes can be seen through the mask which is untitled. Her child stares back at her. Diana the hunter. The queen.

Added numbers
Ink or water

Blankly
Notes

Quiet now

At that time
But why?

Baby
But not

Alive. The lamp seems alive. It took a long time. All of life to get to the end. There are letters and photos reproduced here. In the movie she is saved over and over. She (I) was overcome when she saw the display. It was a relief to see it. Like being dead again. It was a monument to sex. Of her sex. A series of enclosures with a name but no explanation. A statue or statute. A reign.

Felony
Proviso

Statutory
Bent

Murder

Miscreant
Citizen

Informant
Provocateur

When we kill the doe we call it venison. We kill each other. The body is a corpse. A corpus. (A work.) There is a Latinizing as the stiffness sets in. There is a figuring out but only in retrospect. He learns her death. Her terms. He learns the movement in the tomb with diagrams. It's not a house but a necropolis. There is land and water and flowing hair. She is disheveled.

Shovel
Spat
Squirm
Squat
Bitter
Stem
Seam
Twist
Bitten

2.

She is Judy now. The words accumulate with the quality of being mere. A permanent reversal of time occurs. With oneself as the vanishing point the lines regress. The whole thing is built on a floor made of squares, but you can't see it.

A woman fills a frame. There is terror. Her costume is evidence. Still life. Mediation. Immediate. She decides to go with it. She is a real woman. Her decisions have terrible consequences. It is difficult to say. It is impossible to know. Or not to know. No one is guilty. No one is left.

A writer writes with numbers. Marcel. With pictures. His thought balloons resemble her thinking. He laughs because he knows. Eddie. Edward. He punctuates the situation with laughter. But too much has happened. Jimmie. She is still ticking backwards but can't think. Her name is Kim. She was named for the war.

Preoccupation

Her occupation is delay

The ricochet of looking

Several meetings later

The edges of the photo and paragraph

Like parentheses, a board game or his arms

"His eyes," she began

"Abrazos," he wrote. Akimbo

"Writing this to you" She began to investigate and fix the attentions around her, but the picture was mute. Her arm is the pattern of one, her sex of another. Leather stretched over a metal armature. The problem has features of interest. He is a master detective. He is a petty thief. A petit bourgeois. A middleman. "A world in yellow" Because light. "... heart feeding telephorically ..."

The spidery writing of the notes in *The Box of 1914*. Marcel Duchamp, American, 1887-1968. He was not afraid to be naked. She had known him for a long time - or not. It was never clear. There was no similarity between his passion and that crime. But there was a continuum. People turn away from the image of death. Nothing was left of his thinking but these objects. This century and counting. Grim whimsy.

Diana puts together suspension systems beginning at 5 a.m. Energy. Apollo. The male nude. The female worker. Automobile. Moves and comes to rest. Potential movement. The machine. "Eyes shut like a bride ..." (Adorno) Stumbling into position. Precision. Accountability. Exhaustion is the steel in her eyes. She is a real woman. Paradise.

"another fetid nest" (Wieners)

Address

And expelled again

They knew they were naked

His slim belly the slant

Of his eyes and wide

Shoulders unzipped

Fly but an action

The unzipping (Wieners again)

3.

His work was language. There was nothing about. He spoke. He smoked. There was a metamorphosis of his body into air. Single room. Hotel. Implication. Visitor. A woman traveled with him. Later her story emerged detail by detail. He implied. They were the same person. The mythology was too old to be written. "She died," he thought "for this?"

A speaking likeness

The description

Unbearable speech

Document

Made of words her

Eyes and mouth missing

Or reassembled

The desecration

The gangster vivid

Madeleine pictures her own eye. A spiral. There is a turning inside. Inside out. Hers is an active surface. She lies on her stomach. She lies on her back. Moisture in the room. In her mouth. *Semina*. In her mind a collection of pictures and verses. *Versus*. He was in them. In person. The picture takes him in. She has made herself into that woman. She has included details. Anatomically impossible features. She looks dreamy trying to remember the words. "Every word is born of a sex offered to a face." (*The Duchamp Effect*)

She renders herself. Kim. Creatural sadness. But it was not life that interested him. "Ovaire toute la nuit" The horns of a bull pressed against her, head at crotch level. Skeleton. Ex goddess. She is thrown from the tower because of her knowledge of life and death. Her complicity in the incident is at the heart of the madness of the hero. He depends. She bends over backward for him. For them. Her falling body like a rag doll.

Her work was language. *Vertigo*. He doesn't believe in the artist who paints herself unless it is her flesh she paints. But his belief is irrelevant. Diana is not a writer. She is a hunter. Punctuation but no words. Lines that are portraits. Automobile. Her mobility. That day she was pictured in his car. That night. The huntress hunted. Her hair almost white in the moon. The sun.

Age of gold
A child with the memories of a woman

A boy a son
A court

The mission

Laid out like a garden
The window is black

A courtyard
He *sees* the wound

Around her neck. The fatal necklace. "You shouldn't save mementos of a murder." Desperate at this point but only because of the sound. Hypnotic queen of the forest stuff. Soft spoken. She was found in the car. She was found in the tall grass.

Typographical
Error
Car
Left in the lot

The all night
Sorry
Spent
Details of the

Dawn

The grass wet and wakes not thinking of death. Innocent on one side and on the other not. Of the fact of it. The twenty second. Twenty third? psalm. "Though I walk ..." Palm, like an oasis of death. From death. "A stiff hand held out." The arms stretched up. Flung. The burial place was there. That action. The solstice was the hinge of the door. The threshold is an attractor. We go back down.

We visit the grass. Ordinary grass on a typical day. We open ourselves expectantly staring at the hill. The slope is familiar and meaningless. We are pictured there. We sell the pictures and spend the money but the image remains.

Orchids dyed blue. Stained. Dahlias. A flower like a carnival. Blue. Betty. A black mass. He keeps a record of his progress. He doesn't expect to come back. She is also not expecting. In fact she is bleeding. She never reaches the change. She remains unchanged. His book is a memoir. An action. Red.

Read the book before dying
The Black Dahlia
 Counting the pages before your death
 Like any Scheherazade

A quiet night with a book

Ellroy by Estrin read
 Fell asleep (woke dead)
 Later I (who?)
 Claiming there are no

Coincidences which are not language. Therefore legible in the old sense. Not sense as in naming but as in the five senses or directions. "the 5 perfections and the 5 hindrances" (Wieners) The longing which connects us. The arrangement of meanings. The late night interrogations. Memory like cash wildly spent. Holed up alone. Marcel in his hotel in Munich. He invents a woman. Indestructible. Incomplete. Compartmentalized. She descends.

Body/stiff
Kiss/smack
Sip/suck
Steam/ream
Touch/slap
Fuck/stuff
Buss/bang
Fought off
Succumb

"Let your mind go and your body will" But what will it do? The spinning woman in our minds. A common. Wretch. Wench. Assembly required. He paints a red X here and an arrow there, over the nest. The photos are dark. Evidence assembled before the crime. It isn't a crime to die. The body doesn't follow. He is pictured with a woman whose body curves around itself like a medieval letter. Cranach. He is a model Adam. His insinuating hand

Cupped
The stoppages

Villainy
The string stretched

Or wound
Pronounced dead

Dressed up
Disclosed

Disposed of

Unceremoniously. Someone else takes care of it. La maja fracasada. Takes it away. Furniture put in the street. A stranger takes it away. A red table from our life together replaced by the glass table of my life

alone. Diana also buys a glass table. A glass house. To see and be seen.
Not. To be known.

Things arranged on the table. Typewriter. Orchid. Glass laced with
metal. Papers. A box with a book in it. *Rollywhollyover*. John Cage
plays chess with Duchamp. Duchamp with a woman in another
book. Her breasts, she remembers, swollen with hormones. He is
focused on the game. She is naked (nameless). We don't recognize
her.

5.

She works naked. It is hot that summer. Windows open. Shades
drawn. Paper. Ink on hands and then mouth. One room life. Nude
sitting. Nude on the bed. In the chair. Nude with glasses and pen.

Hunger at night

Heat dawn sequence

Too quiet to eat

Too hot to breathe

Stoppages pictured

A ligature stretched

A metric

To eat, breathe and stop in time

To repeat

The illusion is the sense of change. Being transient. Barely occupying a place. The change changes again. The letters are translucent. In the box are personal letters reproduced on translucent paper. It's called a circus (again the spinning woman) but is more like a museum, a mausoleum.

There is a translucent monument drawn by Erik Satie of a tower like a wedding cake. *A Castle*. "Courtesy Archive de la Fondation Erik Satie" And other drawings of smoke. Musical realism. The life of sounds. Her throat. There was a circus which traveled. The wheel was the wheel of fortune. A chance novel one reads.

Through the glass you see a window, a courtyard and a fountain. You see *The Given* through a crack, a hole unlike a window. It is, of course, a peep show. The show is a contraption. A scaffolding of leather to seem like flesh. "White" flesh. A metal frame. Hairless. Unveiled. Given but hidden. Supine but not at rest. Never at rest. Exposed. *Given*. Donnée. Dona. Our lady of extremities.

Represents flesh here
Viewed or for penetration or
Eaten but consummately
Available but fake but realistic -
Symbolic but complicated (dese-
crated) Slaves traveled naked
The history of flesh forthrightly
Exposed during an exchange. Choice
As in delectable not as in choosing

not to go. We believed we would be eaten and wanted not to go.
(Equiano's narrative) Spoke. The wheel again. The vicissitudes of
living in a world where you don't officially exist. People like you. The

model for that cunt belonged to the slave owning class. There is a continuum. But the arm came from his wife. The lamp she holds. Liberty. Liberté.

A blueprint. The white taken from the flag. (Haiti) Slave owners feared the idea of revolution for obvious reasons. The dream of killing generated by the killed person. The rendered person. Torn or drawn. Split. Returned. Rend: "To lacerate (the heart, soul etc.) With painful feelings" (*OED*) Render "The act of rendering an account, statement; account of expenses." A notebook with meticulous entries. Reduced to writing. But reassembled. Death being but one of the differences. The list of Oulipo includes all the members alive or dead. Render. "To play or perform." Member. To belong, to be assembled with. "Remember me."

To give in

To give in return

To return

Rent

Encounter

Reconnoiter

Arrive at

Land (encompass)

See

You can see yourself in the box. In the museum you look back at yourself. The object is present but encased in a force field of reflection. The white walls of the museum and the organized space of the poem. Exquisite context. Corpse of course but legible. Beautiful death. *Die in order not to die.* (Lyotard) Civic death, not the burned toe-tag of your loved one. An aesthetics of dust and history. Rags arranged. Which is the real dust?

The web site as box. Dustless realm. Media. *In media* ... Immediate rest. She thought she was somewhere when she was there. Wrote code, searched. Prevaricated. Tabled. Scanned herself. Young and then old. *In media vita*. She writes with her hands but she can render in any form. Any format. The naked problem in a new form.

Nudity is common there. A key word. All the words are used. A few lines constitute a figure. The fewer the better. Various responses make us believe our interlocutor is sentient. What creates belief? A key word is made into a question. The question into a challenge or objection and so on. We find satisfaction at the lack of personal qualities in this strategy. It is the method itself we wish to engage.

Bullet

Bulletin

Beast

Breast

Life

Lite

Gist

Jest

Gesture

In Motion Speaking. What the nude doesn't do. The sum of this shattering. (The body supine on the bed.) Notes made on the nude in the margin of the book *The Nude* in relation to the naming (we did this) of that section (Nudes) of *Rome A Mobile Home. A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Buster Keaton sets out on a long journey. His eyes dazed. Old Stoneface.

Two nudes in bed editing. They argue about lines. Agree to a version. Words. The word statue is proposed, but is too eyeless. There is a visceral quality to nudes. She puts her hands on him in a healing gesture. His torso twists away though he turns to her. Face. As if holding onto the world. The version exists but he might have changed it. Pre/version. The perverse finality of.

"White hills canceled by color / Inward cakes of creamy nothing / Ramshackle rush-hour and yourself a souvenir" Estrin in stone on Van Ness and Market. Now almost worn away. Familiar. Days of driving. Of rain. When I walked everywhere in the city. Relentless walking for miles. Took cabs. Jerry drove. I never drove. Occasionally I rode in his cab. He came to my restaurant. He pretended to be a driver. Me a waitress. It was the uniform. It was realism. There were foreigners. We gave our names. Rudy and Naomi.

I don't speak
About it This
Isn't me you see

Before you I
Singular or the plural
I (we)

You and me
Objects now
Spoken for

But arbitrary. The high restaurant window. He hired me on the spot. I put on an apron and went to work. It was a sex thing but I didn't have to put out. An imaginary nakedness. Earlier job at a naked place. The Bijou. Thirteen hour shift. Two days. Sent me to the drugstore to put on makeup. I sold tickets. Sent me there for pain killer. The street car. Up and down Market. The old men at the ticket counter.

7.

The aura preceding the headache wasn't visual. It was a shimmering in the perception, as if to perceive the pulse of the world inappropriately, loudly. To know too much. Congestion like the street. A rushing sound. Water. The stream through the heart. The flood. She called for him, they say, from the car.

An apparition in the forest. A woman in a thicket. Maja fresca. The swiftness in the original included as part of the incident. She spoke of a way of looking. "It's what I'm for." Of cashing in for the victims. A person in a system. A time card. Punching in and then out. Inexorable closure. The factory and forest. The line. She disappears in a collision of lines.

Of lies

His work was to lie

And she naked in the pictures and

Thorns finally

Didn't lie

Or isn't alive so can't die

Only the ones left

Know anything

And they don't know

He thinks to make a logic out of it. Marcel or Ellroy. To achieve a pure dimensionality he travels. He rents a room. Thinks with his mind. Of stopping. With pleasure. Measure includes elements of suspense. He remembers everything. He charts that retention. He is capable (culpable) of mere speech. He calculates the future, but feels drawn down into time. He thinks with what is not his mind.

The trick takes the money

An offering is expected

Like a telegram or an accountant. He counts. He has the ability to persuade women with a series of figures, an allusion and a punch line. Into anything. A woman becomes anything. Amazing feat. Twist in midcentury, mid-air.

But she needed no persuasion. Madeleine. Magdeleine. Already naked as if bursting, smashing or tearing herself, her clothes, her surroundings. She got to it. She was ahead. A whore. A horror. An appalling availability dawned on him. A blow. His own torso emptied of air. Breathing slowly now. Heart not going. Then going too hard. Stops in the head. An epithet or act. Loud. She was too loud.

He made no statement. What happened was the only proof that he had existed. But what happened? In the new arrangement of old

evidence there was no closure. He personified closure and wanted to kill it. Victim by proxy. She was a "being for others" in her last moments. Matter only.

"physical agent of love"
Or party girl you decide

She wore a lined bolero
Danced at the drop of a hat

Drank with a vengeance
Was self-sufficient in fact

Having a more filled-out
Existence than the men she

Liked them mean and sleazy she

8.

was disillusioned. Betrayed by old friends. Women and men. In ways that she could not explain. But she knew. A child would have known. Had she? Did they? The mixed tenses of the dead. She saw them. The friends. Straight through to the wall and ground. Betrayal like death. Transparent window or widow.

There is a court in which there is no redress. It is not a place. It is the function of that space to keep anyone who enters from being able to make her case. There is no case. The Code Noir was designed to justify African slavery by seeming to regulate it. In it people are defined as things, "beings for others." The Enlightenment intellection

used to perpetuate the Code cannot effectively end its influence.
There are too many points of complicity. The contraption that allows
you to speak by silencing me is not neutral or logical.

The crime can't be undone. There is no morally superior position in
relation to it. That morality is exactly betrayal. The court comes to
order each time a conversation occurs in which one interlocutor finds
herself to be above the situation. A person pretends to be a pillar but
is merely an erection. She regrets there is nothing she can do for you.

Victim that you are

You get yourself killed
He takes you seriously

He discovers that pain is transferable
No one can name his behavior
Least of all you

History is his alibi
Women his obsession

But you are not a woman to him

It (I) she said was not just some painted clit. I was aware of the
implications of my dimensionality. My dimensionality caused me to
forget you. To forget the crime, though I remembered the dead. The
assassin was part of the memory. It was me. The non-existent past
was easier to grasp than the non-existent present. And then it wasn't.
There was blood. It was bloody. (I) got large, raining down over
everything.

Stained. Some of the clothes were kept in bags but most were simply
thrown away. Bagged and trucked to a dump. Donated. *Given*. The
job of dispersal. Like worms we labor to break things down. To get

rid of everything. She found herself on her knees scraping the rug off the floor. Nothing could be saved. Nothing could be known.

Equiano gets old. They get old together, but not yet. He writes a memoir of captivity in the language of the captors. To tell them. She does this too. Their language subsumes like captivity. And like it, retains a resistant passion which draws one into the narrative. The hunger for the language that destroys life. That owns form. The contract. The act. "I am imprisoned in your language" she says. It was a seduction strategy, but of whom?

His work was a tomb

Serrano's flesh

Piss poor but golden

An infamous but plain

Clerical humility

And then not

Hot and then

The flesh red after fire

Blue before

Cold. Spent the night in the open. Dead. Coolness of stars up through the ceiling imagined alone in the same bed. Quiet. Broken by remembered speech. Spoken for. To account for. How to account for the present situation. Gradual change marked on the skin like a measuring cup. The skin (again) painted leather. The hand held open. The answer. She raised her hand and kept it up.

Ten minus one

She counted but was

not believed. The syllables like a mantra. The answer. Counting in order to rid herself of numbers, of time. The increments of the present. The same count. A decimal minus one reminds one never to go over or to go back. Not a sequence but a repetition like a song. A petition like a question. Never again. Duchamp as a form of grief. A diary. A display of the invisible. Of visible decay. The mode here is eliminative. It is the only mouth she has left.

"Piece of Ass Lost." The necropolis pictured by a dead poet in Ellroy's *Clandestine*. Poet cop. The mouthpiece of fate. Exploitation as love. Women who don't get older. Women as men. It doesn't matter. The U.S. number one in violent death just past Mexico and Brazil. First in the First World and the Third. The guardian of the infested spirit. Someone follows a woman. She is not a muse but a fate. She talks too much. They drink together. They eat. Is she one of many or a singular masterpiece. Impossible to follow him down that street. The action is complete to the degree that it is not legible. Or transferable to another medium. It is not unfinished but undone. Not the crime but the gun. The piece of string with which you hope to find yourself. Missing. She was missing her head. What we have is a reconstruction.

Diana watches herself on TV. She wanders absently around the house. She is not dead. She is an artist. The interview reveals everything she hopes for. There is a queen and a corpse. She finds her cigarettes and begins to smoke. She is seventy. Voluptuous as parchment. Thickly written. She takes into herself a sense of death. She lets it out.

She wonders how to preserve access without giving into a deadened sense of hierarchical exclusion. Now that authority has been shown to be the shuck it is. To provide a method for reading, to alter the activity of reading itself. In retrospect or in the sense that it has already taken place. She reads the scene before the crime. Or we wouldn't be having this conversation. His ambition is naked, mechanical. He also wants to read.

The vaginal scroll

She performs (Schneeman)

Memorably laid out

Source or origin

Like a physical note

Of itself sufficient

Opened like the book

She wrote

The reconstruction is sloppy. Bad. Not convincing. Not made to be so. Black velvet lines the unseen back of the door. To soften the blow. Her character pokes through her performance like bones through flesh. Judy. Judith She loves him but he loves her double. Her twin. Who is convincing. A con, snare or fox. A pest. He likes the angularity. The bending back. But he falls during the kiss. He is injured. "I hate this," she says. He doesn't miss her then.

The scroll unwinding and the performer

Takes over removing

Her shroud her look

Distracted in the picture

She takes off

Her glasses her theatricality

Will be attacked in place of her person

He argues her down

Her desire is unknown

Impossible to predict its hold on him. "... a diagram of the cruel geometries of desire." The reviews are ambivalent. The scriptedness of their exchanges is painful to him. Her double jumps into the bay. The actor after. Also his double. Later on a sound stage wet close-ups. The real actors. His strained face dazed with obsession. The paleness of her hair, dark dress spread out but clinging also. Her limpness in his arms. He stares down at her, climbing imaginary steps out of the sea. Her high heels in silhouette. The twist of her waist is displayed to him, to us.

1.

Madeleine is weak but alive. Unconscious. He takes her to his apartment on Russian Hill. He kicks open the bedroom door, placing her carefully on his bed. He first takes off her shoes. She stirs but

doesn't wake. He holds her in a sitting position, unzipping her dress in the back. Pale wide shoulders, wet slip, brassière. He pulls her dress and slip over her head. He becomes aware that her breasts are against him. Nipples like buttons. He works quickly against her waking. Unfastens garters. Peels off stockings. He reaches around her waist and has some trouble with clips. He begins to breathe hard but quietly. Her head falls back. Her neck is long and white. His hands are dark against her skin. He is careful with his hands like a surgeon. He draws the blanket over her. Even in this drowned sleep there is a defensiveness to the set of her features. He stares only briefly. His audience, himself, is aware of the contrivance of his composure. But is unaware that her unconsciousness is an act. He knows only in retrospect. Perhaps she knows that he is both protector and killer. She seems to be in control. Also looking back. But she is out of her depth.

*The Bride does not refuse
this stripping by the
bachelors, even
accepts it since she
furnishes the love gasoline
and goes so far as to help
towards complete nudity
by developing in a
sparkling fashion*

her intense desire for orgasm clings to her like his red silk robe. When she runs she knows he will go where she goes. She has tricked him but at too great a cost. She sees this as a job. He sees it as rescue and sex. But she can't be saved from the danger of being false. She can't be had. The hopelessness skews their perception. Heightens their senses.

The artist likes to see the woman go too far. The woman likes it too. She manages the twists with some virtuosity. She puts herself beyond her skill. The character changes in desperation but is unable, each

time, to survive. Her eyes in multiple shots. His eye in the credits.
Jimmie. A simple expedient but effective. Death to itself. And Kim.
The actor is left.

To be disassembled

Exit stage right

And another rescue

Marooned on a penal colony in space

She remembers his memory

His voice a slurred machine

"My nakedness creates you," he says (dead)

She brings up the interface

Turns it on

A golem. Like herself. Skin like flesh only not in her mind. Inside the memory, the wetware an obscene cream as if robots ran on semen. She turns to him. In pieces. In a kind of mechanical pain. He carries in him the mothers who didn't survive. It is evident in his soft address. He is her confidant. Her history. She confides. They confer in a jacked-in version of love. His love is wired in. They know things together that otherwise only she knows. "It's better than sex," she says. He says, "No, it's not."

Kienholz by definition

The bionic man

"We can rebuild him"

Not a faceless door

But organ donor

Plugged in

What happened to him

If she is Death in *Orphée*

He is her driver

An assisted death. They would be lovers in another life. She prefers his later more vicious fiction but he hasn't grown into it yet. Their times are not synced.

He in fact
Was scattered

She assisted
It was speaking

Not belief

She longed for
She was

The expert
Not love

2.

"Anything," he points out "can be architecture." It is his way of wooing her. He does it unconsciously. He is not only a machine. He is partly flesh. He is large. He fills the shots. The shots are sentences.

The scenes paragraphs. Here they begin their numbered sequence, but not yet.

“Think of nothing,” they tell her. She is skittish. Like a horse, she expects to be ridden. She is domestic. Domesticated. But only just. The queen inside of her is a source of strength but not the only one. She is not good or bad. Not mechanical but assembled. There are no moving parts in *The Given*. The movement is in your mind.

Kienholz dreams himself in a thought balloon. The eye attaches to the penis. The penises in that assemblage. Himself and his thought. They are at rest. It is a grisly scene but restful.

“Try!” he pleads.

She averts her face

Her head and neck curve

Away like a swan

He presses into her his

Hands on her shoulders she steps back

As if there was a cliff

And ocean as if (she struggles)

They were falling

The effect is circular. The feeling of having been there. As certainly with other men, other machines surrounding her with scenery. A world once made of light and tricks is now made of numbers. It is exact. She again loses herself. He loses her.

We are filled with the incommensurate perspectives of the mechanical man. Numbers and infrared effect. "Come with me if you want to live," "But who is this me and what is this life?" She arrives on the latest in a sequence of worlds, grandly naked. She is right to suspect him. He is not an artist but a technician. His ideas are a pure culture. His is a broad spectrum. A designer substance that will "ream, steam and dry clean." So he says. They have no perspective. They are in it.

The new characters are in love. One woman is part monster. One is a machine with the memories of a person, not herself. The possibilities are evident in their first conversation. Self-assertion, reassurance, revenge, destruction, hero-worship. Their dialogue is generated by their situation and by their actors' pasts. And by the long muscular arms of the older one. The predator inside her. The acquiescent intelligence of her lover. The soft brown cap of her hair. As always it's the things they know together. That they have on each other. That count.

So that's earth. What's it like?

I don't know

I've never been there. It's like the past. You can't go back. That time exists at all is the question. Time is the strange thing. (It's the monster inside of her talking.) It was as if she could see time. Lovers caught in it. Women and men aging before her eyes. The mechanical man breaks. He breaks down. The unwritten assignation holds her attention. The next one. The strangeness of another being. Any one. The moment of revelation or betrayal.

3.

You have things you want to tell me

The first agreement

"It's lovely," he admits of something

She has him on the run

The intervals are indeterminate

The exchange takes place over days

Or in suspended animation

Another genre the other

Lover

"You won't break my heart?" he asks and she knows the answer is technically yes. But feels her own jeopardy justifies her silence. His question is an assertion of being ahead of the plot. But they have only the present in common. *The Illegal Operation*. Kienholz is direct.

The queen is bleeding. Mechanical men surround her. She dies calling for him. She dies underground. Her witness remembers nothing.

But I
You

Remember
Though we

Were not

Ever
Never

Together
Touched

I (in my old form) valued your intrusive presence and brutality. The machine quality was compelling if incomplete. You were fearful. Culpable. Rampant and dark, grasping. Uncompromising except when blind and then basely, entirely compromised. You saw me see it. My accusations were loving. Followed much later by claims also silent. Followed by an inability to speak at all.

She thinks of odd things at that moment. Random but legible. But she is too tired to read and her clothes are torn away. Or is that skin? Is this then the body?

Bolero. A fool's song. A music that builds. A telegraphed climax. Movie music without the movie. The movie ends in the middle. Seems to circle around itself. Smithsonian is the stand-in. He draws X's on a map. A man with arms on his chest. Another X.

He reminds her of himself

Like a son with features

From the past but again

Urgent he draws

Her gaze as if they were both flesh

"As if I was here with you now"

He speaks distractedly. She knows why.

They stare at each other with mechanical eyes

She feels reborn

Or unborn. Out of luck. Or full of it. The outcome in six moves.

Sacrifice of the queen. Dangerous strategy only effective when total loss can be factored into an overall plan. Her gesture is from the larger game. She turns herself down to a hum. She turns to him in a clank of gears.

4.

She is an impossible machine. She is not a car or factory, not an assembly-line process, but an allegory. A pure form. Her levels are measured. The bride is not invented but displayed. Displaced. " ... to the end of transforming both the audience and the occasion." An exact rendering of what happened just before he put his hands around her neck.

Birth
Contraction
Infant attachment
And mother
Or host

Canal

Took us by barge
Across the lake

Dropped off

"Water then" she thought, having dreamed the birth of a child of indeterminate sex. But anything not male is female. Delivered into a hostile world. There was a crowd. The doctor was distant. Male. He was always leaving. She explained things to him, ending always, "But then you know that. You are a doctor." There were women present. Was she one of them? Was the child giving birth to itself like twins being separated?

The water in the *Given* is a lamp. It is the opposite of water or is the light on the water condensed by time into a narrow focus like a movie. Movement and light. An ephemeral effect in the general tableau. Window dressing.

Diana checks into a motel to read. She is also on the screen. She is on a retreat but doesn't want to go. It is a double retreat. She has few physical needs. She hears shots. She ignores them. She doesn't react. She acts. She reads. She records.

A conversation among aspens
In movement around them
Leaves and wind and light
Her hair like a helmet also bright
In the sun the white wood
And green yellow
Nothing to say or remember
She fills the form
Her attributes

She notices she is not young. Her children have grown. Climbing stone steps toward a waterfall, she looks back.

Rootedness
Irregular

Rocks or steps

A creek split into several streams like silver

Braids down her back straight as ever

But a little sore

Cream in tubes
Ointment

For the royal feet

"Now the woman lives alone" (Cole) with her desire to keep going.
The windows rattle in the mountain wind. The morning fire beats
against the glass of the wood stove. She watches it like TV. There is a
lot of altitude. It buzzes. Arranging the wood. It goes up in a breath.
Memory.

5.

Bread left in a kitchen. Another kitchen. Not alone. Alone for the
day. Stale loaves shoved behind books. A light dusting of mold.
Herbs "drying." Spices. The warm smells of the old house. Life in the
debris. Lifting a desiccated loaf, ants crawl lazily out. One a queen.
Imagined. Bulbous and white. Killing her while sleeping. Clearing
out what is always left. Days of work. Never enough.

Coffee at dusk. Books and notebooks on the bed. Radio loud. Picture
books. A line. A caption. A captive. Another line. Cendrars and
Burroughs. Black and white TV. No sound. Movie. A word. A line.
Persian miniatures. Poems by friends. By enemies. Magazines. An
assertion. A resistance. Cognac. Calling a friend. Getting his wife.
Fated songs. Repeated lines. Repetition each time. Sleep in the
morning. Waitress nights. Run to the store on break. Get more
bread.

Ritual breakfast
The pipes outside the window
Play
Irony always lost
Satire or satyr
A flashy friend burns out
They pledge themselves

The table like a field
The creamer and marmalade
Of control

Robe billowy. Morning. The hut constructed around her. *The Age of Huts*. (Silliman) She arrives at the ghostly table. Half again older. There is a long quiet low tide in the mist, through the French doors. Walking to the end of the dock, settling there like a great bird among crows. Standing.

Bodies of water. Streams connecting them. Women and birds. Something white flies low over the water. She imagines. A brown hawk. The sun. The impossible task of standing still in a fixed universe. Egrets and crows. Louder than thought. Egrets stalk mirror images of themselves in the middle distance. A cat presses itself against the glass. Sprawled out on rust velvet she stares at a rust and purple rug on a blonde floor. Rented luxury.

“Only ask the women nothing when you see them feeding the birds.” (Rilke) Feet resting on a Chinese rug, angora shawl on her lap. The low tide exists in stiff waves of mud. She holds it in her mind. She is inside but sees herself as outside. As an assembly of pseudo flesh, hair and paint in an idyllic context. Cunt text simply. Reading it from the inside. Sentenced to that position.

When did I
First

When I
Here

Was

With
Stiff

What
Man in the

Hidden shade. What are those flowers blooming in that dark? Find and plant them. So much dark. Nothing grows there. The day is dark.

The lake is black. Half covered with lime green leaves and lily pads. The man assembled also from memory. The sound of water in the ravine. Ferns and vines. The man there like someone caught. Or someone passing. Nettles and blackberries. The idea of the place. Not existing.

The philosopher's face is sad as he stares out from his picture. He is dead. He contracted a disease. An act. Thinking. A pestilence. Items in the contract. There were headaches and madness. Imaginative sex. The last betrayals. The last year of the century.

6.

"Supposing truth is a woman" (Nietzsche) But suppose she is not? Truth. An empty room. She calls but turns off the phone. A mute reception. A banquet in fact. Not a myth. An act. A near myth. What kind of congress does he imagine? What assembly? With a name like Salomé. A proposition. A sense of dread. A series of names. Morgan. I was Mary then. A shock of hair at his mouth and on his head.

Pistis Sophia

Magdalene

Penis shaped woman

Engraved by Beardsley

How. Morgan. Le.

Fay. Gave. A. Shield.

To. Sir. Tristram.

The white folds

The wide

Space of the shield divides them. He seems to rear back. She is poised somewhat over. She is tall. Positioned in relation to and as a source of protection of. Him. In another moment she burns with fever. And now she is cold. And then hot again. She removes her inky gown. Tits high hips wide. She lifts one breast thoughtfully. It is heavier than when she was young. A thousand years ago.

Road movies like dreams. Son and younger brother traveling. Summer of movement and desperation. Satellite calls. She knew him to be content now in action. Her Janus. Child and man. Familiar but without presence. His verisimilitude. The map unfolds. Windshield. Steering wheel. Rearview and side windows. Things shooting backwards.

The phone rings silently like an alarm. A mystery. No time to say hello. The emergence. The opening was bloody. The event of a moment. When he calls it is always for help. It goes without saying that he never calls. He came over and watched as I worked on the machine. I wouldn't stop. He wouldn't stop watching. I was in love with technology. Thighs like iron etc. Always hungry.

Confidence woman
Strip mine

Strychnine

Vial
Equipment

Lover and assassin
Mother's heart
In vain

Pump

For the pain. Edward was urgent. Sometimes it was pain. More often nerves as he might have said. But didn't. He didn't complain. He fought. He fought it off. The need to vanquish was palpable. In a room on the floor. He demonstrated his faith. A no action hero. We changed media. He used the word *rape*. He meant documentation. A strange beginning which came to nothing. And that only with difficulty.

Nothing is definable unless it has no history. The opening. Divide Meadow from a distance. Relief is temporary. The only thing to do is to keep going. It is an organized epiphany which denies its own existence. (This is what he despises.) With long strides. Knowing something from a distance. And finally forgetting to know. The sheer geography and clouds from the plane. Aerodynamic. Blasting away. Don't worry about me.

Baby
Two-face

Two-fisted
Tender

Bit

Buy into
Identify

Cry
Swallow

7.

Like milk. It was a lesson. Or a contract. She entered into the contract in order to go forward. Not to survive. There was never any question of that. She knows she will not survive. That she will not be identical. She is strung out. Tightly strung. Morgan. Unprotected

except by the contract. The absurd protection of words. "... the universe of rules, which is by no means designed to temper violence, but rather to satisfy it." (Nietzsche again.)

What does she say to him? What makes him do it? Drive her back down into herself. Cruel to be caught in an allegory. An allegorical crime. The levels pressed down on her like a trap. The claustrophobia of his small-mindedness. His terms for sex. Her reply. "Yes" or "Fuck you" she might have said. If she'd been left with her head. As it was there was nothing. The permanent silence of action was the nature of the tableau. There was no actor. No evidence. Even knowing him was a form of suicide. She took care of herself.

It was interesting right up to the end. If he couldn't be smart at least he could be strong. That was her thinking. She was drunk. She thought most clearly then. Something as strong as whatever she was drinking. The days of work. The loneliness and malaise. His strength was a distraction. An illusion. As usual he had nothing to say. They drove around. He never ate. He ate.

With her but not
Alive together
She was alone
With an object
Confusion in a car
Like Kienholz
Bodies divided up
My sex your death
Thank you ma'am

"But I am not a whore," she reiterated. Feeding him back his own objections. It was morning by then. The morning of the next millennium. A mental solstice. A hinge between life and daily life. Useful information is produced by the dead person. But is not useful to him. The person is information. You can't know unless you know. Mary to Mary. Eddie. Edouard. Pride and joy.

Sons and lovers. The age. Their ages. They never bothered with the calculation. Hers was a retroactive force. The knife was part of the story. He held it over her. Never touching. She settled into a careful calm. Trust was interesting only insofar as it was dangerous. She had no historical reason to die.

She doesn't die. She is in another situation. Already. Across the table from her like a mirror. Judy again. The smoothness of the young. A girl child. The unwritten lines. Telepathy. Age. The hardness of what she now calls skin. An alloy. An ally. They forge a connection. They are metallic together. Shoulder blades. The tracery of her experience. Story in braille. She mentions the past but only in passing. I died then. Her lover admires her hardware. But are they really lovers? Was it only the myth of substitution? Oneself for oneself? She doesn't care. With her you could have your cake and your contradictions.

My frosted baby
The light plays in the room

Breathless statement
Made like a bed

Myself and my mechanism
Hybrid

Tailspin
The long dive

Or hovering

Like bees we invaded each other. Shock of contact and a sense of running, scuttling inside like an army down my throat. (This in a letter.) Gulliver to your infinite pin pricks of question and statement. Your lust of assertion. I think best on my back. Effortless wrestling. An old trick learned in a long job. Effortless repetition. Muscle where

you expected only air. Didn't know you were falling. Plucked you from it. Where was I? What I'm telling you. That I also had no choice. An elaboration on a theme with its own law. Our agreement.

8.

Terrible grammar. The spelling of the murderess. Portable like poetry. Her notebook of lies. A convoluted spirit invading itself like a false idea of the soul. She stole from her victims. They all become writers. To say about her. To restate the obvious. The disappointment. The injury comes after the pain. Followed by long scrolls of fiction. Women move through it. Frantic hieroglyphs. Nothing moves fast enough. Was she a mother or a monster? They know too much. They are an apostasy. An abomination.

"Someone" he writes
"Playing with my dick" he goes on
"Not me" he complains
Forgetting that alone
She of all creatures
Unreadable but only
To him his onanism
She tricks him out of
The problem he calls it

Fucking for example. Everything that moves. Predator to predator. She loves his destruction with a greater clarity than he knows. The impossible is true with them. Letters written in every substance. The sex of paper. And she is somewhere else building a house or a whole town. A conference. A festival. She administrates. She fills out. Forms and documents. Is immersed and frankly, busy. Not that I don't think

of you but I think of many things at the same time. And with the
greatest esteem etc

I am
Yours

Spoken
Brief

Only

A history of presence
The end of something

Like
As

Alive or intact. Distraught. Grief. And finally. Distracted. Explanation between them a perversion and in that sense effective. Honorable. The chase scene in slow motion. Out of sequence. Distance was the subject of her dreams. Distance maintained and then collapsed. Held the book closely. In his blindness. Tenderly to his eyes.

My dear child. She wrote but thinking better of it called instead. And later *Virgin In Aspic*. A line from sex. They invented. They danced like little boats. A pageant. A party. That she was giving. *Given*. It was her party. She was expert in her ministrations. Not allowing herself to be first. But wanting to be next. Unable to say. Were her lover's eyes blue or hazel or brown? As if she could look from the inside. Seeing her eyes in her own head. Or gray.

He also saw himself as a woman. With the changeable beauty of the wet machine. He built himself of wax. Of insects. She burned and poisoned him. He was meat to be ground. To be eaten raw. It was a new kind of power for him. Victim. The flower of his being. Rose Selavy. The new name. The next life.

Pudendum

Richly veiled
Him and women
Lets himself have the full

Version the reverie
Its characters routinely
Too young or too old
Whatever he wants
He believes

The scream. The O he wrote. Edouard. Squiggly lines of pubescence. Munch. Also familiar. A family in fact resemblance. Like that of vines winding. Her particularity breaks out. His vision is damaged by the light. The veins break and are swollen. A gasping for air. But no one can breath through that mouth.

9.

If you are not in the movie please keep going. Clouds boiling behind us. A natural or manmade disaster. We try to outrun it. A slick empty thriller. A plot driven by gravity. *[I]mage, object or self becomes simultaneously a thing to be measured and a standard of measurement.* "I" she says "am an artificial life form." It is an old problem. Not unlike his fucking thing. A conflict of dictions. *[A]s it pleases* he says of the string. The projection of will into that unit. An attempt to acknowledge difference. His will. But her difference is not in relation to him.

Buttermilk Sky. Another standard. The blue of black and white movies. The tropical forties. *Laura.* A melody like a story. A reference point. A resource. But the weather is unpredictable. She shivers and he wonders if she is cold or afraid.

Yvonne and

Magdeleine

Torn

In Tatters

A way of speaking a being

Baltimore Oriole

An arrangement

Or predicament

No place for a lady

Someone plays the piano. He wears a two-toned shirt. Has a high-pitched antmelodic voice. The melody comes from his hands. He has a baby face. The air is smoky around him. His daughter stands in the smoke. It's Dacron. Brown and tan. He's skinny. Black hair and brown slacks. Rapt.

Song. She picks out the notes. She reads more than she plays. The refrain. Sheet music. Books of songs. The piano bench. Father and daughter. She learns the walking bass. He doesn't read music. Plays by ear. There are hinges on the bench. The music is inside. Later the music arrives in a dusty box. Husband plays father's songs. Standards. He remembers everything. But they don't meet. Lyrics. She knows them by heart.

He flew. He concealed his headaches from the flight surgeon. Orange and then gray flight fatigues. Our name stenciled on bags. Flying status. Headaches not negotiable. Flying in hurricanes and blizzards. Planes safe in Bermuda while we dig out. Father gone. Pancakes for dinner. Later flying in the war. *Pain is the most powerful aid to mnemonics.*

A child is expected

An ensemble is sent

Green because you don't know

The firemen are local

One is having a child

Learning to speak his language

And he mine

What the child will be

We hold down the fort

She opens the window. She stands there. It has been a long time. To be this exposed. Open. Leather is like a second skin. Seems to breathe. To be attached. She is a fresh creature. The window as threshold and stage. Opening out. No need to jump. She can walk through it. The same on either side. She is fully present. There is no question of passers-by. Visibility. The view is nothing if not surprising. Full grown. It is not her question. It's her skin. Foolish virgin.

Marcel plans the exhibition. He enters it and then withdraws. He makes a monument of necessity. He is anonymous. He is an impostor. Himself for himself. An event or appointment. He is well appointed. Buddha of the bathroom. New logic. Old metal knobs. His room is made for thinking. Dimensionality. He thinks about sex. He plays with himself. He wins. "the diagram returns as the inscription."

1.

Your time is thirsty. It is the performative case. The declensions of that passion produce injury. The hidden written in skin. The writing is read. There are directions. A form is proposed and executed. Gender is critical. It is established beyond a shadow of a doubt. It is not possible to decline. Fate is involved. He doesn't stick around. The aftermath is filled with strangers. The body is transitional. The white curve of the shoulder and arm lead the eye upward and into the apparent distance. But there is no way out.

The phone explodes
Underfoot crack

When the shells
Loudly

Open

No one
The opening

Gets past
Mechanism

Treachery. The place is a body drop. It is not a room. Not a grave. Given by death to the survivors. This shell of a woman. An artist fills a room with shells and rabbits and snakes. Statues. The difference between a shell and a statue. She was broken. Nudes are pictured in the room. *Walking on Eggshells* (Sandy Skoglund) Nothing can keep them from breathing. It's a bathroom. Not a grave. A temporary place. No one can live there.

But that is where she is. Magdeleine. After the dying. After the past. "I have a way into him," she reflected. "His head." Idle thoughts of a dead woman. When she thinks of him he knows. He gets red. His compassion is for himself. Lady killer. Like something he has already bought. He wants to buy it again.

She doesn't have a phone. People have needs. A job or a man or another man. To drink or eat. Go to the bathroom. A child needs a

room. A man or woman needs a house. A tomb. A mausoleum. To be installed there. A matter of respect. Access. Or asshole. A woman describes her killer.

"What I wanted"
And eat

To speak
Before

The end of

"Didn't want me"
Though injured

But I still
By him

To return. To last through another night. It was unnecessary to go on. She lay at the end of a *cul-de-sac*. Suspended between death and death. She was found and photographed. Upended. Carted away in a heap. Dug into like a mine. Some things were never found. "It's a mistake to keep mementos of a murder." There was a delay in finding her. She created delay. But it ended. Diana. Kim. She was unable to delay. Morgana. To stop time from closing in around her.

This is the time after time. The rewrite. Components color-coded according to type. Text version. The verbs yellow. The conjugations shading into green and brown. The conjugal situation. Red consonants. Blue vowels. She is written in Technicolor. Her role is a series of single lines. Pointed interview. Co-producer. Correspondent. She is an agreement as well as a mechanism. Connect the dots. Bone replaced by metal. Skin by leather. A new fluid runs behind her face. Indigo. Breath like ice. Eyes hugely dilated. Black holes suck in the light.

Infinite entrance. The vectors leading from one event to the other become visible. She herself disappears. The project is to capture her trajectory. To read it back. To attract her attention. Or affection. Or simply to see her through the wall. The door. The garden is in disarray. Overrun. Overgrown.

2.

Blood like
Sap

Her disposition
Her deposal
A rash act

Projected out like a shadow or echo

A giantess
Felled
An arboreal fate

So that a squirrel or insect. A white thing. Gets through the crack in the wall. Not where there is brick. But near the center. Where the fruit trees and laurel on the other side are visible. Is it an apple or a peach? Animate. But not free.

"I'm a stranger here myself," she concluded. Though she has the memories of several lives. She functions as a freshly constituted being. One who has hit the wall. Over and over. "Her motion is literal."

She watches a dead man approach an accustomed meeting place. (Later she learns it wasn't him.) It's an old film or tape. The image of him moves swiftly toward his destination. He opens a glass door. His grace is surprising. The context has been established. The film is silent. The ordering is chronological or by chance. There is a color shot at the end of the tape. A familiar landmark. Old color. He smokes there. The penultimate shot. For less than a moment. (But it's not him.) His head changes. The chemistry of fading and forgetting. The close-up of his face.

Oneself as the perpetrator or golem. The inevitable conclusion to a series of stories begun in childhood. He tells his fate looking at his own hands. His cards. His metier. Detective. Close-up of his face. What is he thinking? What does he see?

Chrysanthemum
Very wide

His face is
A screen

Scene

Under the skin
Doesn't see

Reflective
Doesn't live

Holmes *is* Moriarty in this version. He pursues himself. But he kills women. Or men. Dismembers in order to forget. Discards or plants them. He finds the clues. He has left himself. Inanimate. Not separated but broken. Breakthrough. Cursing. "I have broken it!" Like a child. Once she was a bride. Somebody's mother. Someone's son. Now incomplete. "Definitively unfinished." He is not able to return and fix it. She is not.

"Funny when you want something," Diana mused. Or are wanted by something. They say she would never have married him. But what do they know? You form yourself to the desired thing. Become congruent. Feel what it feels. Is he the next in a series of developing situations? Or is he Jack the Ripper? Is this my life pouring out of me on the street? Wait a goddamned minute. I.

"From an invisible mouth words were streaming forth, turning into living entities ..." *The Golem*. (Meyerlink) His recorded voice was breathless. Rough like a road. Like a death there. A long pause. Between breaths. Lines. Lies. The anniversary of my death. And me on this fence. A tape plays in the grave I call my head. People file past. They forget.

3.

Imposing
Said to be

Measure
Masculine

But not

By me
For example

Measured
Blood again

In the story. Defined as a cluster. A nest of problems. Diana poses in a pattern. Leopard skin. Strong man shot. Arms flexed. Hers is the name of a storm. A path of destruction. Propelled by asymmetrical pressures and heat. Heated water like blood in the middle of the world. Concentricity fierce until it falls apart.

Another of the dismantled dead. She becomes a book or a box. "[T]he cupboard, the coffin, the prison cell, or the cistern, the reservoir." (Derrida) The story is an archive. A temporary set of relationships from which information can be extrapolated. She is his past. She is my past. She is what we have left. He is me. An object. Me as an answer. A deal. The pattern of an animal. Leather as skin. Like clothing taken from the dead. Sealed and catalogued. Smell of dust. Not like the person. The stench of time itself. Accessible. To be taken from its receptacle. To be read.

The double present. A response solicited without hope. A technical answer is generated by the form of what remains. How may these things be saved? Or read. Except by an organized accident we would not be having this conversation. "In fact this isn't happening at all," he says, though they are at the center of what is called the free world together. It isn't free.

It wasn't death
But enactment
She doesn't scream
The degree to which he is
Not there is greater
Than that to which
The agreement kicks in
Retroactively
She falls back

She folds out. Folds up. Fucks her way into history and out again. He doesn't come and then does. Does she? Hers is an infinitely suspended orgasm. Her wide stance. Possibility turns against itself. A shock of hair is left. Pictured. Gathered. Woven. A yarn. A text. The great yawn between her legs. The gap between her desire and her recognition. She storms away.

Her smile is frozen. Her eyes are flat like porcelain. She turns to someone. Doll-like. Painted over a photograph. Bright. You have her agreement. You are the job. Her presence is carefully clichéd. *La belle dame sans merci. Fata Morgana.*

But night is never enough. Why does she agree? What possesses her? To put herself at risk. She proceeds down a certain street. Is taken for a prostitute in spite of her glasses. She walks quickly. Layers of transparent desire part like space before her. A tension twists inside. Pursuing a certain man. A decoy. He tricks women into situations on behalf of other men. He knows what to say. He tells her of the time he made a fool of himself for a prostitute. Ten years later in he tells the same story in another form. She ignores it both times. She wants to find out what he'll do when the trick doesn't work. She will give a lot to know.

Neck and
Legs

Shoulders
Bare

Rouge

Before speaking
Lifted

Her eyes
Wide

4.

In the next remake she is the villain. The killer. The bright flat field. There is no crack on her surface. She is a writer. A stone. We don't see her hurry. We don't see her write. She prints out the crime. She wears white. Monterrey pines elongate her horizon. The director is a mathematician. The writer is a predator. The conversation is resolved by fucking like punctuation. The inevitable result of her sentences. Her sentence. "Fucking," she says in a display of her power. She can do anything. There is no code. But we are aware of the violations of the old code. Each line is a violation. The punishment is guilt. Everyone dies.

The real writer begins to bark and howl. Shameless. Craven. Obsessed. Face like a mask. Reflective. Lines like maggots writhe. The body works. The work squirms in a cheap room. The remake evokes the original site. The body drop. The empty street. Naked mother. But this one bleeds.

"I have long grown used to being dead." (Jensen, *Gradiva*, cited by Freud, cited by Derrida) The future is the issue. The archive forms the future. The material is the only thing that is not dead. The dead person lingers in the apparently random interaction of forms.

Finding aids. The register. A Geiger counter of dust. But how do they keep her clean? Her memory is not what it was. Her skirt flies up but the rest of her is still. In the wind. Absent mother. Absent son. Lamp in her hand. Water. The illusion of movement.

Vagrant
Trance

Cycles
Home

Gives up

His body
When still

He gave up
Her body

My heart (the bride) stripped bare. "Woman is horror." (Baudelaire)
He lives in her infirmity. The condition of the day around him.
Acedia. He accedes to her demands. But who is she at this furthest point? Her flesh is dried and stretched. And where is her face?

He says he believes in pleasure as death. He doesn't say it in words.

Her pleasure is stopping time. A rhythmic manipulation. When time goes on the horror dawns on him. But for her the action is end-to-end. Faceless and half-buried in his mind. She represents herself. As speaking and eating. She turns hungrily back at him.

And turns again
Protected

Pig leather
Spicer

Said

The fix is in
The sun

But fading
Hollow

Statue. A collection of statues in a castle in California. Pottery. Light through the Spanish screen like coins. The tower. The balconies and

turrets. Light at the bottom of the pool. Satyrs. The weakness of strong states. The accumulation of merit. Of characters immersed in a new setting. A Venus from an artificial ocean.

5.

The frame in which he opens the memoir. In black and light. The white paper dissolves into another scene. Reading is the task. Blinded by the white we discern a character, a child. By the end we are sent careening back. But we began with death. And with a sense of circularity. We decipher. The ciphering is easy. The clues follow like math.

Hearst Castle is a house haunted by a movie. It was built by Julia Morgan. With incessant attention. Working all night. Riding the train. Five hundred trips up and down the coast. The house wasn't in the movie. Kane is not Hearst. The problem is an accumulation of meaning. Excess meaning is stored. The need to build a house or movie around the meaning is the haunting. Patty is kidnapped. Terrorists give things away. Julia is on the train. All night drawing. Hurling toward her employer.

Nocturne. Facing west
Where the sun was
In a book
Cities of the Golden Gate
Arriving amid swarms
In February
Of monarchs
As warm as later
Autumn (today)

In the bedroom of a chorus girl. Born in Oakland. Trained in Paris.
As later Duncan. Whose golden tea service and jigsaw puzzles.
Transformed into tiles of atomic mythology by Jess. Another
Duncan. Another Oakland. Julia ate little. Drank Pepsi. Like Ted
Berrigan. Added to the libraries. Also like him. But the castle was her
Grail. The balcony faced the sea. She had to build around his
collection and menagerie. Ceilings, altars. "Accumulation beyond
human imagination." *Citizen Kane*.

The preservation of things. Cabinetry. Mission Style. Morning.
"What we see is a whole series of parallel states of existence, and the
"I" simply isn't there." (*Why Duchamp?*) She is elsewhere. Languish-
ing. "That room in Philadelphia." (Same.) Early American. Bed and
breakfast. White quilt. Gold bed. Fall. Walk to the museum. To the
door. Stare through the crack in the wall.

We unlearn which things are real. With terrible difficulty. She found
herself in California. Repeating the past. Mission Style flowering of
genocidal times. Just the arabesques and tiles left. Scattered people.
An arcaded walkway. Herself replicant. The stuff of the stuff of the
ruling class. Knock-off of a copy. The statue garden. Gilded. A
chorus line. What Orson Welles did to Rita Hayworth in *Lady from
Shanghai*. Ominous tone of early sixties. "Build me a killer," the
mother says of her son.

Where he comes from
Or *The Manchurian Candidate*
The prison of the garden club
Ladies falsely displayed
"Die Mommy scum!" (Armantrout)
Fear of mothers and others
Women and Orientalism
The mirror problem
What he does to her

An exchange of characters and names. Distortion. Trick glasses make everything look real. It's not a dream. She's not a blond. They are the gift of an action figure. We must be in the present. She has a crush on the producer. He's gay but it doesn't matter. It's not that kind of love.

The castle is always open. The *Given* can be seen as the burial place of modern art. (Again, *Why Duchamp?*) Evidence of violence. The disruption of the empty set. Pictures of teacups and bedspreads strewn. Taken between takes. Guards protect the stuff in the castle. After the fact. The exotic motif of danger and duplicity. Shanghai and Manchuria. Progression from the foreign to the feminine. Split-gender reading. As man perceiving upright protagonist. Myself. As woman complicit. Triumphant or compromised. The pleasure in feeling the split.

6.

Actor and audience interact by way of the set. The stage. Various attributes are required of the actor. Being alive is not one of them. An actor may be animated or not. It's not her choice. The actor consists of layers of manipulated perception. She may be a puppet. Or she may consist only of colored light. She seems more alive if she is recorded. We read her backwards. There is a pattern.

Motif
Motive

Street
Strip

Stench
Grip

Stencil
To live

Or be live

The split occurs in the sound. Alive. She longed for the objectivity of the uncompromised investigator. The classic detective. The breaking story. To interrupt the program. By definition there can be no connection with him. No pattern. To connect would constitute a mixing of background and foreground. A flattening and consequent change of genres. With consequences. When they do it anyway (anything) the real world emerges from the design. This always happens.

Nothing is hidden in language. The evidence is on the surface. Levels of mediation multiply the surfaces. Analysis and listmaking can generate the action. Or it is arbitrary. You are aware of the shape of one genre but sense the existence of another. You struggle to maintain the original. Elements of horror appear. Or action. You are a monograph on various forms of ash. The poem becomes discourse. Or story. There are funny parts. Believing you can relax you find that you are falling through space. Like a cushion off a couch. An antimacassar. A radio wave. A random atomic event.

Performance of
Struggling

Geometry
Allows

Impact

The arena
As data

Closes around
To go back

Throat and neck involved. But the voices are not spoken. In this recording situation the mixer is broken. The sounds are not combined but sequential. The genre is combinatory but the genes maintain their qualities. It is the new order. Double scheduled histories. "How much do you know," asks her doctor, "about chaos theory?"

It has nothing to do with science. The unfolding of events. The continuous presentation of surfaces. She preserves the original sequence. Desire is produced by the numbers but is incidental. It becomes a woman's picture. A memory palace taken apart by a rabble of editors. *Xanadu*. The interrupted. The unfinished work. One way to remain unfinished is to stop. The other is to go on.

Chorus girl on the grass. *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. "On the French grass he painted her." He stood before the painting building something in his head. Later a kind of efflorescence took over. "Perfect breasts," he said. "Three men and a woman," he counted. "*Dangerous Liasons*," she remembered. A winter of chocolate and oranges. Sweet starvation. Wasting away. Palace in smoky flesh. "This was a palace and an ocean I was in." Reruns of Spicer and Pound. Hotel. Cold December. "The bloody lance that pierced his side." *The Book of Gwenevere*.

In stark
Intention

Traded
Heads

Places
Always

Never
Possible

To

Keep from falling forward. The motion irresistible. The nude nude. The stairs invisible from her perspective. Entering into the picture and into the sense of death were the same. Event. Falling or looking.

A naked man in storage. Plaster. Painted. Covered in plastic. Facing away. Poised there. On the job. Set of numbers "... actual conduct under each moment in particular circumstances." Looking at the wall interrupts thinking. A relief. Plaster. The whole thing pasted together. Statues crowding a room. An army. An inventory. Corpus. Stands there in the grid. Unopened only in expression. The plastic falls across his shoulders casually. He is partially unwrapped. Near him is an elaborate candelabrum of bones. Antlers. The deer again.

Deer. Strangely unstartled. Encountered at the top of a hill after a long walk from a gully. Through pine and laurel. The air goes green. The sky dark. Autumn. Edged in black. Wood-burning stove. The ground shades of brown and gray. Mountains overlooking Silicon Valley. Almost empty zendo.

Tea with me
Digital DNA

The invitation
Is inside

The product

(Space)
It is

Is knowing
Where

You can lay your hands on it. One of the illusions of the age. Everything is not numbers. It depends on what the definition of *is* is. Or going down. The nude from her pedestal. Over and over. In pause mode. Deteriorates before us. Like Delacroix's colors. The efflorescence of her young skin. Falling. The hand doesn't leave the paper in the drawing. The line continues. Curls around itself.

The *Lark*
Magazine and theater
Tea shop
Ferry
The yellow sky
Mid-air
Blue-hilled November
Suspended
High-heeled

Chorus girl. Larkspur. Just plain available. Met on the ferry. Mid-bay. County line. Back and forth to work along the edge of the coast. The continent. The numbers in my head combine with yours. "It's all true," she says of the novel. "I'll take it," of the job. "But how will I go on?"

Suspended between two occupations. The familiar sound of the train. The bridge into the haze. Retrieval. What constitutes information? What do you have to do to get it out? To get it back in again. The distance closes. Is it an owl or a dog? She is Judy again. Working girl. Boss man. Morgan the Fate.

The overrated silence of the artist is her own silence. Her silence is recorded. Recreated. She transforms her living area into a studio. (Messenger) But it doesn't change. Judy writes a false diary as Madelaine. But in what way is she not Madelaine? Her compromise is the object of her lover's obsession. Her guilt is her profession.

1.

Lines of code

Corrupted as

Visible now

Stumbling up

The tower

As her faceless body

Falling from him

Over him

The cascade

Of information. The strangeness of her behavior is based on his phobia. His blindspot is her aura. They are an eclipse. Last night's meteor shower obscured by last night's rainstorm. Animated meteors. The explanation. The prediction. An urgency like an infection. It dawns on him. He is the tower. She crawls up and falls from his eyes. Or is forced out. Torn. A creature in transition. He wants to use her to understand his love. To get over it. To get it over with. He thinks it's a love story but it's a police procedural. A woman trapped in time. An artificial tower. The added fact is the final deadly thing.

As an actor, Marcel doesn't care about his life. He has no life in the formal sense. Only presence. His participation is measured. Limited. The pursuit is his pleasure. He worships her independence. He builds a prison around her death. When she is spread thin he believes it is for him. He doesn't see her discover the hideously reconstructed versions of herself. The mistakes in conscious agony. He doesn't watch her burn them down. *Alien*. *The Resurrection*. It's a chick thing.

"Ida Appleborg 'The I AM HEATHCLIFFE,'" says Catherine syndrome." *Heresies*. But now the heretic is just another citizen. She accumulates a thousand diaries. The *Judy*. The *Diana*. The *Morgan*, where she dream-travels to Spicerian San Francisco. Occupies the

seared lungs and wrecked organs of the linguist. "Today I will blow myself up," she wrote. *Book of Arthur*. "No kingdom will be saved."

The bursting
Surrounds

Of a bloated
Them (him)

Craving

As a suspect
Crime

In his own
But they have no

Idea. The platform never remains. Anyone knows it. She was conspicuous. His was the culture of the forger. She was the currency in it. (We speak of one person here.) He wanted to spend himself like money. But she was already there. Madeleine. Marilyn. It was stardom not utopia that was at issue for him. But she wanted the recognizable world of new love. The meaningful look. Musing. Sex isn't the only thing that can happen between them.

Though it may be inevitable. That somebody gets fucked. "I lost him and then I lost you." Varieties of death. "I died," she said again. Her slow movements and acid blood are the results. The gauze like plastic surgery. Ripley. *The Year of Living Dangerously*. That would be those nights fucking in his car. You were so sure of yourself. Sad imperialist drama the backdrop for our love story. But what was it, if not love?

Luxurious like a sneeze. Her soul blasts out into the room between them. Radio or hyper activity. Either too alive or too dead for him to respond, but he can't not. The assembly is loose. He falls through her like a well. As if the atoms couldn't stop him. It's not unpleasant, if slightly fatal. "I was due for a change." He thinks. In retrospect. The bandages thick. The heart gone.

She walks through the text like a window or skin. The information is real but she is a projection. Disposable Information Filter marketed

with the slogan, "What's the dif?" The future is what we are ready for. Cindy Sherman dressed as Diana. Before the fact. Resemblance. After the fact. Remembered genealogy not present in the blood. Alive and then still alive. The prosthetics. Her role as a device. She never forgets.

2.

Sound advice
From the project notebook
Beaten woman
Sleeping
Fallen or thrown
Artforum spread
Lounging
Unable to walk

She is in bed with a book. On fire with an idea. She puts the book away. Unconsciously posing. Smokes abstractedly in her negligée. There is a design in her head. A proposition. Her posture is open. But she feels solid. She keeps the notebook. She writes the beating. The sleeping. She rocks back and forth in rhythm with her thought. Changing position she reaches for her pen. Fountain. Windows on two sides. The bed adrift in light.

Gwen. Gwenevere. Strange history. Reduced to ashes. *Given*. Gone. She doesn't speak in relation to memory. But there is a redness to her from then. The Technicolor of her hair. Restored now. The past is a place in the machine. She chooses the horizontal possibility of the large scale. Pastes herself on it like a stamp. Abandons there whatever can be detached. Makes it generally available. (Armantrout again.) Makes it seem.

She saves the actual paper. Scans it for realism but finds the real derivative. She includes the hidden surface of her skin. Love before betrayal. Love before love. Innocence was boring. She continues to undo. Shakra by shakra. And now to be left with this pile of hands in this dark studio. Control room with no control. Digital. An implosion of customized information. The site is a function of the sheer physicality of her thinking. Tearing as tears or as terror.

The body
With itself

Parts
As hero

Big-chested

Identity
Well

She wears them
Tilts

Them toward the camera. She sets it up. Décolletage detached. The whole thing golden. She bares her teeth. Happy horror. Tits offered like plastic apples. Nipples complicit with the need for more of something. The artful curve of real prosthetics. Framed in a turbaned dream of colonial rape. Displayed in the catalogue next to the pig-faced girl. Later recatalogued in a deep storage list of climate-controlled things. Ready-to-hand should we require a real Cindy Sherman.

But what else is buried there? What is alive or intelligent? Or dead. We are not physical machines but an unstable series of symbiotic agreements. She was killed by a false agreement. Tricked. Something in her burst. Something simple like blood loose in her brain. A thinking. Like ink on the table. Transformed from solid to liquid. She took a trip to the sun. One too many. He went far away. "But not as far as Velma had gone." *The Big Sleep. The Long Goodbye.*

They had different reasons to kill. There is evil. It was his thought that exploded in her. His law. He ran her to the ground. His god on

his side. Destiny. Destination. Where does he go when he gets away with it? Eventually events include him in a fatal logic. Or he simply doesn't wake up. Anamorphosis.

Ontodicity
Ontogeny

Oncology
Treason

The sleep of

The monsters
Reason

Produced by
Alone

3.

"Future as relapse." Woke with him. But only I. Woke. Same scene. New crime. Sequence. Body perceived. Her hide. Dried. Hidden. Her life as a chase scene. The end of life. The disease kills itself. He uses her will against her. *Free*. Freely given. But not this time. She does everything. To resist. But it slips away. The last thing she sees. It's not in her. Her eyes when they find her. The *Given* has no eyes.

The deal (donnée). The donation. Everything again. The gift. The messenger dies. The information goes on. The cards on the table are mine. She says. The ways to read. As chance. Or fate. Strategy or story. Superstition. Are you feeling lucky? Sudden death. The words of a game. The phrases. Epithet meaning asshole. She has no particular reason to die.

The victim is pursued over time. The board is broad. Squares of color alternate. The *Given* is built on them. Linoleum. Backstage under the contraption. Queen, endgame, last move, emblem of a distant

mother. Homage to fucking. To the cunt. Homage to nature. Puppet. Mannequin. Silence itself. The grave. The *Given* riven. The virtual game opens onto an imaginary place. Dungeon. The room at the bottom of the lake.

Next

Game over

Name the same

Scheme

Baked clay

House of cards

Museum

On-line

Cul-de-sac

The only place you could go was back. There were no links. The links were hidden. Text and background were the same. There was delay. There *is* delay. And pictures. Eventually. Her appearance. And disappearance. The cards left at her grave. The chain mail. Her soldiers and bodyguards. Famous virginity. "These are my troops," she said. Looking into their mad eyes.

The female gaze. Escape from the museum. Headless shaved cunt looking for action in Philly. Shouldn't take long. But a fully fleshed being may expect to languish for awhile before discovering her fate. What seems episodic turns out to be linked by themes which have produced the anguish of her addiction. Her very existence depends on her ability at this point to read what to some would seem unreadable messages. Every move defines an ecology of fear. The brain asks what you want to see. What you want to see takes the form of a woman. A snake. A dog. Thinks of nothing. Forgets to breathe. Forgets to count. Doesn't count. Spicer: "Your life doesn't count" *Golem*. Ritual of something burning. The stars at solstice like orna-

ments. Forming a circle in the dunes. Sees herself from far away. The bonfire. Bombs fall on ancient cities. The news. All night. Sleeping is an adventure. Awake in her bunker. Calming not to be dead. She. You.

Dangerous passage
Enamorada

A formal
Departs

Fuse

Attached
Sheets on which writing

Climbing
Up out of

Bed. She takes off her house. Has taken. Her lair. Hung with weapons. With instruments. Skin to beat on. Wood. Metal. Leaves from the long dark of confinement. Into the air. Past the guillotine or window. Past the door. Unmoved. Years-long stretch of rest. Restless. Creatures converge on the walls. In the walls. The house up on its haunches. Rights itself. Empty of anything but action. Happens. Something like flight.

4.

She unclasps her hands but a copy of them is left on her table. The panes are shattered. A meeting is taking place of self with head. A glass thing. Or gelatinous. Thinking in bubbles. Is visible. Her fate in makeshift frames. Is stapled like canvas. Seen across a field. A circus. Takes itself down.

Doors and all. Tapestries suggest her progress. She is Judy again. She is Mary. The Diana thing never quite. And Lou. And Louise. Blue and gold. Thickly woven. Tough and old. She is astounded by the stories. Do these men and women in their intimate gymnastics represent her fate? Or possibility. Or the past. How did it go again? There was a man. Muffled by velvet curtains. Penned in by chain link doors.

Where in this he wonders
Can I hide?

Among so much
Thick stuff

Counting the doors
To the sides dividing

His access to her
Thought limited

By his transgressions. I need visuals. He called. They were in a car at the time. Commentary is what she provides. In the form of an amused silence. A sighing not about being weak or wounded. Or silent. It is the obliteration (I am him) of time. It is his special skill to address this destruction. To identify and take it back. Turn it into lines like latitude. Isobars of conviction. Convicted.

What does he see when she turns to him? First glimpse of the spider. Science fiction. Metal, glass, fabric, bones, wax. A room of thought. Fact. Long legs. Jointed frame. Hotel days. Let the corpse speak for itself. When I told myself he was alive inside of me, what could I have meant? And then I knew. The trees by the window shook with birds. But I would never get close to them. I saw them only in silhouette. Escaping like myself. The huge legs of the spider lingered. Also part of me.

The running was from room to room. Until now there was no horizon. Reading is a physical thing. For her the books were like beings. The words flesh. But she was no catholic. Her religion was her love for nothing. She was a failed religionist. She turned her attention. She put together the gun. She put the bullets. The bullet holes. Judy puts on her make-up. Louise her machines. They blur into a single fated action. Diana orders the car.

Carte blanche
The beach beyond

Steep
The mudflats

Curving inward

Several beaches
Fallen again

Later
Into silence

No escape. Wood and metal. There is no escape from the new room. Though the walls are permeable. It's no more like a grave than any other room. The stairs don't go anywhere. The corner is vulnerable. The mirrored tabletops reflect familiar faces. It's a family business. The doors face onto the sea. The eyes are as blue as doors. A standing invitation. Willfully. Uxorious. Wifely. The anti-wife. Poised above and between. Seeing down into the room. A statue of an invisible thing. Vanishing monumentality.

Creatures on the beach. A wood throne and raft. Sand in her hair. Dress stiff with salt. Steel plant. Scavenger Inc. An enormous ear listens to everything. She repeats certain phrases. Geese and pelicans. Things are organized. The sounds of geese. Louise is called Lou. Myrtle is all around her. Nettles. The shape of waves on land.

Sweat during the meeting. Clings. Always open. Sea green eyes. Blue room. Criminal charm. The main chance. The dust there. Working in close. She can't ignore the spiders or the castle. Manifestations of sleep. Scale models of the danger she is in. Clothes fastened with pins. Or on the floor. Disheveled in the moment. Like curtains. Hand over hand. Startled.

Collarbone
Of the male

Throat and
Shoulder

Pulling
Away or not

Hand to hand
Breath

Letting it

Go. A relief to be Louise. Flesh not her own. She resists. Letting it out. As Lou. An uncompromised and permanent resistance. Taut. Tight walls of her heart. An alcove. Closed on three sides. He covers her. Blocking her escape. Captured and appended. Apprehended. She saves herself. His is a broken text. Lines suspended in his persuasive voice. She wonders if he is there at all. She misses him. His certainty.

Finely and deeply Louise. Memory machine. Ancient temptress. Punished city. She closes her eyes around the shape of a man. The evidence of him is three-dimensional. The fourth dimension is tall and slender. A collector of experiences. Forced visual comparisons. A courtly interlocutor. His name far back in her throat.

Mary. Maker of domesticity. Manned space. Merry men. A married man. Makes of one. A ship or storm. An encapsulated or made thing. *Then there is the sight of her hands grasping and kneading the malleable clay until the rounded form elicits in the viewer a desire for contact and sets his thoughts in motion.* Robin and. Made. To set out into. The sea. The forest. Lou. Louise. Story superimposed on an existing. Picture. Weapons left. Trees like a corridor. A path through space. Rainy horizon. The black (again) of green.

Tempered
Her display of
Virtue

Unacknowledged
It hurt him
To know

Unlike desire
A model for
The untitled

Respite. Because there is no escape from what doesn't exist. Horizon also meaningless because surrounded by an extended sky. "Touched by what is not yet known" Interior rhyme. Incessant movement. Time's arrow. Her reply spoken in passing. The words fit into him. Overcome by conversational momentum. The mobile phone between them. The naturally unspoken accusations. Each time he begins. Speaking into it. Go ahead.

The prison exists in her mind. The past is damned. Thelma and Louise are a single entity. Their story is apocryphal. This story is post-apocalypse. The film is pieced together and seen. The entities dissolve into a still shot. We next see ourselves as them. We are at work.

The momentum also the intimacy of keeping track. Taking stock. A shared perspective. The sacrament of our time together. Our room. Our view. Our language. Unspoken. An exchange of eyes. Agreement. We respond to queries. The demands of the situation keep you going. Orders. Order. The unconscious order of secret speech. Mutterings of the universe speaking through the speaker to the world. Laid out like a tarot pack. Don't read the cards anymore. Always used them backwards. To predict the past. There is nothing you can do about the future once you know it. The difference between the world and the universe.

6.

In your head
Or vessel

The eucharist
Shell

Or two heads

Joined in
Speaking

Reading
Or kissing

The mouth is the alcove. There is "a remarkably changed relationship to desire ..." The difference is instrumental. But the point is to get the work done. I am at my post. We share the responsibility. Louise and Mary. Married. He has a woman's name. She was a secret apostle. A Magdalene. The available one. She finds the grave empty. The alcove. Opened mouth. A predictable narrative of exile and grief. A road story. With a time of pleasure intervening. The open grave of the spring.

Days widen out into a celebration. "Sometimes I wonder what you are looking for." Spicer. *The Selected Complete*. Your eyes are overdressed Mummies in a Mardi Gras parade. Round as banjos. Your disguise effective because transparent. Sneaking in from Greenwood every day. Too literary for a folk tale. Too fleshy for a poem. Your famous accuracy with the dart. Fragments only of the story recur. We barely know it's happening. We are the women at the tomb. Another eucharist. A case. A dart. The heart. Empty. What *are* you looking for?

Mary. The previously stated bliss. The monument to the Ascent. We miss the musty smell of the dead. His absence is palpable. As when the action hero is temporarily out of commission. Dependable accuracy. Secret knowledge of procedure. But we are trying to get somewhere. Mary and Louise. Escape routine. Repeated attempts like Steve McQueen. *The Great Escape*. What was going on with that? Did you think I wouldn't notice? My orientation existed before you even knew you had a gender. The question part came much later. And it's your deal.

Greenwood greenwood
No help

A drifting
Throne

Or casino

Sings while
The cards

Passing out
"Don't" he said

Splash the pot. It poured that spring. Severe splashing occurred. It rained in. And stacking. Everything that could did. Happen. In another older language because preceding the current invasion. Of sheriff's men. Representatives of the new order. But I went with them. And had both. Languages. He was something like a sergeant. Sergeant Mary. His music drowned out the rain.

His is the name of uncertainty. She knows right away. But where exactly is he in this? She pulls all the way out. How dare he use that tone with me. Who died and made you Queen of the Forest? Sputtering now. Together in the car of silence. A desert unrolling before them. Who is the faithless one in this story?

"Transfigured by His brightness." Women at the tomb. "No better than they should be." One of them is the other Mary. I have to speak to the boss. He says. She says. That would be me. A personal Golgotha and we are left with the mess. Earthquakes. Sky like Giorgioni. Which sacrament is being evoked in this storm? And why can't we leave? "That music," she confessed, "makes me terribly unhappy." Finally using every last drop of their strength to make it happen. They go.

"Grenewode"

Disguise in
Scarlet

Span of days

Lincoln green or
Coated

Robin and
Marian
would

7.

constitute a natural unity. But Robin dies. The forest is exposed. Marian is attacked. Detached. Also dies. Flagrantly into the scene. Leaving their son to his outlaw ways. To occupy the territory. Thief and watch. Scat to eschatological. Ellroy and Duchamp have one thing in common. They are the son. They are interested in the crime. They make women subsume their identities and are in love with them like brides. Each one. But the bride survives. She is not Nature.

She is not *Given*. She is a cop with her own problem. An assassin.
She faces down the long corridor of the tomb.

"If you want something killed you should be willing to see it dead."
A chronic longing for displacement. Lyric problem. Mary doesn't
have it. Louise is a builder. She leaves the tomb after its construction.
She leaves a series of them. "Louise and her lover slowly entwine."
But Dylan went electric in the last century. Louise doesn't stay laid.
Marian is the one left in this version. Her green Robin bleeds redly
out from a black arrow. Pieta. She makes a scaffolding to help him
die. Not an object but an action.

She descends (not nude). She ascends. Not the remembered dead but
the son of someone's mother. Nothing is *Given*. Least of all the
emptiness of the cup she bleeds into. This is also sought. The results
are mixed. Missing. The grave is not a resting place. Action remains
as the next thing. Keeping it all in the air. Potential for movement.
Superloaded context spills into the present scene. It is a job. A métier.

Priest and	Plumber
Point-of-view	Lawyer
Monk	Sister
Musician or	Perspective
Detective	

A figure moves through. The territory surrounding the Philadelphia
Museum of Art. River scene. Freeway bridge. Gazebo. A long walk. A
slow approach. Can't tell if the subject is male or female. The narra-
tive is the blood of the thing. When there is more blood there is more
time. The absence of blood was the point. It was real and not real. A
mystery. A transfiguration. She believed in it like a child.

It was a stall. A booth. A flimsy. Including curtains, a table, a plat-
form. A babe. A crèche or manger. The X in Xmas. The bloody

diagram. The fleshpot. Shack or fuck-pad. So-called. Makeshift. She carries an umbrella. She walks to the museum in the rain. Seeing it from the freeway or river. From the plane. Belted raincoat. Wet hair. Alone in the room. Damp. Duchamp.

The problem of beauty as a letting go of life. The lover as contraption or skeleton. She fiddles with the plumbing. She smokes the way children do. Accused of being spoiled, fetid. She needs to be curtailed. He feels. The process is buried in the story.

Lingerie
Her actress past
Shed
Skin marked
Like a snake
Fantasy sex
Beast and woman
Carpe diem
Caveat emptor

9.

She replies in a voice so deep and stilted, so utterly masculine as to beg the fact of her role in this mystery. He wants us to be girls together. "Misfortune. Mouth. Museum. Slaughterhouse." (Bataille) "Song replaces action." But only for awhile. The hotel room is cold. Leaves press against the glass. The sharp flora of urban desert. Arriving anywhere. In time.

The lobby is a sexual place. The musician plays well but not to excess. He asserts the authority of this perfection. It is his only fault.

"The continuous roar of sex." Stopping only when he plays. The air green to white outside. Dark pink in the restaurant. The literal air. The continental shelf outside the door. The courtyard. A small place filled with thought. Dispersed by the opening. Like smoke. Of the door.

Her way of exposing the present like rust to the same air. The natural reaction. In his head. Her mind like an aquarium. The accompaniment. He hums inside. Staring at another aquarium. Quiet violence.

She takes to the air. The shuttle between. Barely taking off before landing. The plane is like a rehearsal. A dress. The approach is much longer than the flight. Travel time. Reading the death of a poet. Not one's own. *The Text of Shelley's Death*. Adrenaline of landing. (Alan Halsey) Of taking off.

He makes her
Beginning

Sing
The crime

Forget

Regret
Widow

The bride's
Is mine

Or is me. What is left? He asks. Or not me. He says. Strangely loving but it is his own death. He writes it and causes it. She is the absence of the absence of death. Flesh itself. Names assembled from memory. Something is wrong but the picture is clear. And finally nothing is wrong. The vaginal line is askew. Is what opens out. The source. Of information. A perfect wrong note. He is only a messenger. There is a murder in that man but it's not this one. There is no equivalence. Nothing to make clear. Or to go on.

All he can do is stop her. She finds that he is nature and she is enclosed by him. She is consciousness. He is a wall of muscle. Like a

heart. She is pressed. Parted. Against her desire like fear. She believes she can make him go. An act of will. By wanting him gone. But finds she cannot. Want him. Gone. Does she not want him? Or will he not go? Is he there at all?

He doesn't go. He is a sexual predator but friendly. Even. Passive. "It's just another part of the conversation." She reasons. "No it's not." He returns. He moves closer (though they are already entwined) to show her what he means. The suspense in their thinking remains unresolved. Only for her (dead now). "I'm travelling to forget you." He claims. "I know." She writes. "It's not working." He goes on. "Ditto." She rejoins, suddenly tired. Sleepy almost to death. It has turned into a phone thing. "Tyger tyger" She dreams. The name of his oldest child is in her mind before he knows it himself. Los. Loss.

Jubilate		A jubilant
Year of the		Present
	Tiger	
Or lion		Who escapes
Himself		But only just

1.

She is like wax. Lit from the inside. Animated again. Laughingly she says the word they are both thinking. He looks at her and sees it. She darkens as she speaks. Her head bent slightly and looks up. (He escapes her dark vision of him.) The two of them say something together. Turning it over in their mouths and minds. She is melted a little around the edges. The end of the day also lit. The horizon violet. Clouds in waxy froth. "The badness in me." She calls it.

Anemone
Apricot
Scant
Distraught
Panting
Cheek
Penis
With laughter
Both

Conspiracy of thought and being. Driving together. Rain on the window. Thoughtfully. *Penis*. Absence. Incompletely imagined. Shared breath and completely with some satisfaction. Arriving. At the same word. Eating. Later. Something sweet. An ordinary conversation on a bright day. That's not how it was.

Mary. He began. *The Story of Mary MacLane*. Sharing a death with Keats. Disease. Not like Shelley (as in Halsey) oceanic. But clearly the body. Later on a beach of Lake Michigan she walks with a woman. She describes a man. A devil or dictator. She has what she imagines. She becomes what she sees. "Nothing." Mary would say with bitterness as the child she was at the time. And finally "Nothing" with the satisfaction of her life lived as a genius.

"Be carefree, be light-hearted, be wicked - above all, forget. The deeds are what you will; the time is now, the aftermath is nothing; the day of reckoning never." A huge lake in another time. A woman remembers her husbands. She leaves her emeralds. But no one gets them. There is no direct line.

From her hand
To her heart
In paper painted
Things dissolve in space
Resolution

A picture of the paint
Space filled economically
Also gone
Truth or decadence
Doesn't matter

Equal itself? Apparently not. In some exasperation when quizzed. An identity problem solved mechanically. "Turn your back and walk away." She advised. It was her usual advice. It was the usual time of day set aside for these considerations. The window was a picture of joy. A plate of her sense of light in a favored book. A well-worn sight. Like the designs of the emerald woman. She was a designer. Nothing came from her. But what was in the bones.

"This is not a diary. It is a Portrayal" (Mary) "[I]nner life shown in its nakedness." She was sick but wanted to go on. She questions her own merriment. Something comes from her head into her stomach and limbs. Spreads. She stands like a tree in the heat. Encephalogram. Hotter inside than out. A swarm of insects. Black-birds. The room she is in. Crawling with natural things.

She pictures a room with a cliff in it. Or a flood. A waterfall. Or is that a book? Overexposed. Flooded with light. (The original room is dark.) But here is another dawn of work. Opened on her lap. The smile that isn't smiling.

2.

Incident
Vestment
Investment

Spring
The action
Or fountain

Event
Election
Of electrons

Not equivalence. The tape isn't a diary. There are no days in it. No days available. It is more in the way of a statement. Or horizon. A manifesto. To state. A mechanism to create delay. The end of the street. Of light. The outline. The end of a friend. Not death but results. Exaltation. Ex. Explosion. Thought leaves the page. There are no explosions in daily life. Except when there are.

The refinery explodes over and over. Far away and unrelated except in time. Art direction. Special effects but thank god no story. An adventure. Greenish dawn. Bombs dropping. Bodies found on the hillside. Unrelated except to each other. Mother and daughter. Mother and son. Beyond recognition. Another death. Another dawn.

"Death by beauty. Death by sensitivity. Death by awareness. Death by experience. Death by landscape." *Reasons for Knocking at an Empty House*. (Bill Viola). Death by bombs. The field of blackbirds. Downed jet. Stealth. Exposition. An expert reads the explosion. The graphic organ. The fields and sheets of red.

Fiction as landscape
Meant as daylight
Meaning the procedure

As state
Time change
Video instrumentation

Yields the target
City or organism
With surgical

To be removed. One abstraction shows through the other. Precision. Superimposition. Nonobjective response. Jagged edge of morphine paranoia. Overextended stay. Someplace. Someone has to go. Away. Right now. Someone can't wait. Bleeding together of possible figures in motion. It's all pictures. Record of movement. Seen close up and from above.

Brightly dyed. The optical experience of a phenomenon but not the one we think we see.

The seen, in a reversal, becomes the sea. But someone sees through it. In the concept the horizon was even. The plane parallel with the world.

From which the shore
Subtracted
The walking wounded
Or out cold
Puddling, dripping, raining down
Blood and rain
Names for the present
Emergency or just plain
Wounded

3.

And taped. Replayed. Shallow breathing. Shallow grave. Shallow life but lived deeply like a spine. The cups of her eyes. The fine lines. "A new opportunity will come your way." An artificial landscape. A real bride. A clump of trees or blurred beach. A desert garden. A figure so faded as to be almost invisible. Thinks there. A precise impression.

Not the romantic landscape but the mechanics of information retrieval.

Codes pour through the gap in our defense. The stratosphere is a machine. We have known for a long time about these areas of low or ambiguous information. A secretion. The organ in the body responsible for belief ceases to function. The gap in recognition is shored up. A "sea change" takes place but inside. Color bars are the last thing you see.

Stasis. Organization. Symmetry. Only just not this time. Leaving the landscape of that crooked smile. Leaving the scar. Being now plainly outside. Diablo snowy in spring. Just south of my mind. A painted haze of blue. Actually Vesuvius in the present rendition. Completely rendered and detached from the last version of itself. "Real."

Green of leaves
Livid meadow

The royal road
The map

Fleshed out

Swarm
To the field

Descends
Left

By refugees. Another medium and too much time later. Couldn't find a reason for the war. Random is the new word. Words can't keep up. Things go wrong. Someone knows it. Walking back into the debris she says something about her life. The explanation is the problem. Being in disguise.

Raw cold of a wet spring. Change of voice in the Halsey Shelley. Not Halsey or Shelley. "[B]ut to me this is all dreary reality." An unidentified woman. Pleasure herself. Or grief. Displacement. Landscape. "I felt like painting something beautiful." He claimed. Stuff scattered there. Everything lost.

A camp of displaced people is transformed into a park. We find ourselves there. There is paint on it. Against the sky. Construction. A field opens out. The waterfall is on the same level. There is a sea. Names are among the things lost. Like falling in love but not with a person. The wind in the house.

Today's date
Against the skin

Rough
Linen

Against the sea
Property

Life or
Loss of

Disinterred

Disinterested. Possessed. Having followed to the letter. A root system like ink. Living diagram. Instructions. Reconstruction. After the fact nothing exists. Simultaneously. A painting of a woman with birds. At rest. Nakedness. But casual. A remembered ache. Rushing by. Alert to it. Off and on. Waking again. To thirst.

A rehearsal in time
for the dead ones as landscape (handbook)
her book can't know how to
tell you then turns and does
a gloss on the Castle of O? blueprint for Vertigo?
pingpong of sources in vast cinematic bowl
bared body unspeakable
but never at a loss for words
the sheerest proposal there is
trying to come through these pages
Clark Coolidge

In this *Nude Memoir*—a roving gallery of nude torsos, nude cadaver toes, nude female lover and dead male lover, nude bride undoing God's and Duchamp's imposed abstract nakedness—a woman is born. She is born of words formed when "a sex (is) offered to a face." She is terrible and she is wonderful. She is film noir married to Baroque. She is sentences, magnificence, lust. She is an edifice of loss materializing and de-materializing on a line between poetry and prose that Laura Moriarty casts with the hand of a magician. I, too, dream of stripping bare this figure that the poet has so gorgeously decked out, to get to the heart of her namelessness. *Nude Memoir* is an entrancing work of love, mourning, and resistance by a major poet.

Gail Scott

"She is in trouble with time." Is the woman perfected? Can she be saved? Trick questions in the "double present." There is a body, and "An artist, a criminal, a killer, whose work positions, immobilizes, dismembers, kills, encrypts her. "The nude is given" – in and into an enclosure where she figures the ground that founds and fractures figuration and enclosure. The reflection-work of the woman artist or poet further complicates this geometry: "In the museum you look back at yourself." The nude gets up and goes for a walk, sits down to write her life. Moriarty follows, directs, acts the work of this body as staggered, stepwise motion building bodies of work, including her own. "The actor is left," a potential for enjambed coincidence that bodies forth coherence on a large scale, while struggling at every join in that construction against the crypt that structure threatens to become. Women, workers, slaves, aliens and monsters, husbands who do not survive, children who are "not born men" – this might include us all, but its very transparency warns against taking that hope as given: "Someone sees through it." Someone dies. Someone survives vertigo by "gaps in recognition," an argument with fate "shored up" by the very irremissibility of time. Someone is both. A double agent. Never quite at once.

Nude Memoir is the best crime story you will read this year. It is also essentially a work of profound and unfinished mourning, of mourning and of not finishing. "One way to remain unfinished is to stop. The other is to go on."

Taylor Brady