

*“Time that sees all has found  
you out against your will.”*

—*Sophocles*

I never knew such elation as the hours leading up to my suicide.

*Soloiste! Soloiste!*

They point at me and scream, *Soloiste! Soloiste!*

I scream back at them, *Agoniste! Agoniste!*

There are no flowers here. There is the dandelion, of course, but no daisy. *How does your garden grow*, I asked the fox, as she lay on her back with her mouth open pretending to be dead. *Just as the Devil lies in wait to trap the unwary, I never run straight ahead*, she said, *but always follow a tortuous path.*

My soul is among lions. I went through fire and through water.

Hath the rain a father?

The thing about the Mermaid Parade is everybody looks so bad and yet if you ask them they'll tell you they feel fabulous.

In 1987 she wrote, all the pilots drive Lincolns and have pink skin. The stewardesses fuck like bunnies. After Cixous, the envelope is sealed with a kiss, is this poetic justice? Write for rules and detailed information.

She wrote, *Last night we made love like two retards*. And then the doodle of the Wonder Wheel.

I was madly in love with her for two years, and when we broke up, amicably, she gave me back everything I had left at her apartment, everything except my volume of Neruda's love poems.

The audacity of pigeons. She said the pigeons have Brooklyn accents. She said I saw you in the subway. I asked you is this train going to Brooklyn. You had the worst case of hat hair.

She was from Germany. She wanted to see where Lennon was killed.

If you want to stretch a sweater, sleep in it.

She fell asleep at the writing table. I took her in to bed. I returned to her writing and read, where it began in a letter to Timon, *Deliver yourself from revenge, that is your bridge to the highest hope*. I have met him and the impression is not good. How does one say, sour breath and rotten teeth. Or, what is the opposite of charming. We read, *Psalms 38*, and there is no soundness in my flesh, for my loins are filled with a loathsome disease. We're all looking forward to be meeting again in that great golden cornflake in the sky.

She fell asleep at the writing table. I took her in to bed. I returned to her writing and read, where it began in a letter to Juliette, *There is a night I will never forget, and it is what I will*

*remember you by always. It was not meant to be a sleepover. It was snowing, and it was snowing forever. You walked me to the door and I was about to leave but when I saw the snow I was taken by the most superstitious fear. You did not plan for me to stay over. And in the morning your mother (and her boyfriend—I remember him, he was a student) made waffles.*

The next morning I read in Jung that the basket is a symbol for the maternal body (for the womb—a *basket of fruit may symbolize fertility*). A basket may also hide a secret.

In my dream I held a goldfinch and heard the voices of Dismas and Gestas.

I came beside her but before I could tell her, the wind blew her dress against her body. When I awoke she was kneeling beside me.

*Jacques-Marie*, I uttered.

The wind was picking up.

Do you know the hissing swans? Do you know the scene where he drinks water from her hands, and then he looks up?

*You are so totally without guile*, she said. *And that is why you are so totally clueless.*

Poetics. Lather. Rinse. Repeat.

The monster rises from the pit. The lovers turn. She screams.  
He fires. Roll credits.

We practiced pulling up and jumping out and hurrying into the  
buildings.

The poet's mechanicity. Fabulosity.

Sex and Poetry.

This episode: "Sex and the Collage Poem."

Or you could say poetry is like sex, in which case you want to  
ask yourself: If this poem is sex, do I want to have sex with it?  
Well, if it's a collage poem you don't know where that poetry's  
been, and the poet who wrote it really doesn't want you to  
know; or maybe that poet will tell you, but then that's like that  
poem saying, *Yes, I want you to have sex with me, but just not  
with me exactly, I mean with these other poems.*

Forks and Knives

An anthology of poetry by women who have had episiotomies.

Introduction.

Part One: The Midline.

Part Two: The Mediolateral.

Part Three: Forks and Knives.

There's a whole belt of avant-gardist territory where to criticize them is like telling the Fat Lady at the freak show to lose weight.

This movie was shot on cell-phone video. It's the footage of the head of Jacques Derrida on the body of the Bigfoot.

The poet's mechanicity. The poet as ironist. Where he fails is in that his irony fails to rise above the rank of sarcasm.

In a previous life I was a chorus girl and I died very young and with a broken heart.

This is the part of the asylum where they let you go 'round naked. Robert Lowell is here. And so is Anne Sexton.

Manners. Recoverable at will.

The white rat is day. The black rat is night. Gnawing rats are the passage of time.

She did the whole first chapter of *The Whale* for me. We're talking magnitudes and properties, she said. *Seems some letters are more equal than others.*

This scene takes place on the beach.

The sky looks painted on.

We met a man named Tom who said, clearly, Tom, my friends are not your friends, and what is more my friends will have nothing to do with your friends. And nor will I. We met a man named Aloysius and that was enough. Later that morning we met Dolly on her way to a tea party. May we come along? Corky, tell us about your open invitation to stay at Davy's any time. I have an open invitation to stay at Davy's any time. Thank you, Corky. Corky, tell us what you told the doctor when he told you about your special chromosome. Doctor this is my worst fear realized. Thank you, Corky. Did you say something, Corky? The word you're looking for is *holophrastic*. Thank you, Corky.

That afternoon, at the gallery, she was nudging me. Did you get that? She pronounced her last name *Roo-nay*. Not *Roo-knee*. *Roo-nay*.

And if you were a superhero your special super power would be . . . *the dirty look?*

In the morning we recalled the exhilaration we felt when we were running away.

On the receipt she wrote, *ministre de corbeille à fruits*. I said, *That is an act of poetry*, and she said, *And for me*. This is a photograph. A vélo-taxi on a Paris boulevard. On the back of it was written, *ministre de corbeille à fruits*. She said the soul is a stranger on earth.

In the envelope, this letter, where it read, You are too well-balanced to be a poet. Your poetry insults the poetess in me.

And in the margin, *Quite so*. This photograph. Someone I did not recognize. I told her, *replace your apostrophes with commas and use as few contractions as possible*. That night, as she slept, I rewrote her poetry, replacing her apostrophes with commas and using as few contractions as possible. In the morning I took her to see where the comedians lived. *The pool is empty now, but see there? See that crack in the foundation?*

In the morning I took her to the House of Hearts, to the place of the Destroyer of Hearts. The pool is empty now, but see there? See that crack in the foundation? That is where Medius fell. This is Procopius, Greek historian and proto culture critic who made scandal his specialty and survived into his seventies. The man with his pants at his ankles is The Fool.

In the morning I took her to meet the Climack sisters. They are something out of the Brontës, she said. The cure depends on your having what you want and doing what you want. *Conjugation, my love.*

I usually get what I want, but not always. The only way I can describe it is she seems to be mistaking me for somebody else.

Finally, we see him back at the Greenmarket at Union Square, where we first met him at the beginning of the film. He is handling the peaches. He holds one up for closer inspection. Suddenly his expression changes. He centers his attention on the deep redness of its skin and on its curvature which he now likens to the curve of Marie-France's behind. The red peaches have taken on a new meaning for him.