

*better either way*

n. casale

## fist(ula)

a new coda emerges where i thought i was spent. an active  
mind but before i sit down to type. cause now performativity  
is inhibiting creativity. can i even create? can i beget beauty?  
or is it all just navel-gazing, autoerotic, narcissistic?  
*Gender Trouble.*

died on a friday night; it's just fake poetry and emotive language. elicit a response with a show of authenticity. emo music is meaningful magical. i'm just jealous and capricious.

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everything looked like i licked a battery– bitter but kinda good. we zig-zagged across the beach and gawked at the humans.

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how could you be such a failure? how could you lose love?  
you had it. i'm a fuck-person. the first step is acknowledging  
you have a problem...

i held two *raisins* in my palm, determined to eat them mindfully. a ghost trail of memory and defiance leaked or emanated from them. an infinite history of causes and conditions and causes that co-conspired to co-create and co-align in my calm palm.

## I AM NOXIOUS

i hold them in my mouth after noting their aroma. grape juice and memory manifest. why haven't i had grape juice since i was a kid? shit's good. my Kinder-Küche is permeated with precious memories... remembrance of things gastronomical. *ugh, i haven't even read Proust.*

i held your face in my palms... soft body. once, i asserted you were the most comfortable *fucking* person i had ever known, with *double-entendre* and *roubles-pour-prendre*... when they let me, i hold my kitty's face in my palms. precious suffering being. why do you think cats only live around 15 years? anthropomorphize it any way you like.

Just a few days before his death in 1997, Burroughs recorded his final journal entry, which expressed his profound love for his dear cats:

There is no final enough of wisdom, experience—any fucking thing. No Holy Grail, No Final Satori, no final solution. Just conflict. Only thing can resolve conflict is love, like I felt for Fletch and Ruski, Spooner and Calico. Pure love. What I feel for my cats present and past. Love? What is it? Most natural painkiller what there is. LOVE.

– *Artists and Their Cats* by Alison Nastasi

with complete loss of generality, i feel it's my path to love those who passed before me anew, at once, ensemble. do i renew my vows? memory, the habit of loving, it all gets in the way of the actual *practice* of love. am i saying the right thing? expressing my intentions in the way that will help others the most?

people are giving trump shit for having those notes listening to the parkland survivors. sure, he deserves it, and a vantablack fissure of shade descending to Hades' ass-crack. but really, honestly, i'm doing the same thing on some level. non-violent communication, a thorough examination of language and phrasing; with the intention of improving my communion with others in such a way that they may feel free, loved, and open. but the invective insinuates that his cues reflect a lack of empathy and preparedness, which is likely the case for trump. it's *very like me* to say that *i'm very interested* in the dissonance/assonance between surface significance and perhaps unrelated undercurrents. what *is* dysphoria, anyway?

yes, i'm a fuck-person. back breaking brick depress you quick-hairy arrogant ape, aspiring, mangled.

take a walk, pretend i'm Art Garfunkel; just another day. the archetype of the walk starts for me when my sister was

still using a pram. i liked to walk with a small wax dixie cup of goldfish or animal crackers or pretzels or something. i remember seeing a cloud of bats one dusky moment.

scientists don't know the exact age of earth, or the universe. the best we've got is that the earth is

4, 540, 000, 000  $\pm$  50, 000, 000 years old

at this point, i expect myself to decry the defamation humanity has hurled upon the world. but Larry Ward (Jung) said some things i know to be true of my *whole* outlook, not just the wounded aspects. whole, whole, i'm whole, the Tao is whole, everything and everyone is whole and extant.

wholeness is not enough. immobilized by my emotions, locked eyes motionless, tension growing i'm all undone, dunedin... dialectic dick; what is sexual dimorphism? i'm trashed.

what is the origination of human action? i'm just feeling so bad about myself. chasing salvation in a wide sense stationary sense. irritable, exasperated.

i'm sorry, it would be disingenuous to develop a plot; i am temporally trapped in a body-mind. Laurie Anderson.

it's overwhelming the extent to which i am politicised, co-identified, and determined under the binary; such that it demands i construct an identity that is only socially coherent under its frame. all else, necessarily being outside, is alien, admonishable, adductive, nonconstructive.

i feel rude and lost. i pass through racist, hetero/homonormative, stereotypical, classist, masculine phobic/erotic vector spaces as exercises in delirium and degeneration, death threats dying to me. they're extremely disturbing experiments in defeat... my thumb just bleeds and bleeds.

ok, it's an ideological narrative that necessitates the extrication from a hegemonic culture. to find a new way. it's also

just loss and pain, loss of a life lived in love, pain of a person with a penis.

here we have a 2-layer network with directed nodes. assume we know the statistics and topology of the network. let one node fail at time  $t$ . *he* causes the nodes *he's* connected to to fail by time  $t + 1$ . all these guys have failed.

i'm carrying immense intensity, but every time i show it i feel guilty, self-aggrandized, manipulative. who the fuck has an important idea about this life?

i touch the depths of my love for you (as a supra-temporal representation) and barely emerge, laden as i am with the fear: i'll not find something so special again. consider me exempt. relegated to a life of cheap kicks, waiting to die. masturbating in many ways.

fuck this is bad.

prolix pretense praxis paint practice prove depravity praise.  
fucking somebody who don't love me.  
juridical blend of whole identities. girl stuff boy stuff.  
"Power User" Olga Bell. unfortunately.  
me and that which is visually sparse.  
"baby, baby, baby kitty."

ok, how about an Acker thing? with my death all injustice ends- it's a forgone conclusion. we changed the state, together. we just showed up, ceded our time, and the regents acquiesced. we held a pageant to celebrate my end, the end of all injustice.

preparation for the pageant began in 2001, when someone first pushed the concept of an afterlife upon me. "we will meet again, in heaven." Until then, you must pray, *i.e.* plan for the pageant.

by the time i was 24, i was ready. my education complete, i was welcomed into an ambiguous world of loss. freedom. nothing left to expect, no more veils to unveil. relegated to a life of cheap kicks, i thought, "maybe i can help others. maybe i can make art out of this."

depravity as a designation dissipates. maybe it's an equality complex, but it's better than ideology. in any case, we have a pageant to prepare for! we can't get caught up in right and wrong. every element of this existence is essential to excellency. i take that back. in fact, there's nothing to be done for the pageant. the practice is the apotheosis. what does all this discipline lead to? yes, my body is docile, but my politics are not.

at the pageant everyone's in costume. people signified along gendered lines; *along* these lines of perception. we find ourselves in this space and for some reason feel entitled to identify and refer to one another's body. "yes, over there, do you see that femme person?" does a mosquito imagine their ingress into a person's *pierna* as a consent? courted, does the skin part, not in umbrage but love? do i even own my own embodiment? at the cellular level, i harbor more bacteria than cells that are 'of me'. i am consistently violated, encroached upon by my fellow folk. they think they know me, they identify me and speak at me. willful ignorance.

a decade is short. ten years since i first heard punk, folk, jazz. i still love jazz, at least. what's even left after Coltrane and Hartman played together? in any case, the pageant has a constrained vector space to operate in: Charli XCX's music. her fans, diffuse, gerrymandered worse than district 12. self-assembled self-declared poptimists. pot-heads' hands high in the air.

after the pageant i'm dead, but there's jazz to hear so the audience sticks around. dark sheets descend o'er plexiglass panes. the band's dressed like Ghost B.C. but they sound like Getz, Blakey, and Coltrane. those from the Yardbird Temple scoff at this sacrilege. *everybody* claps after each solo, a single measure of mutually assured construction. i love jazz!

at first it was simple words with this stupid idea that if i write incomplete sentences i could break/jam English. not to mention the English band: The Jam. point is that i understand: the only thing keeping me alive is art, expression, the alchemy of every emotion into garish gold. i can't give myself anymore. i can't help others. i can't be a therapist. i can't be femme. i can't be a good jazz drummer. fuck! it's ok. the pageant's over... aren't i dead? isn't all life's injustice complete? all the suffering, over?

my voice, discrete, my body, depleted. skinnier! hunger is a monstrosity. i stop thinking (broken English) and get shaky. there is a hurt without pain. i'm actively attempting to destroy my musculature. lithe i barely live. this tenuous tendril, tense and tearing between a *hoch* hope derived from art and a wispy will to live. yet these many millions of millions of members of me (much more meagre than my attendant microbiota) demand in no small terms that i maintain their livelihood.

i carry this scary shell- under-eyes dark and body inflamed (bumps bumps bumps.) i use a machine to remove many hairs from me at once. my face, my legs, the skin doth protest too much. ("without my legs or my hair", "shaving in all the right places", "nobody fucks me like me", "i fucked all the men i wanted to be".) lady lay, lay me lady, lay, i'll lick thee. feminine ideation? this body becomes useful in phases. unfazed, i'll face frequent fears, fearsome things appear: hordes of folks settling for less, settling for 'secure', 'safe' lives of 'sane' malaise and low prices.



## 2

# bathysphere

anxiety, sleepiness, anger. joy, kindness, love. everything identified breaks this human system. maybe i'll dream of a coin. on the obverse, the moment before birth. out of birthlessness. on the reverse, the moment after death. out of deathlessness. some thesis— spending a whole life merely undoing this human form, systematically. revoke socialization, vanquish whatever 'demon', individuate, self-determine, heal and die.

Acker died. she was searching for a non-western cancer cure. something like, "you have to find the source of this disease. only then will it heal." i don't know, but i like to think that she was already so far along in this task that she recognized she had completed her work with this form. the final mend, on the mend. death, an enemy? the most loving parent?

obsessed with mutuality. i ask you out, you ask me out. i kiss you, you kiss me. i lick you. (and aren't i a good lick?

lick lick lick lick lick lick lick lick lick lick lick  
crotch crotch crotch crotch crotch crotch crotch crotch

it's too late to be erotic; i'm too far gone. i wanted dearly to write something beatific about giving head. my vigor is confined to the act itself. prose is mediated, necessarily, and a poor substitute. in search of lost crotch.) you lick me. i fuck you, you fuck me. equality my delusional dream; to deny the clinamen of mere personality, let alone socialization, presentation, material possession, weakness, egoism... all of these wily weights that hurt our every chance at true love.

in behavioral ecology, cheaters are those who stand to benefit by taking more from others in mutualistic relationships. for instance, fish such as the bluestreak cleaner wrasse will sometimes choose to feed on their clients' mucus, scales, flesh. this instead of- or in addition to the ectoparasites that the clients can't remove themselves. the hosts police/deter this behavior by chasing, speeding off, or other forms of retribution. it's intriguing, the way cheating seems to challenge mutuality while simultaneously reifying it. the rascally wrasse may seem to destabilize the symbiosis, but some biologists posit (poset) that cheating in copioetic relationships provides the genetic variability required to continually select for cooperation. if no wrasse was a rascal, nature's restless selection would have no referent.

yes, English can be broken, life can be broken. this system collapses under pressure. it's totally possible to stay up too late and make myself write something. why such extremism? suffering-complex? i know i'm gonna feel bad tomorrow. why this involuntary energy, to explore this space? i think it's pretty damn-near fucking exceedingly obvious that i'm dealing with some shit. it's too easy to say this is just about recognition.

i'm just this soupy pisces person with decaying, dying depths and a disaffected, dainty demeanor. internalized gender-non-conforming-phobia, heteronormative violence, self-policing, other-policing. and even now, as ever, poisons perennially appulated, the gaslight glows: is that all?

fucking yes. yes, yes my weeping core wails. this is my fucking life. this isn't a fucking game. i'm fucking dying. this isn't about a healthy fucking balance of pain and pleasure, body and mind, information and emotion, or *any* fucking safe dichotomy. die, die to me; damn every dichotomy. don't divide; coincide, cleave!

