

Dodie Bellamy / from THE LETTERS OF MINA HARKER

So here I am, working on my ending, going crazy with endings *bye-bye book, so-long lover* Dodie's handing me one eviction notice after another, my lease on her body she says is OVER *this letter is "the land's end: the last fingers, knuckled and rheumatic, / Cramped on nothing."* I try not to be pessimistic as Plath but, Sing ... we were at my kitchen table eating ratatouille when suddenly I was on my knees, tugging down his pants licking the crack of his ass—at The End of that crack is a dank smelly hole, that's where Dodie plans to stick me—can you see why this letter's taken months to wrestle to a finish, I'm like the anarchist in *Five Came Back*, being flown home at gunpoint to my execution—when the plane crashes in the rain forest near a tribe of natives who decapitate their victims, fill the heads with hot sand and shrink them, I'm happy. *A few of his cells stick to my tongue like specimens, instead of sending them to a pathologist, I swallow.* I've been fucking my brains out *my brains are all fucked out* you know how it goes, Sing, your writing goes down the tubes like an unfertilized ovum *blood on his cock blood on my thighs blood on the towel beneath my bun* I am a feminist artist I buy lipstick wholesale in five-gallon buckets and cast it into urinals the color of menses, urinals that glisten and gape. You are my opposite number—wired on espresso vibrating in a chair *an artist and a feminist* sticking close to those cigarettes *living alone is scarier than a movie*—the last time I lived by myself was in 1977—the street hustlers next door boomed the lightwell with Donna Summer, they never seemed to sleep these gaunt boys hanging out the front windows luscious as orchids, "Hi, hon, wanna party?" Whenever I switched off the kitchen light cockroaches rustled the garbage, trapped, frantic, huge, like the anxiety attack clawing my chest *Love to Love You Baby* I'd come home feed the cat and dart out the door. The rare times I did sleep there, or sit down, the cat glued herself to my lap and wailed—so I flew her to Nebraska for a couple of months to cool out with Nature. Her name was Molly, a beautiful calico. The night of my wedding she wouldn't eat, then after fifteen years died of kidney failure *nice timing, Molly*

unmoving in her tiny cage she felt hollow against my palm, not a purr, a plastic tube sticking out of a shaved spot on her front paw, fluid dripped through it chlorophyll-green as if the vet were transfusing her backwards from animal to plant *then the tube turns umber mineral then empty air.*

The coast so grainy, fog washing out hills, highway, ocean to a nearly monochromatic gray—at Pigeon Point a glowing yellow-white cone bursts from the sky and streams into the gray water. Quel sunset! Rendezvous pulls off the highway along a gravel road. Approaching a lighthouse I say, “His cock was a lighthouse and my cunt was a circle of farmhouses around its mighty base.” Succulents cover the ground, their sappy leaves dense spikes of green cheese. We park the VW and walk along a dirt path, the lighthouse like all lighthouses is grand and ancient, white paint cracking and peeling off in large dull flakes. The buildings turn out to be a youth hostel—arms wrapped around each others’ waists we continue past a half dozen identical square huts, more like barracks than cottages, with a motley collection of drapes hanging in square metal-framed windows, bunk beds behind them. A couple of young Germans enter one carrying 6-packs of malt liquor. Out back we find a battered wooden pier, walk to the end of it, wind blowing hair in face, damp chill stinging cheeks, seeping through my cotton jacket, I cling tighter to Rendezvous, his body more a wind block than a source of warmth—hip to hip we lean over the salt-stripped guard railing *wood as gray as the weather* and absorb the churning ocean, the Ascension sunset, flock of pelicans in the foreground, tug boat on either side, a massive wave breaks against the pier, shooting up a wall of lacy white—everywhere I look seals leap in unison, three or four at a time, extravagantly, ecstatically. Rendezvous points, “That’s a big fucking seal.” On a deserted road in Berkeley a falling star flares towards us and disappears, we lean across the stick shift and make wishes. In Pacifica the horizon bleeds from yellow to pink, at

the end of the beach Rendezvous and I huddle on a log. The parking lot's now so far away that the teenagers who drink beer around a bonfire look like upright ants holding cans in their claws. The wet sand reflects the sunset, sleek and pink as a body double, Rendezvous sticks his tongue in my mouth then both his lips, I gulp, he pushes against me *deeper and deeper* as if he's trying to stick his whole face down my throat. Beneath his jacket his back is the warmest thing in the world I pull out an arm and reach for his cock but my hand collides with glass and metal, I drop his wire rims in my purse *the erotic force of night-lit modeling* the horizon shrinks to a faint salmon crease between dark rolling ocean and dark unmoving sky, Rendezvous recites Rilke *Ein mal jedes, nur ein mal. Ein mal und nichtmehr.* I go for it in a big way, lick his lips and moan, "Time to pee," then I pull down my panties and squat behind him, spread knees resting on the log *tinkle tinkle* he shakes his head and smiles, "You are *so male*." He sticks his finger up my cunt *ein mal, ein mal.* After a couple of weeks we hardly go outside, barricade ourselves in rooms and fuck fuck fuck. Our next move is to pop bits of food into one another's mouths and sloppy-kiss with juice running down our chins. He turns on his computer and tells me to read the screen, "To walk in front of the car. To be in a different spot in night, but always with the night before you, after you. To release yourself back into that night...."

High contrast black and white photo of Drew Barrymore, black copy flush center in a narrow column over a wall, "It's more about freedom than sexuality," says the actress of being photographed nude, "If you're naked in a classy way, there's something totally free about it." Drew's nakedness has dissolved to grain, her nipples melting into gray pools of aureola *cross-legged classy in white heels with large bow ties at the ankles* three bobby pins stripe the side of her plastered-down bob, penciled eyebrows arch with mild surprise across her forehead *wide, empty, slick*

as the paper she's printed on where did her nose go her fragrance is Guess, "a spirited blend of fruits and florals," Drew leans back in an easy chair her arms flung straight up, gardens blooming from her armpits, hands turned outward, fingers spread as if she's throwing shadow puppets on a wall: rabbit hopping, duck quacking, or a man stooped in a wheelchair—it's Larry Eigner—facing a packed auditorium, with a large orange flower arching from the back of his chair and over his head, he listens attentively to Charles Bernstein's vigorous delivery *take it/ every atom of me/ belongs to you/ across distances/ one space* beside me Rendezvous sniffs his fingertips, "I can smell you on me." *A toy cart/ up-ended, a/ begging dog/ quiet* Drew frolics with seagulls across Coney Island's deserted beach in short-shorts (about \$105) and combat boots, her Emporio Armani trench (about \$615) flaps in the breeze, as do her arms *lines in small detail/ similars large* Drew in lace and feather wrap-top and satin pants, cigarette dangling from her full recumbent lips, a dame who's been around the block, once she was a star but now she spends afternoons in the filtered light of her bungalow clinking the ice cubes in her Scotch, smoke curling above her head like a memory, the bell rings, she opens the door cocks her hip, "Yeah, babe, whada ya want?" The camera goes click click click click *post-coital but without the wrinkles to savor it, bigger than life like a Jeff Koons figurine* I imagine Drew kitty-corner to Michael Jackson and Bubbles in a stark white gallery, gold trim gleaming, tiny red lightbulb at the tip of her cigarette. Whenever sex is over I feel like a has-been.