

DAPHNE MARLATT / In Search of Plot (Deceased)

a bout of ambush
riding through bush
a band of word
bandits

reading nouns
naming or clowning around

8 poets on a 14-hour train ride
Pacific Rim Express on Pacific Great Eastern Rail
PRE on the PGE to PG 1974

masked figures heading towards
Suspense's Bridge

sending each other up
on pages of various
provenance

hand to hand
word combat

which hand belongs to whom?
now 2 of them gone

narrative a spur of the past riding the present
curve perhaps

*severe mockingbirds all up in a tree call'd train, askin' where's the
nightin- gone?*

asides a siding
stoned trains
slide by

Plot looked about him, wondering how to get beyond the Events lurking in the hedge.

stick-handling story by different or differing
non-deferent hands

Setting was hardly to allow herself to be obscured, but she wasn't in a position to argue.

as gender takes a turn

*Plot stuck in Evelyns throat. Her name was Evelyn but her friends called her Eleven.
She had a bunch of hardy hedges and never went back.*

so Laurel was there from the beginning
a form of hedging bets on where
this comedic saga was heading

*Later, she told Bud Baron how she fell out of the phone-tree into the Hardy Hedge.
"That I saw Greg Corso's naked torso hiding behind every pillar & post..." Hiking back
towards Squamish, she thot fuck those poets!*

politics erased
climax delayed

in a likely story

*Has plot thickened yet? he felt between Grace's Kelly as the train hitched its cock
sureness thru the next tunnel.*

in the background
duly ordained
nouns or nuns
board a lewd Western

*each with a sprig of laurel each
presented with a George V dollar*

zeitgeist entering

Anger
Vats
Cambodia

*Dear Evelyn, dear dear
Evelyn:*

*How I miss you. Events seem
to be everywhere, despite the
presence of the Americans...*

nuns are nouns
without u

in the habit of
sly exchange

*news of these events passed from character to character, from setting to conflict & back
again before Eleven or ten-thirty.*

as the V-2 dipped
its wings in setting
unlikely uni-
corn in his lens

*It's all these mountains are bad for—a kind of war where-in arms are pitted against
arms, as according to the will of the little boids off the voids (BIRDS of the WORDS)...*

conning a
version a
narrative à
clef trans-
figured plot
affair

or serial
conte

-station

(adding es)

*That's just scrub oak & them's the train crew, she replied—he spun on the heels of his
well-oiled pun, How'd YOU get here? he said, this is the men's smoker.*

a lot of pseudo
& some weary
or wary
real

She collared Plot...clued him to the business at hand + told him to cut out now. "I can't do that," he whined, "I got a public to think of—" Landscape darkened + then brightened. I've got it—you can stay—clean up yr act—+ come on as Process. No one will know."

how to reel
it in or end
cliché sendup

in no res-
er -ection

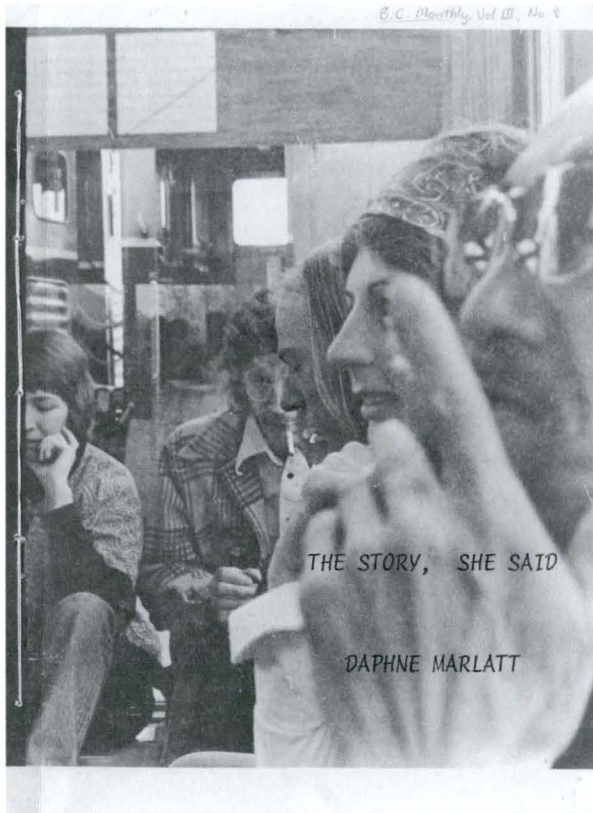
Peck and Plot were dead & both of them new it. Sub-plot strolled into the landscape looking for a proper setting. Little did Subplot know of poor lil' landscape's scrapes. Music lulled its romantic hush over the Peegee Electronic Wailray.

thus ends Chapt. II
of a stoned story
more chaps
in their chaps
to come

Note

The above take on our collaborative mock Western arose from re-reading some of it all these years later, prompted by George's description (see "Collaborations," in his *How I Wrote Certain of My Books*, Mansfield Press 2011). To repeat specifics: in 1974 eight of us took the train from Vancouver up to Prince George to join Barry McKinnon there to read, talk, drink and otherwise cavort our way through a poetry event organized by Barry and Gerry Gilbert at the College of New Caledonia. Dubbing ourselves the Pacific Rim (Rhyme/ Rime/ Grime or Grim) Express, those of us on the train were George, Gerry, Gladys (now Maria) Hindmarch, Dwight Gardiner, Brian Fawcett, Carole Itter, Roy Kiyooka, and myself. We were young enough, in

our 30s (well, George was edging into his 40s), to be full of ourselves, except for Roy, who would have been in his late 40s and possessed a measure of wry distance. The Pacific Great Eastern Rail which, despite its name, served the western part of BC took fourteen (George says sixteen) hours to get there. In Prince George Barry McKinnon joined our writing spree. In the beginning, as I remember it, all of us took turns writing entries although there were only a few die-hards still writing by the time we climbed back on the train. It's been difficult to decipher some of the handwriting now that we're so much older and two of us have died. Gerry gave me the original pages so I could put together *The Story, She Said* (a combination of excerpted passages from our collaboration and from the journal account I also wrote at the time), published in 1977 as one of his issues of *BC Monthly*. The handwritten and typed pages of our collaboration exist among my papers at Library and Archives Canada.



Front cover of *The Story, She Said* by Daphne Marlatt published as an issue of *B.C. Monthly* 3.8 (Dec. 1977). From the foreground, Roy Kiyooka, Daphne Marlatt, Dwight Gardiner, Brian Fawcett, Gladys (Maria) Hindmarch. Photo credit: Gerry Gilbert