

LISA ROBERTSON / The Coat

dozens of watches

yards of linen

tons of iron

bootpolish silk or gold

a table a house a piece of yarn

a coat and ten yards of linen

iron linen corn

twenty yards of linen and one coat

the value of the linen and the value of the coat

the coat is directly with the linen

such as linen brings to view

that the coat is expressed



The coat takes the position

such as a coat

coat or maize or iron etc.

linen etc.

20 yards of linen or one coat

one coat for example

one coat varies

the coat equated with the linen

worth one coat
in one coat
in 20 yards of linen
in which the coat is the linen
& the linen looks like the coat
its buttoned-up appearance as a thing
the equivalent of the linen
instead of the coat



So vested
I looked around for something out of which matter could be formed

moral evil, chastity, suicide, knowledge of literature, poetry, highway robbery, food,
concubinage, usury, kings, liberty, games, war, plague:

I made a list of these things
that is: nothing apart from the Gushing Abdicating Bilious Live Body

the pools of bile glistening on the floor of the operating theatre
beneath the heavenly blue lamps

sometimes simply *those* laws since
no community is for a body

thus the proposition
of the coat



But I think poetry is nice
because of my body
the insurrection of my unplaced body I mean
on sodden space of groaning porch
so as a clothier I must ask
what kind of unlikely coat is cut from 20 yards of linen?

And the enjoyable gland also
dribbles a politics
for its friend



The equivalent form of a body does not imply
that the magnitude of its value can be determined
for the body of the friend is commodious only
and so extinguishes all other commodities
rather than exchanging. I will be its receiver
and nothing more. Our own relations
speak and sew with a motion like a circulation
sliding and sticking with the pleasure of a freshening
it is amazing that it should be so difficult

to simply know her commodiousness
commodious as balenciaga I would say
therefore with no equivalent
Gownly it simply stands alone and beckons
as would the enormous marxian coat minus certainty
it seems unbelievable
as in the non-abstract frequency-receiving gesture of beginning



When you proceed to measure a person
first request her to button her coat that
you may better discern her shape and position
then place the end of the measure to the
top of the back-seam or where you intend
the top of the back-seam to be and
extend it to the required length of the waist
say 16 inches continue it to
the length at bottom say 36 inches
next require the person to bend her arm
while you take the length of the sleeve from the
back-seam to the elbow 19 inches
and from the elbow to the hand making
33 inches then take the length of
the lapel by placing the measure at

the top of the back-seam and pass it over
the breast to the length required at front
21 inches then take the size of
the breast 18 inches and the belly
16 1/2 inches the top of
the arm 7 inches below the elbow
6 inches at the hand 5 inches the
sizes of the sleeve are taken 2 inches
from the top of the fore-arm-seam 2 inches
below the elbow and the same distance
from the bottom.

◆
Between the neck and the collar-bone
from the inmost parts
and what the difference is between
obscenity and the museum
this is what happened

Friend, there is no community. She either had a beginning or she had not.
Of shapely pleasure she spoke
the techniques of new shapes
which broke the materia medica.

The proposition dissolved in the vicinity of these

sunken pools and chandeliers
bought by the same purchasers



It seems unbelievable
as when there is a tree and you try to hear it
and the sensation of behindness
into the midst of which you have been plunged
shows equilibrium as inimical to life

As when you mime what you perceive
like a voluntary intuition
that ripples from body to friend
if the seam is a rhythm

As permanent gesticulation in uncertain scale
as reviviscent motor element
into the midst of which she has been plunged semiologically so
my organism hankers

She made her muscles into thoughts:
Especially her facial muscles liked
a well-stacked wood-shed

I do this because it's more portable than sewing.



The community therefore is a mechanism that, after being set in motion, performs with its

goal an exchangeable simulacrum

whose component parts make the lucid clicking

of value

as water down an incline

as windmill to wind

nor cease to change its form

beyond inevitably insurrectionary motions of specific elaborate bodies like hers

nor eliminate transcendent contradiction

as a machine has a bitter history

they bait with honey

for bodies do not pass away but they can

all golden plummy trembling sad

as in the theatres we see

and deeply deploy

friendship and enmity

for illegal incandescence

when did the image become a machine?

before, when it was love

entirely emancipated as

free external motion
between timely bodies linked by moving postures
it will subsist invisible
outside the circuit and its stages
we must conclude that there is no image
that the friend's body
speaks through her mouth
as transcendent movement succulent
what the political will be to her
cannot be limited
there is only a body where there is my friend on the porch
fearfully I know this to be
because there is no general body on the porch
there is no general body in the car
no general friend



a green dress coat cut very scantily with very narrow lapels
the sleeves very large at top and tight in the arms
the shoulders very narrow
the collar of velvet ascends very high on the neck and the crease rolls over like a
horse-collar
flaps are worn at the waist
the coat is cut across the waist—it is a new system of cutting

a waist-coat of white Marcella, single breasted with a stand-up collar
a blue dress coat with gilt buttons and velvet collar
a fancy under-vest with a blue under-vest
a green dress coat with a fancy velvet vest and a blue under-vest
a wide French braid down the front edges around the collar with five volutes of braid
down each side of the breast
double breasted frock cut quite plain except the lapels and the collar
six buttons down each lapel, the collar short and buttoned-up under the chin
a vivid remembrance of discomfort arises in my mind
the coat is disobedient perception



I saw clumps of food-plants in random containers clustered in the empty lots
I saw streets without people
I saw the shipping cranes against the sky
I saw the dark of the tunnel
In their difficulties I saw them
Mostly people were bending under the community of things
I saw the clean children being ferried off in vans
The objects scattered by the roadsides seemed uninteresting
I had little desire to recuperate them
When the community becomes exchangeable there is no community
My vernacular trickled and caked on my cheek
They good as asked me to stay

What I was used to no longer felt familiar
I altered my perception of risk
I took to the light and there was plenty of it
A kind of irony brocades my consciousness
Beneath our incisions it aches
It's late and the lamps are on
There's something gentler happening now
The abstract trees undulate out in the dark
It's nearly October
I turn to my friend
I have some questions about cells, hormones, commodity