

DOCTOR WILLIAMS' HEIRESESSES

A LECTURE
DELIVERED AT 80 LANGTON STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, FEB. 12, 1980

“THAT EXACT REGISTER
OF ANNOYANCE
OR NON-ANNOYANCE
OR WHATEVER”:
ALICE NOTLEY’S FEMINIST TONES

A TALK
DELIVERED AT 4799 SHATTUCK AVENUE
OAKLAND, OCT. 25, 2014

Alice Notley


Becca Klaver

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Mommy’s clothes don’t fit her any more
she refuses to buy new ones because
she thinks she’s going to lose enough weight
to wear the old ones again
isn’t she dumb?

more of the Irrevocable

the baby always wakes me up but
who can afford to sleep now?

Alice Notley, from “Three Strolls” (*Incidentals in the Day World*, 1973)

My greed was outrageous
power-outageous

I felt all better & feverish
my braincase was

hypertranslucent
& exercised with rumpling
tumbling skin
which I held gently
over my brain
like a blanket
or a weird threat
of cutting it off
from the world.
Oh my god. My
chest got cut off in
the mine.

I was mine & I was going
to dig myself a jewel.
I dug a little bone in me
I dug a little boneshaped
hole in me, I loved it
Hello you fuckers!
Dug around in there making
my emergencies go off
I thought they were lovebells
or runaway truck ramps

I'm hungry.

—Catherine Wagner, from "Imitating"

the fan club

paul thek showed up
in my dream
in my big shitty room
of reverence & awe
announcing art
is not white
or red
its hell
& running his fingers
thru ur hair
he said this body is a tomb & i like it
& i am living there

he said the present is pink like my pale ass
my art my body my garbage
& looking at u
his eyes flashed w/ desire

i thought how did this happen
in my dumpster
in my rose colored room
i guess thats what makes it good about a poem
me talking
& my whole self
struggling to write it down

—Cassandra Gillig

Article V

Testamentary Trusts for Minor Child(ren)

to all of you at school:

this constant reinvention. yeah i was a different person when i woke up every day. but that never made me any less myself. it made me who i am because i wasn't ever tied down like you with all your grown up excuses for the way you act. i never made excuses because i didn't have to, and i won't now for what i've done. because the person you whose life you made utter hell yesterday wasn't ever me the next day. i feel sorry for you because you live like you do and you'll never live like i did, like the millions of people i've been. why live like you're afraid to be something else? you can say that i'm not being myself. or true to myself because i've done this now, taken it out on my wrist and left you all with no intention of ever coming back. You might even call me stupid, or crazy, or a coward. but the truth is that while i was here, i was more me than any of you will ever be. so go ahead and judge me, take your best shot cause even when i'm dead you'll never live like i did when i was alive.

trisha.

—Trisha Low