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Oh, Self

(from *I'm Very Into You: Correspondence 1995-1996*, by Kathy Acker and Mackenzie Wark)

Oh will I remember all that you just wrote? Memory slips even more than... what?... gender (is that self? not here)... and I was going to email, I can't even remember spelling, to just quickly tell you about the movie I just saw, Todd Haynes *Safe*... and your email!... now I can't remember all you said 'cause I want to tell you, emotion taking over, see *Safe*, it is WONDERFUL hits the spot (advertisers make correctness) makes the art world into the stupid nothing it is... well it is so great seeing something that good... I saw it with RU we're friends again which is great 'cause I hate losing friends there aren't enough and it is my family, my friends... so now all is dream... Australia and this usual life melding, here where I do my emailing at two in the morning and wake up figuring out deals business how to give my publisher his share of daily grief oh will I get enough hours to write? I'm so greedy to do that... not like Sydney passing days drunk roaming through the bookstore with you... oh no please "analysis"? For me, "analysis" means "Kathy's being insecure and needs to breathe a few times." I hate it and can't remember anything anyways... except dreams... all this reality slipping and sliding... my main stuffed animals are Gulfie otherwise known as Woofie who is a feral witch I mean wolf only I just washed him so he looks almost sweet which is very disconcerting but probably needs my stinky body next to his so he can become feral again... and then there's Ratski (Rat) the star of my new novel 'cause the pirate girls' banner is RAT EATS ALL (based on certain ways of telling about the "musa" (mouse) (rat according to me) who sits at Ganesh's feet)... and then there's WITCH or BITCH who is very powerful so I tongue kiss her a lot all my animals are very penetrable including my feral motorcycles... one is still in shop and the other needs a carb adjustment but is happy I'm back 'cause he needs a lot of attention from me... is this pantheism or just spaciness?... it's two in the morning... I know what you mean about slipping roles: I love it, going high low, power helpless even captive, male female, all over the place, space totally together and brain-sharp, if it wasn't for play I'd be bored stiff and I think boredom is the emotion I find most unbearable... I'd say there's my love for Baudelaire but he's also so cool when he talks about Jeannne Duval's stinky body it makes me feel as if I'm in this danger whose name is sex... I know what you mean about slipping male/female I never know which one I am I used to get all worried about myself, I should make decisions, announce a name, and at some point I just gave up 'cause it's too difficult and, oh, I started this book by Alphonse Lingis *The Community Of Those Who Have Nothing In Common*, the title reminds me of Blanchot, the intro. is so great, as I was reading it I started seeing (thinking) what you said about ethics, the need... sort of the terrain of *Safe*... I love emailing you... last night when I went to bed I thought, oh it's strange doing this without K, what a great sudden feeling 'cause I never feel that and it's good to remember things like that again... like a sudden opening into a forgotten territory... emailing must be pure narcissism... I think I'm going to blab even more intensely now so byebye for

tonight... I'm not good at saying things emotionally I guess that's one place I'm male, am pleased that you're better at it than me... I just get awkward when I should be direct and say, oh what do you think it all means? I also have a huge fat white cat who used to be the queen of the world because she was so aristocratic but now has been mashed by too much sleeping with me and looks like a rat though not feral... I also have a shark but he stays in the living room 'cause he's not furry after all there are rules of proper behavior oh byebye

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## Oh, Self

Oh, self, emotion is  
WONDERFUL art. RU  
dream-drunk for me?  
Reality is a feral wolf  
and EATS ALL, so  
I tongue kiss all my  
penetrable needs. (But  
I know you love going  
high low, helpless and  
brain-sharp.) Boredom  
is unbearable,  
my love. It makes me  
feel danger. Oh,  
I have the need. Oh,  
it's strange feeling. Oh,  
the world looks feral  
after all.

# Fill my mouth with your slippery tongue, fill my throat with your spit

I used to buy cocaine  
from a dealer named Flea who  
lived in Little Italy. Once,  
the corner  
at one end of my block  
was awarded "Best Drug Corner"  
by the *New York Press*. We used to go

to The Knitting Factory's  
progressive happy hour when  
it was only fifty cents  
for a plastic cup  
of liquor. We slept  
on a matted futon. Time would click  
slowly by:

2:01, 2:02, 2:03, ... all night long and  
in the morning, I'd get up  
gritty-eyed and weak,  
and sometimes  
I'd have the runs from  
all the cocaine the night  
before. We took turns  
using the bathroom to do  
our art. I would sit

on the toilet with a snack table  
across my lap to write,  
and he would develop photographs  
in the bathtub. The time  
when my cigarette  
burned a hole

in the blanket. The time when  
he stole \$200  
from a stranger's car. The time when  
our bikes  
got stripped (they even  
took the pedals). I read a story  
about two people who fucked

without touching,

and of course,

I thought of you

and me

and how

telling my stories feels

a little bit like fucking

(it's that kind of release),

which is probably why

these days, *you*

are my recreational drug.

## Mardi Gras Lament

When we dyed your hair vampire-red before driving down to Mardi Gras from Natchez, when we put your hair in ironic pigtails, when your sister's small blue house and smoking cigarettes on the back stoop, when voodoo, when that guy in the baseball cap who was drunk and going on about "the gays," when that guy in fact had a massive crush on you, when we had to buy drinks and wait in a long snaky line to pee, when we'd barely get outside when I'd have to pee again and the whole process would start all over, when that guy *really* liked you, when the rain spat in our hair, when we slept in your car in that parking lot where they stored all the floats, when beads and breasts and beads and breasts, when more beads and more breasts, when we had to push-start your car in the morning, when we ate muffulettas toasted thick and salty-sweet in that small café, when we drove back to your sister's house with sticky eyes and sore backs, when I had that strange nightmare about dead bodies floating in a pond, when the soft shower water that felt thick and gooey, when squid noodles, venison, shooting squirrels, and a freezer full of roadkill, when we returned to California, when days and nights became one long adventure, when later, adventures stopped being a necessary part of our lives, when children, when house, when jobs-bills-life-everything, when our love came unstrung, when the beads bounced away just out of our reach, when they scattered across the ground.