

In which the deer learns of the forest Vancouver July 1982

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Où la biche s'instruit sur la forêt Vancouver juillet 1982

La narratrice relate les jours et les nuits passés en compagnie d'un homme rencontré au dépanneur de la rue Davie. Cet homme, qui compose des poèmes dans sa tête, l'emmène à des soirées organisées dans des entrepôts décorés de filets pêche. Lors d'une de ces soirées, elle trouve un chaton qu'elle appelle "Quelqu'un" et qu'elle nourrit au compte-gouttes. À travers ce récit qui couvre une "gamme" complète d'événements dans le quartier gai de Vancouver (doe [do], ray [ré], me [mi], far [fa], sew [sol], la, tea [si]), la narratrice explore ses relations avec les autres, elle-même et son chaton. Parmi les rencontres relatées, un homme prétendant être Jésus accuse les habitants du west end d'être des païens, des pervers et des homosexuel(le)s; mais comme le dit le poète du dépanneur: "Jésus aime les poètes brûlés, les dykes éberluées et les queers".

At the 7-11 on Davie I met a man who composed poetry in his head said he never wrote any of it down he invited me to a party on the way stopped at a restaurant sniffed lines of coke through a rolled up twenty after the first round I giggled when I saw my face in the jagged mirror held to my nose and the white powder blew away the poet almost cried said if he wasn't so romantic he would slap me

The poet spoke in rhyming couplets said he composed lines for all the beautiful people he met

*At the 7-11 a doe
eyed girl buying du maurier's
how delightful a deer
grazing over-lit aisles*

All night long the poet introduced me as his doe eyed girl which made me think that even if he didn't write his poems down he cheated by memorizing lines at the party he rhymed assorted women my way the designer who said she had a mannequin that looked just like me the prairie woman with lizard skin boots who offered to rope me in but the poet said I wasn't a cow I was a deer and too young for a chicken hawk like her

*doe a deer
a female deer
much too sweet
for aging queers*

In the back of the warehouse a huge fish net hung from the ceiling the poet said it was the bedroom and I hesitated but he laughed and said not to worry he only liked having sex with himself I could hear faint mewing as we climbed up the ropes made our way to a little loft in the back where a black light was on and in a cardboard box seven kittens in a knot I picked the doziest one held her to my neck so she could feel my pulse the poet said they were too young to be taken but I couldn't leave her in all the noise and smoke so I hid her in my pocket before we climbed back down

ray a drop of golden sun

When we finally left it was almost daylight and on Denman the last of the drag queens were settling their tabs trying to get home before the sun came up I left the poet at the restaurant where they sometimes let you sing for your supper picked up some cream from the 7-11 and wound my way to the pink house where I slept until the kitten started suckling my chin

me a name I call myself

The kitten sat in the palm of my hand not even big enough to drink from a bowl or even stand all dizzy she was so I called the vet and after he gave me a lecture on the selfishness of separating her from her mother too soon told me I needed an eye dropper and would have to feed the kitten on the hour

far a long long way to run

On the way to the store a man dragging a ten foot cross on his back yelling about how he was Jesus and kept dying for our sins and how we were heathens in the west end homosexuals and perverts who would go to hell and I asked him if he was Jesus why did he have a wheel on the bottom of his cross

sew a needle pulling thread

I found a shoe box for the kitten who drank more than on the hour settled her in with an old T-shirt I could't think of a name for her so I called her Someone she had splotches of orange and brown with a pink nose I couldn't leave her at home seeing as how she had to be fed so often I decided to take her with on the way to work I ran into the poet who invited me to another party sure I said cool I could meet him at the 7-11 around midnight but he said no I should meet him at the party then he took a poster out of his portfolio and wrote Jesus loves the burned out poets doe eyed baby dykes and queers

la a note that follows sew

At work Moira said I could hide the kitten in her office so I go in and show Moira the eye drop and how to use it she says yeah yeah sure she'll take care of it just put it under her desk and I said she's not an it she's Someone and Moira says yeah yeah sure she knows and when I kneel down to slide the box under she wraps her legs around my head swivels so my face is in her crotch saying how delicious I am and she can't resist me and couldn't I just but then there's a knock on the door and I tell her if she does that again I'll bite her crotch which only makes her wiggle more her breasts almost leaping out of the tight spandex tube top and she says I'm even sexier when I threaten nasties

tea a drink with jam and bread

I drop the kitten off safely at home and promise her I'll be back for sunrise

The party is in an old brick warehouse you get in through a door in the back lane and I only find it because I see two women with blue and fuchsia hair standing smoking cigarettes under a purple light inside it's like a mining shaft I go up then down along a corridor turn here and there the building vibrating from the music finally I can hear the buzz of voices smell of cigarettes and I am

in a room of black on black on black where a band plays but it's too dark to see
so I step right under the only light and the white of my dress shirt glows
fluorescent everyone seems to stop dancing to look at me being the only one
not dressed in black

and that brings us back to doe

The poet rescues me from the spotlight takes me to a room slips a black balzer
over my shirt he tells me he'll take me shopping in the morning tells me to
follow him he has some people I need to meet but as soon as we get back to
the main room I lose him I hang around waiting for awhile but begin feeling
dizzy so I go find a quiet spot and lie down a couple comes sinks in beside me
necking then another couple and I'm starting to feel lightheaded not sure
whether they notice or if it matters then a woman leans over puts her hand on
my chin pulls my head back and takes a good look she asks my name and I
tell her then she sticks her tongue as far down my throat as she can her
boyfriend says he is pleased to meet me

doe doe doe doe

In the morning I find Someone curled in a perfect ball on my sweater she
blinks up at me stretches her paws I hold her to my neck so I can feel her
purring hold her tightly until we both fall asleep