

## Poems from My New York Years

### Words in Polish

And it said  
S-K-I-T-Z-E-C-T  
Maybe  
    a word  
    in Polish?  
Under the sky  
    all muddled  
    with rainclouds  
Hey—I  
    just saw  
    Lady Liberty  
wondering  
    about the true poetics  
    of literalism  
what's it all worth?

Sure,  
    there is poetry  
    in everyday  
    life  
But is there  
    poetry  
in everything?

Not so!  
And I challenge—  
    and since you can't  
    read  
    my mind  
Maybe you'd like to  
    look over  
    my superscripts.

Here  
    a rainy day  
    in Brooklyn.  
Riding the G-train  
    back  
    from the  
    volunteer thing  
    at the  
Superhero Supply Store.  
No promises

to reveal sources

Hey—

that's

inspiration.

The predecessors

The influences

caught in the lines—

fly paper

try to guess my (real age)

motivation.

Huffy coffeehouse

slam poet voice

chugging out the words.

Hey—

this is

really intentional.

Don't you

Don't you dare

Don't you dare

edit this.

## My Rape Move

On a hilltop  
Overlooking  
    canyon  
your windswept hair  
    and dead-on  
    gaze weren't proof—  
    but a rebuttal.  
Made me question  
many motives  
and cling  
to my mistakes.

Called to mind  
“salt of the earth”  
but each and  
    everytime  
they lay  
together  
she kept thinking,  
    “White Guilt”  
And it made her feel  
    generic.

So, it would all be  
    exploratory  
Hey—  
    you speak to me  
    and the transparency  
    I reclaim  
    becomes a new language.

Because all that  
Jungian  
    read-between-the-lines  
    bullshit  
never amounted to much  
    in the way of  
poetics.

Hey, fuck.  
    Challenge it.  
    I liked your that line in your poem:

“Seamus Heaney?  
He sucks, too!”  
for its  
transparency.

This man  
he wore  
his passions  
like good-fitting Levis  
You know  
everyone’s got a pair  
But most people  
don’t wear ’em right.

This is external.  
I am thinking of  
an object.  
It looks like...  
It looks like...

He wears his passions like  
Look—  
If you just  
Look  
at him  
you can  
guess what he’s thinking.

It’s the classical gaze  
that the scholars  
keep revisiting.  
The motion  
and  
the motive.  
The Rape of Lucretia  
(was she asking for it?)

Does that stare mean  
*Come hither?*  
or  
Is that look in your eyes  
telling me to  
Get  
the fuck  
away... ?

Steady oceans  
and the stuff beneath  
wouldn't challenge  
that gaze.  
It means, lover of women  
thinker and dreamer  
glorious  
potentials.

My rape move  
hunger pains  
was  
the withholding.  
The only weapon  
in my caddy  
the only hope I had  
for hoping  
was withholding.

Unintentional tactic  
of abuse.

Pathetic song  
that starts out  
"On a hilltop"  
or "On a dark, desert highway..."  
or the funny  
mixed position  
of you and I  
in this  
very room.

I can't promise  
but I'll try  
to do what I can,  
with very little.  
and stop planning out  
every. little. stroke.

I'll just let the paint  
fall where it may.

The Mona Lisa  
is not in this poem.  
Neither is God.

I am done  
plotting  
your destiny.

Temporal crooks  
could not lay their hands upon it.

All I ever asked for  
was  
deflection.

**Atlantic City Terminal, 8:58 p.m.**

a pigeon dances  
in the filth  
between the sliding  
doors.

Thirty dollars  
roundtrip  
pizza cheese grease  
drips off of  
fat fingers  
Black bag man, old  
carries only  
yellow bags.

That Latino couple  
he's got  
drawn-on  
eyebrows.  
"Mira! Mira!"  
20-dollar bonus  
casino voucher  
redeemable at Tropicana.

Sickly sweet smell of  
griddle cakes  
Then  
somebody's burrito stink  
loud, like diarrhea  
fills up the bus.

A waning moon.  
Half a lime slice  
caught in the  
neck of your Corona.

Took one like this before,  
Manchester,  
Ridiculous loneliness  
wannabe  
backpacker  
The time is now!  
The time  
is ours!  
"There's no moment like  
the pressure"  
Forget me  
in the faux lights

Port Authority  
Bus Terminal.

That's Life  
April 3, 2006

Sleeping, breathing, eating  
shitting, pissing, sweating  
living, dreaming—  
    raining  
This paper  
about the poets.

**La Mer**

Past the elbow of Cape Hope  
beyond the weathers where  
no mast dare sail  
we set out, with strangers  
lulled to sleep in the womb of la mer.  
Salt water embryo crib.  
Ursule, queen of the underneath,  
reaches far with her squid arms,  
rocks, comforts  
poisons your enemies  
with her  
inky black kiss.

The far deep,  
beyond any seaman's dreams  
I, where we wash up  
so much flotsam  
and lily, sea salt water blanched  
bloated skin discarded, like the scum  
after they use us up  
And she's not bitter  
No, she's not bitter.

La mer, mother  
tumbles out the rough edges of broken sea stones  
makes dull, beautiful pebbles  
out of broken edged beach glass  
rolls you until you are smooth  
and clean again.  
Re-pure.  
Hush little baby  
she'll forgive us all of our  
trespasses against her.

Clinging to you with arms of kelp, seaweed  
crushing your face in her  
crusty limestone reef bosom  
she is mother nurture  
and also father, punish  
two in one  
beats you against her beaches  
flogs you  
against sea cliffs.

You are a dirty girl  
dirty, dirty little girl  
no use with you.

You know when you deserve it.

Bless you, La Mer,  
Marie Maria  
madam mother  
and keep you  
She takes you back, cleans you  
sins fade away  
like so many  
oil slicks sink,  
you shake off  
your foam bath.

La Mer will save you  
by wrapping you tight in tentacles  
squeezing you half to death  
opening wide her  
starfish mouth/cunt  
and thrusting you back in  
wide ocean vagina,  
where you are safe forever—  
in the sea.

You are clean forever,  
always in the sea.  
You will bloat, flake, wither  
be reformed, evolve  
no longer a sad grey hollow  
rotten mound  
no longer  
the sad swollen faced  
discarded body,  
the sea child safe,  
to dissolve into sand,  
be pulverized  
against sea stone  
be beaten  
to oblivion—  
to mix again  
with La Mer  
to return—  
Salt of the Sea.