

5 plus PS

from *Graphic Novella: Collage and Gloss*



Rachel Blau DuPlessis

How to write? But the very letters are coming loose! A ball of gibberish falls out. Is that thing on the bottom a clue or a clew? This a detective story? It says it is. We might be doubly deceived. Is it plausible that the teller of the story, the detective in this plot “did it”? Like The Murder of Roger Ackroyd. Can we stand another tour de force?

Say instead that this is graphic. This is a novella. The eternal is a hopeless rag. The symmetrical an already rejected goal.

Call this “news”--news of a novelty that is not a novel. News of a poetry that is not a poem. It’s true that the novelties and novelty of a different novel (another poem) are no longer really novel, although they always may amuse. It’s smaller than a novel, and graphic. Even too explicit. But the pictures sometimes go wrong way round. It’s all uglier and more inept than art. Trash book. “What is the new” has long been the question, and “how to make it.” But really, who now is satisfied by a category called “the new”? As such, it is a fake, if perpetually charming as it offers the happy pleasure of being on top of things. This color, that cut, maybe some sequins. That face, this leg. Gratifying. But overly stylized, like flipping through a magazine. The issue is “the news.” Even just the small news, the bits we titrate for a small dose of reading so we don’t dissolve in the acid bath of disaster. The smaller news is feeling the sadness of an endless beginning continuing, and in suspension. No real sequence. It’s true that there is a specific flag draped in this snapshot--but it’s meant to head up just one file among many. True--this one’s the file I am slotted in. What are you writing in those awkward letters? Is something happen~tally a perpetual rage at uncontainable inhuman humanity. Shorelines? “The ██████ regime’s bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators has prompted a volte-face in ██████.” Violent unstable weather? Extractionism that cracks the earth asunder? The endless deaths of bees? Sand for water? Many people are observing. Can see these events. Live in watchfulness. Somaticize dissonant vibrations. Sey.



#This whole book now is going to be a detective story of how to write.

WORLD NOT

But few as yet have particularly new (“novel”) ways of behaving. Certainly not most of those in power. The collapse of the political class--and not simply in one place--is now patent. Public good twists to private gain. They are selling the state to high rollers. And molding citizens into clumps of wastage and confusion. The roaring and rearing of economic elites will hardly compensate. This collapse of institutions--but we’re in the twenty-first century, how can this be?--it seems a shocking science fiction! Who expected these murky and weasely sets of post-disaster denials: “I’m not responsible.” “Nor I!” “It just is.” “We cannot stop it.” “What can we do?” “Very important people support this _____ (factory, mine, dam, investment, atomic energy installation, etc.).” There are experts on the case. Their experts are on the case. All this extraction and extra action provides jobs, infrastructure (sometimes) (rarely) (not for general use) (restricted) (this was “unforeseen” when we agreed to it). Laws have been rewritten and barely noticed. Just more wordy words, we thought. You seem to benefit, OK. Then “the laws” get interpreted; we are stunned at the result. Oceans are implicated. The vastness of this roiling event is impossible and implausible. And yet we are here. It thus seems true that “We are on our own”--but that’s also absolutely impossible, and implausible. What is to be done? Will we drown in the sudden rising of intemperate waters? It seems that every initiative is half finished, half collapsed. Partial--and again, cui bono? Who benefits? If this is the question, and the answers are partially findable, why are there no sanctions? Why are shifts and changes so meager? How can one even begin to write this--is it only to imitate the half-collapsed? The helpless hand? 0 0 0 that corny poetics of mimesis. And the glue itself will wrinkle and pucker. Nothing will be artful. Nothing pleasant. Nothing temperate. It is not a particularly aesthetic moment. **TO SAY THE LEAST. Sey.**

I just sit somewhere, wherever
I am found,
seriously
making poor art --I'm
serious; artpoor, arte povera,
art spoor, the art from small
materials, from detritus of convention,
from the underseen, underwanted, the
less and less.

A scrap, a bit, a shred, a shard, a headline
ripped to isolate one word, a word
(a sword, a surd, a sort) that gives me the fantods.

I cut things shabbily, trusting chance,
but also, and always, suspiciously.

I used too wet a glue, innocently.

I'd "watered it with my tears."

I cited things, like from Grenier,
then crumpled them, then
flattened them out.

Sey. Just scratches
of days, nothing much.

Not looking for a lot of "results."

This is a vague (unplatted)
archive, neither omnivorous
nor complete.

Yes.

Sey.

end / hand
 self-care
 studied
 So many ways for
 the work to happen
 unless you get time
 does this noise alternative
 worlds or the poverty
 riddledness of our
 world

She discovered her own complexity with some regret. Mazel tough.

She taunts the story ambitiously non-hegemonic.

An eros of conviction laid out some detritus.

Setting. Mustn't forget setting. Raining. Dark. Forested (forested? I'm at the desk!). Dry and hard. Wet and lush. Symbolic. A book on the table. A chocolate bar. Not spring yet. Setting one thing here, another there. Window with a dirty screen. Lists of things to do. Night. Day. Time frame. A ladder. Apt. App store open. Beholden. Someone walking down on the street. Is that person part of the story? Or random? I can't believe you are so ignorant of the right way to go about this.

"Faith is a
 miracle of
 the middle
 structure"
 Jeanie
 note 11
 Attention
 Eclipses p 14

Fraying a path, while burrowing to the end of weariness.

There is no “whole” as such. One curlicue, one excessive note, mark, intonation, spelling error, interpretive or suggestive cadence, one bit of fancy or willfulness, one key association of words and the “whole” exceeds itself, displacing its ideal message. But this displacement is the actual state of things.

(And thus all books are of another mind.)

Dance the jaunty dance of understanding. These legs are dapper and .admirable. Wellclothed, actually. Their power is charming and meant to charm.

The harm here is harder to track. It pleads and elaborates; the tone is unbearable. It’s confused about cause and effect, ends and means, agent and client, A and not-A, and who does what to whom.

The stakes rise later, both for (the cool) authorities and for those who are jerked around. For the knowledgeable and the baffled--for both. Even if they hardly know it

(given the fashion shot glossiness vs. the flyer photocopied and stuffed in the streetcorner news boxes of the free papers as a kind of psychic journalism, knowledge consolidation, or reportage),

they are on the same page.

Wake up Philadelphians:

Read people, know sad, glad, upset, sick worried breathing. Would not want elderly woman a prisoner in camper trailer Van. Stealing love is crime as stealing book. Tell truth and things go right. Each person pays for own errors. Doctors are to help patients Teachers are to help students. A scout to help lonely kid on own street. A Mother is first to help own daughter. A Dad to help son. So stay alert. It is urgent to find out what's going on in own family. Psychiatrists are to make many suggestions. Do you. . . . Develop positive thinking: Think Good. Do Good. SOMETHING SEEMS WRONG HAVE COURAGE TO SPEAK UP. THANK YOU FOR READING THIS.



NOTICE: THIS MATERIAL
MAY BE PROTECTED BY
COPYRIGHT LAW
(TITLE 17, U.S. CODE).

“Pages from different moments are bound together”
pages from different monuments
sometimes they add up.

I decided to swim 50 fixed lengths, an unbelievable self-improvement scheme, and had started doing just this, but in a light yellow pique bathing suit with a full 360-degree circle skirt over what we used to call the pippick--yes, reader, it was a fashionable garment from the actual 1950s. Pond mud swelled the hem, dirtying the folded pique edging. The skirt created mucho drag. This was being a girl back then.

I wish I could make a gigantic pique mock-up of that bathing suit, 100 times original size, both as a conceptual work and a work of enormous craft, to be hung outside the entrance facade of every major museum in the ...

oh, forget it.

#

The women students at the museum school were tired of being groped, felt up, brushed against, butts touched, talked at with aggressive pleasantries during the crits, or during his studio class. Given that things like this were suddenly being discussed more openly, they came together and decided to "do an action" to confront this artist, their teacher. So they bought a can of white latex paint, and one day they stood in a gauntlet, painty hands dripping, and as he walked down the corridor, they groped him. *Pudeur* kept



them from grabbing at his crotch, so the result was that his jacket--his jeans jacket--was enormously covered with handprints, messy blotches and streaks of white paint. And he was upset beyond their wildest imaginings: "This jacket belongs to Dennis Oppenheim!!" "This is Dennis Oppenheim's jeans jacket! He loaned it to me!" He was so upset that many of the women felt quite badly about the jacket. So some took the jacket and washed it for him. But two women objected vehemently and refused to help the other women wash it.