

Fall 2005

Kalends

by
Mairéad Byrne



belladonna* books

458 Lincoln Place, Suite 4B Brooklyn, NY 11238

www.belladonnaseries.blogspot.com



deadly nightshade, a cardiac and respiratory stimulant, having purplish-red flowers and black berries



Most of these poems were first published on *Heaven*, www.maireadbyrne.blogspot.com. "The Russian Week" was published by *Denver Quarterly*; "Personal Insurance" was published by *5 AM*. "Downtown Crossing" was published on *Fieralingue* by Anny Ballardini, who also translated it into Italian for publication in *Poicin*. The excerpt from "The Weather" is taken from the 12-month poem published by *The Drunken Boat*.

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belladonna* production and design, Bill Mazza.

It is set in Geneva, ITC Calson Medium and Bold, and ITC Officina Sans.

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belladonna* is a reading series that promotes the work of women writers who are adventurous, experimental, politically involved, multi-form, multi-cultural, multi-gendered, impossible to define, delicious to talk about, unpredictable, dangerous with language.

Rachel Levitsky and Erica Kaufman, editors, belladonna* books.

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2001

- 1. Mary Burger, *Eating Belief* oop
- 2. Camille Roy, *Dream Girls* oop
- 3. Cecilia Vicuña, *Bloodskirt*, trans. Rosa Alcalá oop
- 4. Fanny Howe, parts from *Indivisible*
- 5. Eleni Sikelianos, from *The Book of Jon*
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- 26. Anne Waldman, *[THINGS] SEEN/UNSEEN*
- 27. kari edwards, *a diary of lies* oop
- 28. Bhanu Kapil Rider, from *The Wolf Girls* oop of *Midnapure* oop
- 29. Rosmarie Waldrop, *Trace Histories* oop
- 30. Tina Darragh, from *rule of dumbs*
- 31. Chris Tysh, *Mother, I*
- 32. Jennifer Moxley, *The Occasion*
- 33. Zhang Er, *Cross River . Pick Lotus*
- 34. Tonya Foster, *A Swarm Of Bees In High Court*
- 35. Lauren Gudath, *Animal & Robot*
- 36. Alice Notley, *IPHIGENIA*

2002

- 37. Caitlin McDonnell, *Dreaming the Tree*
- 38. Eileen Myles, *We, the Poets*
- 39. Suzanne Wise, from *The Blur Model*
- 40. Lydia Davis, *Cape Cod Diary*
- 41. Elaine Equi, *Castle, Diamond, Swan*
- 42. Maggie Nelson, *Something Bright, Then Holes*
- 43. Summi Kaipa, "One: I Beg You, Be Still" from *Was. Or Am.*
- 44. Julie Patton, "Car Tune" & *Not So Bella Donna*
- 45. Joan Larkin, *Boston Piano*
- 46. Minnie Bruce Pratt, *The Money Machine: Selected Poems*
- 47. Anne Tardos, *A Noisy Nightingale Understands a Tiger's Camouflage Totally*
- 48. Michelle Naka Pierce, *48 Minutes Left*
- 49. Veronica Corpuz, *Untitled*
- 50. Leslie Scalapino, "Can't" is 'Night'
- 51. Jen Benka, *A Revisioning of the Preamble*
- 52. Susan Briante, *Neotropics: A Romance in Field Notes.*
- 53. Joanna Fuhrman, *Belladonna* Moraine*
- 54. Nada Gordon, *SONg of My OWnself*
- 55. Catherine Daly, *Surplice*
- 56. Caroline Bergvall, *GONG*
- 57. Maria Negroni, *Art and Fugue*
- 58. Lourdes Vázquez, *May the transvestites of my island who tap their heels*
- 59. Belladonna* Bilingue: *Womens Work In Translation* (vol. 1)
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- 65. Renee Gladman, *Untitled, Woman on Ground*
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- 67. Eileen Tabios, *THE ESTRUS GAZE(S)*
- 68. Susan Howe, *118 Westerly Terrace*
- 69. Corina Copp, *Play Air*
- 70. Lyn Hejinian, *Lola*
- 71. Mercedes Roffé, *Theory of Colors*
- 72. hassen, *Salem*
- 73. Mónica De la Torre, *Doubles: An Exception*
- 74. Erin Moure, *Befallen I*
- 75. Lisa Robertson, *First Spontaneous Horizontal Restaurants*
- 76. Martine Bellen, *NYC Stories / Lessons of the Microscopist*
- 77. Karen Weiser, *Heads Up Fever Pile*
- 78. Fernanda Laguna, Gabriela Bejeran, Cecilia Pavón, *Belleza y Felicidad*
- 79. Mairéad Byrne, *Kalends*
- 80. Stacy Szymaszek, *hyper glossia*

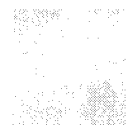
2005

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by a generous grant from today

– Cralan Kelder



STOP

THAT'S ENOUGH **STOP** I HAVE FOUND EVERYTHING I'M
INTERESTED IN **STOP** FREDERICK DOUGLASS FAMINE FLUXUS
CONCRETE VISUAL SOUND KINETIC CYBERNETIC POETRY HOPKINS
SWENSON TOLSON HUGHES ITALY MAINE NATIVITY CHILDBIRTH
METAPHOR EXAMPLE KOSOVO IRAQ **STOP** IRAQ **STOP** IRAQ I
HAVE TO HIBERNATE NOW A THOUSAND YEARS I AM MOVING
INTO THE INTERNET I AM MOVING INTO THE FUNNY FURRY HILLS
OF MY BLOG **STOP** I AM FLEEING FROM LIFE OUT THERE INTO LIFE
IN HERE **STOP** WHERE EVERYTHING IS FLUID & SLICK & SHADY &
DUSKY & FLAT

mairead [4/7/2004 12:30:53 AM](#)

THE DAY

Himalayan peaks
Smith Street
cucumber slice
44 West again
silver-grey light
my intersection my traffic-light

mairead [4/11/2005 11:23:00 PM](#)

FRAGMENT

2.

know, left us in Mississippi, several times,
and returned. took job because
said he would live in
but not Mississippi. to be
married in in but
left again, having taken the job in
got involved
another relationship, then changed
asked to come
taking the job and leaving me + the
children a mistake from
in September +
joined . planned to
here end of
year. got married in November.
Almost immediately
angry + anxious again, we
pretty good

10.17.04

A brilliant cold sunny day in Providence: from the inside looking out.

10.18.04

A cold sunny day in Providence, brilliant colors & energy.

10.19.04

An overcast day in Providence; rain.

10.20.04

A coldish sunny day in Providence.

10.21.04

Quite a bone-chilling day in Providence.

10.22.04

A gloomy wet day in Providence.

10.23.04

Nippy enough in Providence.

10.24.04

NYC

10.25.04

A grey October day in Providence, bark worse than bite.

10.26.04

October day brimful of blue sky, gold sun and cold in Providence.

10.27.04

A surprisingly benign day in Providence, altocumulus flocks—my Honda felt like a Boeing on the upside-down flight path of Smith Street.

10.28.04

A shining day in Providence; flexed starfish arm of cloud high over Smith Street.

10.29.04

Sublime sunshine & altocumulus clouds in Providence.

10.30.04

A drizzly day in Providence.

10.31.04

A pale gold day in Providence, sublime.

from **THE WEATHER**

10.1.04

A fine sunny day in Providence, glittering.

10.2.04

A fine sunny day in Providence, big-drop rain towards night.

10.3.04

A fine sunny day in Providence, state buildings on Smith Street rosy towards sunset.

10.4.04

A fine sunny day in Providence, edgy with high skies & clouds.

10.5.04

Providence this evening: a bowl of cold sun.

10.6.04

A fine sunny day in Providence, working all day & night.

10.7.04

A balmy mild day in Providence, sublime.

10.8.04

A very fine sunny day in Providence.

10.9.04

A beautiful mild day in Providence, no jacket.

10.10.04

A warm cloudy day in Providence, sunny in the afternoon.

10.11.04

A wonderful mild sunny day in Providence, wind in the trees during the night & early morning.

10.12.04

A sunny fall day in Providence, *a nip in the heir* as Keats & Chapman would say.

10.13.04

A warm enough day in Providence, sunny.

10.14.04

A day to stay indoors in Providence; but I had to go out.

10.15.04

A rainy day in Providence; gloomy towards evening: glad I put the elbow on my downspout.

10.16.04

A golden October day with big blue cirrus-swept skies, sparkling breezes & blowing leaves: a very successful poem.

EMPLOYMENT

Using the same black ink

Using the same pen and ink

Using fine dark charcoal black ink

Using the same pen & light sepia ink

Using the same pen and pale grey ink

Using the same fine nib & light sepia ink

Using the same pen and charcoal black ink

Using the same pen and thin medium-grey ink

Using a finely sharpened nib and charcoal black ink

Using the same finely sharpened nib and coal black ink

Using the same sharp quill and medium grey ink

Using the same nib and charcoal black ink

Using the same pen & medium grey ink

Using the same pen and dark grey ink

Using the same charcoal grey ink

Using the same pale grey ink

Using the side of his nib

Using black ink

mairead [3/7/2005 11:11:00 PM](#)

THE RUSSIAN WEEK

Inside this week is another week & inside that week is another week & inside that week is another week & inside that is another week & inside that is another week & inside that is another week so that instead of 7 days each week is actually composed of 7 weeks each one a little smaller than its container week but still workable & with rosy cheeks. This arrangement is necessary. If a week were only a week *aka* a standard 7-day week it would not be possible to get things done. Therefore *voilà*: The Russian week. As soon as it becomes apparent that everything cannot get done in the albeit larger, more commodious week, one can simply crack open the inside week, only slightly less commodious in size. Then, when things pile up as they are wont to do, one proceeds to the inside-inside week, its size only slightly less commodious again. And so it goes. I will not go through the process in tedious detail. For that it would be necessary to have an inside-inside-inside-inside-inside-inside-inside week, i.e., 8 weeks in all and obviously that is impossible. There may be some future in developing a system where each of the 7 weeks which constitute the week would in turn contain 7 weeks, giving 49 weeks in all inside one week, and indeed the prospect of an *ad infinitum* progression. But this proposal lacks the calm symmetry of the established model. It is knobby & hectic where the other is smooth, rounded, generous, economical—and natural. Thank God for the Russian week.

STATE HOUSE, SEPTEMBER

candle-flame against turquoise
pearl against lavender
mint against rose
breast-milk on mauve
metal against mackerel
yellowed lace on watered silk
graphite on glass
silhouette on pale blue
eggshell on streaked blue
grey cut-out against sky blue
velcro on azure
cupped flame on indigo
old snow on cerulean
gravestone on cobalt
sepulchre white against Ascension Day cloud
mausoleum white against Renaissance cloud
light slate against milky cloud
soft white on white
dove-grey against white
old bone against smoke
thumbprint in smoke
dead bone on dirty wool
haze on fog
lemon pith on light grey
ivory on blue-grey
rosé against blue-grey
spooky grey on grey
graphite on glass
mauve against ash
shadow on shade

LIGHT IN FEBRUARY

gold
golden
rose-gold
light gold light blue
light-grey
grey
high bright blue
golden-blue
blue-golden
transparent light blue
blue-time
bright grey
calm grey
grey w/ light blue notes
grey/foggy
lucid grey
high cold blue-sunny
light-blue-sunny
blue-silver-gold
grey-moist
blue-gold
blue-gold-cold
yellow-blue
white-grey-cold
golden blue-snowing
yellow-blue-cold
blue-gold
grey-white-cold

PERSONAL INSURANCE

These are unpredictable times. I got a call from a man at dinner-time who wanted to sell me home security. I was not polite to him. He started to talk about murder. He said, "I know where you live." It got me thinking. I've seen movies about guys like this. I feel I'm prepared. I take care to keep a fresh copy of myself in my closet at all times. I back up my files. If anything happens to me there will be another Mairéad to look after my children. That's the least I can do. I just can't believe some parents. They don't seem to realize the consequences of sudden death on a family. I mean, you could lose your house. The children would have nowhere to live. They would be split up. Everything would change, even the cat. And what do you do with a little black cat in the event of the death of the mortgage-holder? Send a piece of the cat here, a piece there? No matter which way you look at it, the cat would lose out, or at the very least go through a difficult period of adjustment. And I know all about them. I'm a single parent. I have to think about these things. My dream is to have a whole rack of Mairéads back to back in my closet. Some people might say it's extravagant but I see it as an investment. What can you do when you have children. It's about peace of mind.

INVENTIONS: THE HANDY EVERYMOTHER ZONE-OUT CAPACITATOR

This handy device pumps out standard mother issue "I Don't Know" responses every 15 seconds, deflecting the child's steady stream of questions away from the mother freeing her from constant jaw-ache, numbness, feelings of uselessness & endemic ignorance, & the sense of being tethered to a stump when all she wants is to rise into the blue ether, while also satisfying the child's ongoing need for attention, reassurance, and news from the kingdom of adults.

The Handy Everymother Zone-Out Capacitor

CAN BE ATTACHED TO keychain, belt, collar, or secreted in purse much like a cell phone **ADJUSTABLE** volume **COMES IN 5 SEPARATE TONES:** "Honey," "Brusque," "Speculative," "Firm," and "Playful" **PROGRAMMABLE** "Periods of Non-Response" mimic real life:
Your child will not be unnerved by any sense of robotic or unmommylike consistency of response.

Testimonials

"I could zone out for quite long periods and Willy continued to scamper along beside me chattering away" —Joan, Pawtucket

"My Handy Everymother Zone-Out Capacitor" actually had a very deep voice which I do think Duart noticed but soon adjusted to"
—Irena, Skowhegan

"I'm a moral theologian so occasionally need some decompression time. The Handy Everymother Zone-Out Capacitor allows me to collect the twins from school without being scared my head will break"
—Sandy, Fall River

When Your Brain Waves Must Run Along Parallel Tracks The Handy Everymother Zone-Out Capacitor Can Make Those Synapses Snap!

(Note: Shorten Slogan)

THINGS I'M GOOD AT

Smiling at children

[I intend to add to this list]