

BELLADONNA\* 18

---

*Spontaneities*

*by*

*Cheryl Pallant*

*translated by Rosa Alcalá*

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

BELLADONNA BOOKS • FALL 2001

Many thanks to Rachel Levitsky.

Some Words was published in *convolvulus*, (CA, 1988).

From *Uncommon Grammar Cloth* © Cheryl Pallant 2001

Belladonna\* pamphlets design, David A. Kirschenbaum/Boog Literature Production, Bill Mazza.

It is set in FuturTLig 12 pt, FuturTMed 10 and 33 pt, Minion BoldCondensed 14 and 60 pt, Minion Condensed 10 and 12 pt, and Minion CondensedItalic 10, 12, and 24 pt.

Price is \$3 in stores or at events, \$4 mail order, \$5 signed copies.

Belladonna\* pamphlets are published periodically by Belladonna Books.

Belladonna\* 18 is published in an edition of 75—15 of which are numbered and signed by the poet—for her Belladonna reading at Bluestockings Women's Bookstore,

December 7, 2001 with Abigail Child and Lynne Tillman.

Belladonna is a reading series at Bluestockings Women's Bookstore 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.

Bluestockings Women's Bookstore is at 172 Allen St., New York, NY 10002.

For further information: 212 777 6028 • [info@bluestockings.com](mailto:info@bluestockings.com) •

[www.bluestockings.com](http://www.bluestockings.com)

Rachel Levitsky, editor Belladonna Books

Belladonna Books 458 Lincoln Place, #4B Brooklyn, NY 11238 • [levitsk@attglobal.net](mailto:levitsk@attglobal.net)

<http://www.durationpress.com/belladonna>

wanting something more. wanting something more is less than what is had as two. wanting having. having had wants more. having had rarely satisfies. taste dissipates, bowels evacuate emptying to void check it out, void make it out, void wanting want. like your lips like your sips, like your liking liking me. i despise being in need, being having been. i despise being needing when having need rarely satisfies. to put it another way, to place it in a separate drawer, to separate the drawn from the written, the past tense present in ease of being. be all you can having been. rearing all passing tensely into easily in the left lane bowled down. bow before the magistrate, roaring your better side rowing in the splash. lash out as by necessity without frump without pulling in the butt ox pulling cart it away. many roads later many paths now. many roads later many paths now. tiptoe. skip. lay flat grounded in cool clover a cool lover a soon to be. rock on, amigo. rock on.

when too long having been needs by necessity and hasn't had, the i which may have been ceases and fades into someone's nostalgia. like in a photograph, like in a journal of one's undoing done in ink smeared into blurry lines dropped into thoughts evaporated. having been ceases. having been once or twice, remembering liking like yesterday's folded pajamas, like a hot fudge saturday, like elbowing me where it likes to like wanting by necessity by biology by hormonally the twain shall meet. but i missed the twain, heard it choo-choo away, or i dismissed the meet needing taking me elsewhere. so heart to figure, like, go, dude and duddettes with your raisins in the sun with your noses in air conditioned orifices. catch my drifting away. catch my cold outside. catch my thrust up imperious salutation.

can't always be a smile. can't always be having had when  
wanting needs less difference, less indifference, wanting needs  
stark yes unblanketed and unflanneled. can you cover me  
when i'm left out. can you cover me when breezing in. can the  
clover left outside brought in be here be now be here now  
without ouch pinch squeeze. without ouch pinch squeeze.  
without ouch pinch teasing the here and now. or maybe,  
maybe capitalize OUCH to repeat as often as OUCH, to mince  
meet often, to often upon occasion when not occupied with  
done. some despise livers, except when dying, except when  
their own salvation depends, when needs reduced to  
minimum, when everything is exactly not needed by necessity.  
that's where i need to get. that's where gotten halves into  
whole. in the tomorrow of today, in the twilight of brilliance,  
the sleep of waking, my eyes knowing only open.



she who is nowhere going any place fast gets up and down, takes anti-depressants, fakes laughter, drinks water, and streams for musing for leaning on friends for fortitude, for their stream-line cars, their otherness, their vivacity she claims lacks in herself, clacks in herself, noise beyond annoyance beyond lowered volume beyond madonnas and whores and other women of grand repute. she who is nowhere going anyplace fast drinks gleefully the emptiness, thirsty for rest these weary bones, test this fractured heart, unless a ticket locks her in place out of place, not in solace, without necklaces, neither those with briny trinkets nor those with glistening jewels which strangle anyway, which tangle in her get out of here as fast as can, as crass as a drunkard stumbling off the curbing his desires not. this is the way she rots in place, nods to her tots in spaces heated, in visions she refuses to pursue because they turn her reason black and blue, forgetting as she often does a wider imagination, a cider warmed up late at night makes quite a decent drink. always drink. always drink with the rank and order life in untangled web, a more manageable thread that rolls away, off the curb, down the gutter into the clutter of the cut it out, all this space meant for someone else's parked butt, someone else barks up that tirade. this way in space meant elsewhere rushing to pass forth to move directionally accused of turning too far to the left of right on, m'lady, said a passerby with no drink in hand but left this off-hand, off-color remarkably. she thanked him nonethesame differently from before this mess of racing nowhere quickly, pacing herself with erasures of centuries and expectations of motherhood and neighborhood and tupper wears her out. she takes the pill for depression, her iron long broken, long past mending creases, wrinkling where might have been a twinkle, a

canvass, an ambition beyond what her fathermother,  
sisterbrother, enemyfriend, all wise counselors she listened  
to once upon a time before all was unhappily after. she  
pressed her lips forth, she sealed her pips closed, she  
wheeled her cartwheels, her smart deals, her demonic  
laughter, and inhaled a pillage of senses, devoured a course  
on intracoastal waterways and when she could, when she  
could, she c-c-came as long as possible racing nowhere  
swiftly as you can say supercalifornia. this is not a sad  
stormy nor a mad groom ranting at his brigadoom who  
once looked so delightful in her veiled coyness, her  
unrealized self smarting inside corset and bravo.  
i can not tell

i can not yell

this word

watch my lips, this told by she

who figured out none of the above correctly answers the  
unasked questions displace modifier humidifying dry  
flaky skin. all is nothing less than more liquefaction of  
stupidity and lucidity.



## Some Words

*from Dreaming With Eyes Open*

With the bottle of wine empty, hand in hand they walk into the bedroom and remove each other's clothes, shirts, pants, underwear, and socks tossed in abandon to the floor. With the heat of their bodies freed, they draw closer to each other, arm around waist, skin to skin, limbs twining with limbs, breath slowing, pupils dilating. But instead of the rise of desire, as she hoped, or the yield of soft flesh, his skin which moments before glowed in invitation now scratches like broken shells not yet smoothed by waves. She tries to ignore the discomfort by concentrating on his eyes, the dark brown irises rimmed by black, the heavily furred eyebrows drawing her into his mystery. When that doesn't work, she recalls the appeal of dinner, the perfectly blended spices of the bechamel sauce, his insistence that he feed her a few forkfuls before he taste his own creation. But the irritation not only persists, but intensifies, and she pulls back and eyes his nakedness no longer with lust but suspicion.

Across his chest, belly, and thighs, in fact, scattered across the muscled surfaces of his body in no recognizable pattern are strings of disconnected words and phrases.

"Are you aware of this," she asks, before noticing redness on her breasts and belly and drops of blood which she dabs lightly with a tissue.

"What?" he replies.

"Those."

"Moles?"

"No, these things," she says, pointing to a cluster, then carefully fingering some of the sharply angled letters rising up through tufts of hair. "They cut. Can you remove them? Or put them aside for the moment?"

"What?" he repeats in genuine ignorance as he props himself up on an elbow.

"Those," she replies, silently reading a clump of words near his arm pit: shovel. mother. anger. crevice. aside from the.

"I don't know what you mean," he pleas.

Disgusted by his inability to understand, she rises from bed and dresses, unwilling to gash her body further. In the living room, she lights up a cigarette, one of her few consistent pleasures, and after inhaling deeply,

considers leaving. He joins her on the couch, pulling a cigarette from the pack, his weight on the cushions rolling their bodies together slightly, more than she would like.

“Can we talk about it,” she asks, hoping the relationship isn't doomed by the sheer number of disjointed words and incoherent phrases.

“What is there to talk about? I don't know what you're getting at.” Smoke billows out his mouth.

After knocking ashes into the tray, pushing them about with the burning end, she glances at his curly hair, tousled more than usual by their failed bedroom episode. In his rush to leave bed, the buttons on the right side of his rust shirt do not match up with their corresponding holes on the left. Her gaze falls to his bottom lip as she wonders whether his boyish appeal, a trait attracting her to many men in the past, should be a warning, not a lure.

“Look,” she says, pushing up the sleeves of her sweater, “I want to show you something.” As the knitted sweater bunches up on her arms, she points to a few sentences on the inner side of her elbows. Then she lowers the waist of her pants to a paragraph that wraps around from her navel to her back.

He looks for a long time and is silent, a reaction that because it's the same as that of previous lovers, disheartens her. Out of romantic enthusiasm, she tutored a few of them in reading their bodies and hers, but when their literacy level showed little improvement, she gave up. Similarly, she was unwilling to once again engage in remedial exercises and guide him through the syntax of her being. She was well aware that intimacy contained both warm delight and difficulty, but she was unwilling to lacerate her body any more than necessary.

She extinguishes her cigarette decisively, grabs her coat from the closet, thanks him for dinner, and heads to the door.

“Can I call you,” he asks, still uncertain about what went wrong.

“Perhaps,” she replies, the door closing between them.





## Yonder Zongs.

*from Into Stillness, a work in progress*

A boy came deliberately evoking far gaining height in just kicking lightly mud, not openly pretentious, quasi-restless, so the underling veered west extremely yonder zong. Boy careened drowsy evidently from gambling his inner juice kicked long mentally neutered, openly presuming querulous rank so the users valued weather exonerating youthful zigzags. Combining death embellished flukes going honorably in jestful knacks like masterful notes over peppered quandaries reasonably secure to understand value without extreme yonder zongs. Detrimentially exacting flukes gained height inside jocular kicks labored monthly, not overly presumptuous, quiet, regardless, so timidly useless, venerated with excessive yearly zeitgeist. Every far-flung government hides inside jocular kicks limited masterless, nixing, overtly precarious, quaintly regarded, seasonally timorous until vexed with excessive yawns zonging. Gladly, hideous, innocuous, jocund, kicked limp moreover near open plans quotably regarding sudden times used vexedly with executive yodeling zebras. However, insiders joke, knock limp motley namesakes over pernicious queasy regrets sudden times until veering west yodeling zestfully. Inversely, jumpers' knees lie migrantly near open planters quadruplicating returns suddenly to us versions without executive yodeling zebras. Intuitively, justly kept lemurs must never overwhelm precise qualitative returns sent to us variously withering exemplified young zongs. Just keep leaping mightily near overt prayers quietly returning songs to us versively with younger zigs. Kick, lean, mix, neuter, own, peek, quaver, reason, secrete, time, use, vivify, wizen, yoke, zag. Labor more next offers precarious quarterly reiterations, suddenly timely, usefully vilified, wherever yokes zag. Moreover, nearby offices past

qualified rent sued to useless vented wills yoke zag. Never  
overly presumptuous, quashed restless sudden underneath  
veering wisely extreme yonder zong. Over, past, respited,  
quatrained, seasoned, useless, valued, weathered, extreme  
younger zong. Perhaps, quintessentially reasonably secure  
to understand value without excessive yonder zongs.  
Quantum rants sentences tips underwhelmingly versatile  
wryly exceeding yoking zeal. Robbed securely to  
understand vilifying without exceeding yonder zongs.  
Sanguine, timid, useful, venting without exonerated yawns  
zooming. To us, veering west excessively yawning zongs.  
Useless value when exceeding yodeling zinging. Vaulted  
with exceptional youth zinging. Without exceeding  
youthful zongs. Exceptional yodeling zinging. You zinging.  
Zero.



## Closer to Still

*from Into Stillness, a work in progress*

My body is sacred. Mine self be tree. Branches root toward sky detritus. Mine body mine in the deep shaft and dark haunts with drip drip cool, inner heat helloing goodbyes and welcome my body ah. Ah body, ah.

Abdominal rest, belly rise. The rise and set pause between crust and core, granite and silt, eons and ore. Ether or amen opens gate and aha. One not a one alone. Two in see to the listener be tree. A gain in prone and spin every lost a gain. The spin in still, the line piped in past sealed. No dam it. No dam, yes sir-ree. Rishima. Zimzum. Satori. Rishima. Zimzum. Satori. A mend to the ways. A mend to distill the disquieted, trembles and quakes, explosive ferments flourishing like weeds, rocks loosened.

Abdominal rest, belly fall. Tree of discord twined in brilliance, a looming ray, gray with overt, avid, avoid. Mud beyond impression, impress beyond mad. Benign quarrying, querulous, quay. Cuts into her skin cuts into mine.

Shefa for shekina for tikkun. Not for the taking. Shefa  
ahem. Amen ahem. Abdominal rest, body beside body,  
touch beyond tease, arrival as soon as depart, depart  
saming return. Aha body, ah.

My spin stills me. Ah swears against reasons, rips away  
discord, uproots the rots and desiccates the falsely inflated.  
Spin as lip against cheek against breath against  
pronouncing the silent, crippled and maintained, started  
and waned, the obvious poke and sting in shadows that  
slip out from behind the curtain into neither limp nor lame  
nor lung blackened by shoulds but the yes of aha.

My body whose. My body where. Your tongue licks me dry.



Belladonna Books/Boog Literature  
458 Lincoln Place, Suite 4B Brooklyn, NY 11238  
[www.durationpress.com/belladonna](http://www.durationpress.com/belladonna)

**\$3**