She Tries Her Tongue: A Blueprint for Women's Collaborative Writing

The 2 am Collective

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
Somehow she doesn't feel so alone.
Envisioning kindred silhouettes slouched
transparent figures of her sex
channelling floating histories,
our sticky souls,
ono the collective page.

Jodi Derkson

Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem
After years of hesitation, she writes past impossibilities
Complex losses and grief interrupted
inhabit her body
Sadness seeped bones
Rage the taste of blood in her mouth
Regrets ever-present, heavy
Too many hard truths
The flow of ink a healing salve
exorcising old ghosts.

Debra Sutherland
Somewhere
a woman
is writing a poem.
Mostly naked
in the still dark hours of the morning,
warmed by the sound of rain increasing,
cradled by her lover's slumbering breath,
she wakes alone
with the taste of poetry
on her lips.
Obliged by her hunger,
she moves to the page
and feeds.

Danielle Arsenault

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
feeling cheerful and cherishing her new lifestyle
no longer dependent or in need of protection from folly
back in school
mature
a model for her daughter
suddenly, she stops writing
tears roll down her cheeks

it’s midnight
morning on the other side of the world
today, her daughter has a class presentation
who will assure her she looks just great?
tomorrow, her son has
an interview for his first job
who will give him that supportive hug that only she gives?
next week, her mother goes to hospital
who will tell the doctor what he really needs to know?
and next month, her husband has a three-day board meeting out of town
who will be home in case the children need help?
long distance lines are the only arms she has to mother everyone

the tears stop just as suddenly
anger wells inside her
anger against her husband
why does he tell her all these things?
does she really need to know?
yes, knowing keeps her connected to the family she has left behind.

Emma C Kishindo
Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem
She is writing in the margin of a shopping list,
Hunched over,
Scribbling on the back of a parking receipt,
Doodling in a duotang as the professor digresses,
Filling the pages of a coil book in a café,
Lying on her bed,
Contemplating a journal entry,
Dreaming of poetry as she falls asleep,
Reviewing her poem in the shower,
Running, dripping to a memo pad by the phone,
She is typing slowly, then quickly at a computer.

Everywhere, women are writing poetry. . .

Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem
For her sister
Friend
Audience
Herself
Sitting, lying, standing, in any position
Given a pen, a pencil or a lipstick
In the living room, under a tree, by the beach, atop the mountains
Writing love, life, work
Writes as she wishes.

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem,
gazing into opalescent bubbles
as she unravels the spidery layers of time.
She renders the past transparent
and embraces indigo and silver slivers of her younger self.
She is an artist who can, at will,
appropriate the vibrant colours she finds there,
swiftly applying them more richly and with greater intensity
to the contours of her present.
Even so, she stands cloaked in wistfulness
as she stirs the spaghetti that will feed
her hungry daughter.
Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
while under her table
    between her ankles
sits a baby
    playing with the fringes of her skirt
and
    drooling
    onto her toes

Monique Richoux

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
    thwarted, not by crying children or angry partner
    angry children or crying partner
    four tiny feet surrendering to the sky, tail unmistakable,
    rat
    death is on my carpet
    my cat hunting his own poem
    epitaph: life-cycle accelerated
One poem used to scoop away the other
Both now compost
Two lives interrupted.

Nicola Doughty

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
her heart bruised like a peach
f
   a
   l
   e
   n
unveiling masks of desire and despair
She breathes staccato
Striptease
Cover closed, her watermark blurred,
she picks up her journal, and walks away,
fully clothed.

Shannon Bourbonnais
Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
she looks out the window
in the reflection captured there
sees the girl she once was
the woman she hopes to be
rain on the windowpane
streaking a tear caught in the curve of her cheek
she wonders why her eyes do not yet reflect
the anticipation of journey flooding her heart veins.

Karin Lee

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
Liberated from critics and precautions.
Moments open unapologetic
Ancient voices beckon salted thoughts undone
Merciful release
Seduction of pen, triumphant metonym
Whirl of creation
A stanza danced to life.

Jacqui Gingras

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem.
I see you, your pages spilling out
Sitting underneath the pear tree.
You pull round the branches to bind you
to the place where your babies toddled.

Stretching out my hand you wriggle,
memories trickling out of our girlhood.
When I pull harder to take you into
other worlds of knowing, you fall back,
refusing to get up.

Nadia Grunwell

Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
adding ingredients beyond
the yellowed, hand written recipe
the flavor of her secrets
ancient recipes of mothering and widowing
hidden in each batch
sweet lemon squares
for her grand daughters to taste.

Liisa House
Somewhere a woman is writing a poem
reconciling rhythms of her world
filling the blank slate –
swollen-bellied,
breathless,
fists towards the sky –
rhyming the red ink of
silenced voices
crying
sighing

somewhere, telling a truth.

somewhere a woman is writing a poem
tasting, glimpsing
desires long ebbed
flooding memory
coursing through her body
flowing recall onto her page
merging, moments narrating
her current
her life

Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem
Breath and being entwining each letter
Clock ticking, pen sliding, nose-dripping, tears gliding;
Choking out words, memories, moments
Thudding through brain cells, bloodstream and bones
Eyes bleeding memories
Melding and molten –
Ink and snot
embracing as poetry.

Somewhere a woman is writing.
Her poem
prose
story.
In her head
her blood
tumbling from tongue
flowing through fingers.
Shards of her soul
Spilling onto the page.
Free her
Save her.
Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem
in the twilight hours of history, lavender turning to ash,
as time spills over and the moon unfurls her white-pitched fever in
the songs of jasmine winds. The young woman I was climbs the
stairs, the moon’s pale alphabet filling her. She tucks her child into
bed, bends over her desk in the yellow lamplight, frees her hand
to write, breaking through the page like that Dorothea Tanning
painting where the artist’s hand gashes through the canvas, fingers
and wrist plunged to the bone. She writes a dark, erotic psalm,
an elegy, a poem to grow old in, a poem to die in.

Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem,
as she gives away the clothes of her dead loved ones,
stretching crumpled wings, her words rise liquid in the air,
rosaries of prayer for the dying children, for the ones who
have disappeared, the desaparecido, and for the ones who
have been murdered. She writes through the taste of fear and
rage and fury. She writes in milk and blood, her ink fierce and
iridescent, rooted in love. Somewhere, a woman who thought
she could say nothing is writing a poem and she will sing forever,
blooming in the dark madness of the world.