

Indira Allegra

excerpt from *praxistexere*

Bodily contours and morphology are not merely implicated in an irreducible tension between the psychic and the material but *are* that tension.

– Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter*¹

¹ As referenced by Salamon, *Queer Phenomenology*, 25.

Textile and linguistic development are inextricably linked throughout human mythology.² The Greek goddess Athena, is the patron of weaving and literary arts. Spider Woman is the first storyteller and weaver for the Diné people. Nummo, of the Dogon people, spoke the first creative word by passing his tongue over warp strung between his teeth.³ The floor loom, then, is not only a tool for textile production, but also a horizontal plane – like the phenomenological writing table – whereupon queer texts can be composed through the semiotics of cloth. This ability to write can be interpreted as an agency or animacy that is an innate quality of the loom.

² Tonight there is a fissure / between the handle / and this mug / that has lived on my desk / seven years / with this notion of dissertation / for the Cherokee / seven is a sacred number / of clans who survived / the great flood / migrated across / broken / boulders / to the fractured back / of Turtle Island / here an Indian / must endure / inside the ivory boundary / of a mug / without a handle / the porcelain brand / of the university / will burn too deep / to carry.

³ Kruger, *Weaving the Word*, 24.



Feelings for lovers can sometimes become overwhelming. Sometimes when I censor my desire for contact with you, I choke on letters I want to send but would not be reciprocated because you cannot find your words. They've gone granular – dispersed in a serial erosion of intimacies from your life. In early stages, this pressure of unspoken want on my airway excites – drills the bedrock of my belly into my headwaters and I crave it. I crave the feeling of being penetrated by my own unuttered desires from the inside. I crave the shape of each silent word for the lover I need punching down into the bloody dark from the soft opening of my mouth where my tongue is quiet. If my cunt cannot receive you this evening I can still feel fucked by the swell of longing unspoken. I can feel fucked while sneaking the hook into the eye of my bra, before afternoon train connections, while plating the toast...

Later this masturbation asphyxiates. It's painful to asphyxiate on your own desires. My jaw sets against a toothy pain-radiating center of the shoulder against the bone in my arm and I go lightheaded. My chest is crushed on three sides between a chronic lust an acute poem and urgent need for emotional access I cannot achieve with the person I want to love. The arrival of any new message from me in your inbox could be too much. I could be too much. My breath is eclipsed by the fear I will be accused by you of criminal intent – loitering on your post history, trespassing community confidentialities, breaking into your boundary to write bad code for an immune system designed to protect one from dysfunctional femmes, clinging queers and potentially problematic partners.

You drilled
deep water
until twilight broke
but would not stay
to skim
the rising oil
instead
you had me
gazing
at the cold moon
spinning in your mouth
rough promises
that cratered me
later
your fists
gripping hair
I'd left unbraided
for you
black willow
grazing the banks of
my shoulders

rung thick
with cicadas
beyond our window
calling
calling
me
off the ledge
of a child
neither one of us
had planned.⁴

⁴ Gulf



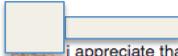
Indira Allegra

8/7, 11:09am

thank you for letting me know - and for your openness to learning about what I desire - for now I will say that I would like to explore a more regular dating relationship when I get back - but respect the assessment of what you have time for in your life. That's real.

i feel slightly out on open water as i am usually the one who has zero time for anything but occasional dates with folks

usually i see my loves once a month if i am lucky



8/7, 11:11am

i appreciate that. thank you for sharing dear. i am very much in that place of feeling like i have little time/capacity but wanting to have more and wanting to figure out what that would look like for me (ie- reprioritizing things).

the once per month life is real



Indira Allegra

8/7, 11:11am

yeah it is super real

The body of my floor loom is designed for tension. To weave weft and warp together, warp threads must be held taut, able to raise wide enough for me to slip my weft threads through by hand. My desire to weave is an orientation device, repeatedly centralizing the loom, causing me to lean into it. To reach for the loom, my arm becomes the gesture through which I am toward the other.”⁵ If sexuality is located in “the join between desire and the body”, then weaving has the potential to be a sexual site – a site where my posture can indeed be shaped by the affective animacy of the loom when it touches back.⁶

⁵ Salamon, *Assuming A Body*, 53-54.

⁶ Salamon, *Assuming A Body*, 51.

You are lengthening me
your lips are perched
at the edge of the tent
where the Caribou's back is turning
to open himself to you
the ice was straining to keep
the southernmost stars from cracking
the horizon
your hair is slick with the fat of seals
I was coiled
sleeping
you are slipping through the edge
of the tent where the Caribou's belly
is rippling against the seam
you bear your bone hunger
between your teeth to hunt me
I was coiled
sleeping
I am snowblind
what of the wolves?
they will come panting for blood
when they smell it
their snouts will piston through the turn
of the dipperstar into the morning
stitching the heatless cluster into that
which is earthbound but unfrozen
they will follow the new moons

rising in your eyes
you would consume me in the presence of white
bears
you would claim the rigid mound
of my body with the Great Spirit breathing
through all the skins we are lying upon
I was coiled
you are slipping your seam
over the length of me
I am snowblind
your hair is slick with the fat of seals
I was coiled
What if Atuat?
if my daughter hears the kelp
unfurling from my throat?⁷

⁷ After *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* (2001 Canada)
directed by Zacharias Kunuk

