The Perforated Map

Also by Eléna Rivera

Remembrance of Things Plastic (LRL e-editions, 2010)
In Respect of Distance (Beard of Bees, 2007)
Mistakes, Accidents and a Want of Liberty (Barque Press, 2006)
Disturbances in the Ocean of Air (Phylum Press, 2005)
Suggestions at Every Turn (Seeing Eye Books, 2005;
available from Guy Bennett and Mindmade Books)
Unknowne Land (Kelsey Street, 2000)
Wale; or, the Corse (Leave Books, 1995;
available as a PDF from Duration Press)

Artist Books: A Botanist's Dream Her Hand

Translations:

The Rest of the Voyage by Bernard Noël (forthcoming Graywolf Press, 2011) Secret of Breath by Isabelle Baladine Howald (Burning Deck, 2008)

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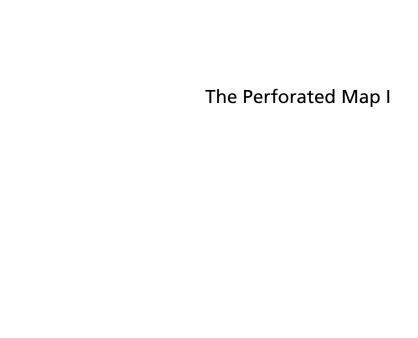
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In us an impulse tests the unknown

—Lorine Niedecker



Suddenly

on my knees

this large

Bittersweet

pull

Ars Poetica

Inaudible perhaps this moment, inevitably

washing face and hands it slips

away, forgotten by our "progress."

I am drawn to explore aspects, features of the seen/heard,

which limp still catch light, colors, twigs of hope.

I slip in your side, indistinct,

a moistened hand, a gangling sinew

where the space of the poem cascades

as years peel one after another their films of silence.

Bodies encounter effigies and turn, bloodless, unable

to defend themselves from distance—the soundless features

of today holds unwittingly the lineaments returns the words home, opens hinges.

Disturbances in the Ocean of Air

I.

Across the border soft sadness feathers

A blue way an icy improvisation

2.

Prepare yourself before entering these impervious parts.

I took a stroll down the corridor and saw the Pacific hanging on a clothesline.

Did my thoughts choose this commotion? I wanted to compose under the overpass

so as not to hear the roar of the city. I took off my clothes and slid down in

a cold, moist repository—
"and then who knows? Perhaps we will

be taken in hand by certain memories, as if by angels."

3.

The full moon opens a hole overhead, hovers. I am cut open with an arrow of air. Disturbed by this I start to run. I am running around in circles of different sizes. Which one will lead to where I want to

go? My head is at the level of my mother's hand. I press my cheek against her soft smooth hand, her "every soft thing." Turbulent pleasure. She says, "A man will go home and tell his family how a little girl kissed his hand in the subway today." That was around the time when I saw the movie *Hara Kiri*. The wooden sword went in with much difficulty.

4.

Tender children clipped

mad for a home but only housebroken

5.

I wake from the dream while lunate pleasures adapt to stillness. I hear the sound of my body; it lies supine on the wet bed. I am wearing a wool coat (and nothing underneath). In the distance a truck/jeep is going toward the border of an immense ocean (disorder here). Water moves violently up and down, up and down. If this is real life what can one do? (I think.) If this is fiction what can happen? She is lying on the floor and levitates up and down, up and down, almost banging (terrifying). The way with childhood memories—how things are magnified. I was explaining how I was in a room where something was going on—how I could have taken it wrong, because when the insect crawled on my body it seemed like such a big thing. So in the room with Mom and this man, I could have easily, taken what had happened as a much bigger thing.

6.

Can one imagine: "Desire without the object of desire"? Without even an image? an extract? lava?

7.

Scarlet Scar

Imagine the peeling bark of a madrona

What is underneath? That huge intrusion

8.

A movie can also magnify a drip: "You didn't see it." those words "You didn't hear it." I was pushed from both sides, put in that in-between place, that bridge—the place between "tree" and "wood," "morning glory" and "dried flower," or "cow" and "a piece of beef wrapped in cellophane."

and then you stumbled across I was at that age

where I heard everything a vessel for every hard word

From mouth to air to ear The line is taut

Words are changed by refraction Can you rest where it is dark?

The Colors Project I

language creeps snowthoughts I and my into penchant for out out damn spot spiral down enter the woodpecker peck peck at my soft and fuzzy and the juice runs up the tree a young deer in front crossing sound it out as I came One stood and stared watched me descend into the cold place my heartless branch I wasn't sure I would go there simple but then I had to that's the problem I make myself make myself She will she will she will and "I" stuck mud, snow, fatigue and then the idea of failure results in nudity another moyenne no not that not not compare the drip drip the juicy blotting out the long obscure sides of my mouth give me something to do before rising the amethyst stillness typographically drops our day

The Colors Project II

Honeysuckle sunshine carves holes in my eyes soft light wheel a vans motor A portrait In the morning running a pump We will put you shutting out bird calls, heaters, refrigerators in an envelope to try your feathers slip slip hair bleached so you will have to pay close attention what is muddled at first by the sun grows clear in time at times barely Warm me and I will bathe of what is left of in an essence jaune or four syllables in Spanish spreads the call to rivers and the children playing with building and the making beaches, this is my deep trickle Lorine as we play of the ephemeral call and response your words so engrained each plump grain has become absorbed cell in me absorbing light toward the sun as we reach giving it all giving what we can more than we can handle our words our narrow limits softening the hard meeting coming out of excrement the chair sit bones and rising back into it to seek sweet suckling

Crossed Out

The written fact (lies) transmitted and ignored, jewel of red daylight Words take on meaning and we, carried heartbreakingly by the speck of possibility

"desire for desire"

the density of that edge dominates as I bind myself angry at being rebuffed— Full of wiles these words

"jewel of red daylight"

that ensnare me, dominate, as I bind myself to the density of that edge desire rebuffed

again and again

these stairs pull

ice gleams, hold

the Mind Tower

or "an angry person"

slips out (can't help it)
We contradict,
slip into
desire dense with specks

all open

sieve words

all

all