

no me pongan f, no me pongan l, no me pongan o,
do not put me f, do not put me l, do not put me o,

no me pongan r, no me pongan e, no me pongan s,
do not put me w, do not put me e, do not put me r, do not put me s

no me pongan flo, no me pongan res,
do not put me flo, do not wers,

si muero en la c.
if I die in the r.

THE LESBIAN BODY (1973)

by Monique Wittig

trans. David Le Vay

The is no trace of you. Your face your body your silhouette are lost. In your place there is a void. In m/y body there is a pressure at the level of the belly at the level of the thorax. There is a weight on m/y chest. Initially these phenomena are intensely painful. Because of them *I* seek you but without knowing it. For instance, *I* walk beside the sea, m/y entire body is sick, m/y throat does not allow m/e to speak, *I* see the sea, *I* gaze at it, *I* search, *I* question m/yself in the silence in the lack of traces, *I* question an absence so strange that it makes a hole within m/y body. Then *I* know in absolutely infallible fashion that *I* am in need of you, *I* require your presence, *I* seek you, *I* implore you, *I* summon you to appear you who are futureless without hands breasts belly vulva thoughts, you at the very moment when you are nothing more than a pressure an insistence within m/y body. You lie on the sea, you enter m/e by the eyes, you arrive in the air *I* breathe, *I* summon you to show yourself, *I* solicit you to emerge from this non-presence which engulfs you. Your eyes perhaps are phosphorescent, your lips are pale m/y much desired one, you torment m/e with a slow love.

We descend directly legs together thighs together arms entwined m/y hands touching your shoulders m/y shoulders held by your hands breast against breast open mouth against open mouth, we descend slowly. The sand swirls round our ankles, suddenly it surrounds our calves. It's from then on that the descent is slowed down. At the moment your knees are reached you throw back your head, *I* see your teeth, your smile, later you look at m/e you speak to m/e without interruption. Now the sand presses on the thighs. *I* shiver with gooseflesh, *I* feel your skin stirring, your nails dig into m/y shoulders, you look m/e, you do not stop looking at m/e, the shape of your cheeks is changed by the greatest concern. The engulfment continues steadily, the touch of the sand is soft against m/y legs. You begin to sigh. When *I* am sucked down to m/y thighs *I* start to cry out, in a few moments *I* shall be unable to touch you, m/y hands on your shoulders your neck will be unable to reach your vulva, anguish grips m/e, the tiniest grain of sand between your belly and m/ine can separate us once for all. But your fierce joyful eyes shining hold m/e against you, you press m/y back with your large hands, *I* begin to throb in m/y eyelids, *I* throb in m/y brain, *I* throb in m/y thorax, *I* throb in m/y belly, *I* throb in m/y clitoris while you speak faster and faster clasping m/e *I* clasping you clasping each other with a marvelous strength, the

sand is round our waists, at a given moment your skin splits from throat to pubis, m/ine in turn from below upwards, *I* spill m/yself into you, you mingle with m/e m/y mouth fastened on your mouth your neck squeezed by m/y arms, *I* feel our intestines uncoiling gliding among themselves, the sky darkens suddenly, it contains orange gleams, the outflow of the mingled blood is not perceptible, the most severe shuddering affects you affects m/e both together, collapsing you cry out, *I* love you m/y dying one, your emergent head is for m/e most adorable and most fatal, the sand touches your cheeks, m/y mouth filled.

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I have swallowed your arm the weather is clear the sea warm. The sun enters m/y eyes. Your fingers form a fan in my esophagus, then come together to thrust further. *I* struggle against vertigo. M/y optic nerves start under a very strong pressure. The shimmer of the light on the waves insults m/y entire body. *I* am penetrated endlessly by you, you thrust into m/e, you impale m/e, *I* begin an extremely slow journey, *I* am thronged by roarings, m/y ears lengthen, they beat furiously at the wood of the deck, they strike the sides of the boat, m/y tongue cut against m/y teeth is carried away as you descend m/e, m/y vocal cords stretched by the passage of your fingers transmit no sound, cries propagate themselves within m/y arteries incessant siren wailings arm signals. You do not stop. *I* perceive within flattened against m/y skin the organs ranged one beside the other all distended, the green bile makes halos, the stomach hangs emptied of its acid the liver resembles a stranded turbot, the spleen has burst, but you m/y so atrocious intractable implacable one you still descend. *I* wait for you to perforate the membrane of m/y diaphragm, *I* wait for you to touch m/y pylorus, *I* wait for you to thread m/y duodenum on your hand, an enormous cry accumulates at the centre around your arm, the pressure you exert on the sound-waves finally makes m/e explode, *I* know it by heart m/y tormentor m/y most baleful one, m/y shadowy visage sparkling with black, the sea closes over m/e, then *I* draw you down, *I* drag you down, *I* take you with m/e foundering.

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I have access to your glottis and your larynx red with blood voice stifled. *I* reach your trachea, *I* embed m/yself as far as your left lung, there m/y so delicate one *I* place m/y two hands on the pale pink bland mass tou-

ched, it unfolds somewhat, it moves fanwise, m/y knees flex, *I* gather into m/y mouth your entire reserves of air. Mixed with it are traces of smoke odours of herbs, the scent of a flower, irises it seems to m/e, the lung begins to beat, it gives a jump while the tears flow from your wide-open eyes, you trap m/y mouth like a cupping-glass on the sticky mass of your lung, large soft sticky fragments insinuate themselves between m/y lips, shape themselves to m/y palate, the entire mass is engulfed in m/y open mouth, m/y tongue is caught in an indescribable glue, a jelly descends towards m/y glottis, m/y tongue recoils, *I* choke and you choke without a cry, at this moment m/y most pleasing of all women it is impossible to conceive a more magistral a more inevitable coupling.

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The tears flow fast on your cheeks, m/y hands repair there and are moistened there, the tears fall larger and larger tepid salt against m/y mouth, they cover your neck your shoulders your breasts, *I* scatter them, *I* disperse them over your entire body, the tears continue to flow, your breast heaves with sobs, you begin to hiccup, the saliva falls in great strings from your mouth, *I* hold its elastic substance between m/y fingers, *I* carry it on m/y mouth on m/y forehead on m/y eyes on m/y cheeks, *I* stop breathing, *I* roll you in your own tears, now they make quite a pool around you, incessantly *I* utter words to make you redouble your tears, you weep without stopping, you weep for yourself, you weep for m/e with marvelous force, your entire body is involved, your shoulders heave, now you start you sob you cry out, your tears fall all at once when you straighten your neck, you implore m/e with strident voice but *I* remain utterly ferocious towards you, then you begin to weep harder still, you make yourself drunk and you intoxicate m/e while your water m/y in-temperate mistress, m/y most tormented one, descends in runnels across the beach of the island to the sea.

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You turn m/e inside out, *I* am a glove in your hands, gently firmly inexorably holding m/y throat in your palm, *I* struggle, *I* am frantic, *I* enjoy fear, you count the veins and the arteries, you retract them to one side, you reach the vital organs, you breathe into m/y lungs through m/y mouth, *I* stifle, you hold the long tubes of the viscera, you unfold them, you uncoil them, you slide them round your neck, slopping you let them

go, you cry out, you say delightful stink, you rave, you seek the green fluid of the bile, you plunge your fingers into the stomach, you cry out, you take the heart in your mouth, you lick it for a long me, your tongue playing with the coronary arteries, you take it in your hands, *I* cannot speak, your teeth biting m/y cheeks your lips unscathed at the edge of m/y lips you, your sovereign hair over m/y face, bent over you look, you, your eyes not quitting m/y eyes, covered with liquids acids chewed digested nourishment, you full of juices corroded in an odour of dung and urine crawl up to m/y carotid in order to sever it. Glory.

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I press m/y hands and m/y bare feet against its slippery surface, *I* swim the whole length of your body, *I* re-ascend, *I* touch one of the small fins at the level of one of your eyes, *I* try to unfold it, it resists, it palpitates under m/y pressure, *I* let m/yself sway on your flank from one great flipper to the other, *I* try to stay balanced while you move forward at full speed. Then *I* fall in front of you at mouth level. You in the incessant movement of your single gaping curled lip m/y mole you swallow m/e, at once *I* enter into your immense red illuminated esophagus, *I* fall against its wall, *I* find m/yself propelled from one point to another to the level of the arterial arch, *I* am utterly shattered by its throbbing, *I* am driven to the level of the auricles and the ventricles of your heart only the membranes of the two walls separating m/e from them.

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The eye of your stomach is closed. *I* kiss its swarthy lid. The girdle of eyes that stretch from one hip to the other below your navel regards m/e whole. Drowsiness overtakes m/e. *I* shake m/y neck and head with all m/y might. *I* apply m/y mouth to the eyes of your belly. *I* make them roll under m/y lips one by one. They watch m/e, they all begin to shed tears together, *I* see them flow over your thighs and knees while you laugh with your single mouth, clasp m/e with your large hands. *I* am surrounded by the brilliance of your multiple eyes. A blue halo rises from manifold whites. The eyes edging your pubis are closed. Each eye in the fold your elbow watches m/e. At your wrists the lids of the eyes which accompany the movements of your hands flutter. *I* seek your mouth with m/y mouth. *I* perceive the two eyes of your face, they watch m/e. Weakness overcomes m/e. Moving away from you *I* see that all the eyes of

your body are fixed attentively on the different autonomous parts of m/y body in their actions in relation to one another. M/y muscles affected suddenly convulse. *I* see distinctly the gleam of your eyes ranged along the inside of your thighs, they stare at the skin of m/y belly close by. *I* see the winking of the ocular bracelets at your ankles. *I* see the two long rows which descend from your shoulders to the tip of your breasts. M/y entire body is riddled by your gaze. It immobilizes m/e. A mist comes before m/y eyes. Slackness takes m/e from the brain to the hollow of m/y loins, *I* am dizzy, *I* totter, *I* try to compel your eyes to a convergence, but at this point m/y all-seeing one you suddenly disintegrate m/e all your eyes fixed on m/e.