

THE LESBIAN BODY (1973)**by Monique Wittig****trans. David Le Vay****proposed by Kate McIntosh**

I discover that your skin can be lifted layer by layer, I pull, it lifts off, it coils above your knees, I pull starting at the labia, it slides the length of the belly, fine to extreme transparency, I pull starting at the loins, the skin uncovers, the round muscles and trapezii of the back, it peels off up to the nape of the neck, I arrive under your hair, m/y fingers traverse its thickness, I touch your skull, I grasp it with all m/y fingers, I press it, I gather the skin over the whole of the cranial vault, I tear off the skin brutally beneath the hair, I reveal the beauty of the shining bone traversed by blood-vessels, m/y two hands crush the vault and the occiput behind, now m/y fingers bury themselves in the cerebral convolutions, the meninges are traversed by cerebrospinal fluid flowing from all quarters, m/y hands are plunged in the soft hemispheres, I seek the medulla and the cerebellum tucked in somewhere underneath, now I hold all of you silent immobilized every cry blocked in your throat you last thoughts behind your eyes caught in m/y hands, the daylight is no purer than the depths of m/y heart m/y dearest one.

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Your hair is all black and shining. In the space between your long jaws teeth exposed I recognize your ambiguous infinite smile. Your tall ears move and quiver. M/y hand placed on your sweat-covered flank excites a bristling of your skin. I run light fingers down the length of your spine or else m/y hands bury themselves in your coat. I touch your firm breasts, I squeeze them in m/y hand. You stand upright on your paws one of them intermittently scratching the ground. Your head weighs on the nape of m/y neck, your canines gash m/y flesh where it is most sensitive, you hold m/e between your paws, you constrain m/e to lean on m/y elbows, you make m/e turn m/y back to you, your breasts press against m/y bare skin, I feel your hairs touching m/y buttocks at the height of your clitoris, you climb on m/e, you rip off m/y skin with the claws of your four paws, a great sweat comes over m/e hot then soon cold, a white foam spreads the length of your black chops, I turn around, I clutch at your coat, I take your head between m/y hands, I speak to you, your great tongue passes over m/y eyes, you lick m/y shoulders breasts arms belly vulva thighs, a moment comes when frenziedly you take m/e on your back m/y she-wolf m/y arms round your neck m/y breasts m/y belly against your fur m/y legs gripping your flanks m/y sex thrusting against your loins, you begin to gallop.

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I swim far out to sea that here bears thousands of seaweeds to look for you. I am totally enveloped in the black liquid mass, m/y body is rolled by the water rolled up in the vegetation. No moon, no stars are visible. I have lost sight of the island shores, I do not perceive the fisher women's boats drawn up with their flickering lights. The warm changing waves cradle m/e bear m/e away. Sometimes a fish comes alongside brushes against m/e, only its motion is perceptible, I cannot estimate its size. The sound of the sea boomings rumblings rattlings impacts clashings surgings enters m/y ears making m/y eardrums vibrate, a pain arises there, reverberates within m/y brain. I seek you in the dark of the sea and the dark of the night which I cannot distinguish, I emerge from the water, m/y head shoulders torso lifted as far as m/y waist pushing down on the water with m/y legs and m/y arms straining m/y loins to look as far as possible. You are nowhere in this mass your white body spread on the surface of the water your shoulders your back lying there your hair dragging behind your eyes closed. Great seaweeds cling to m/y neck m/y shoulderblades m/y waist m/y pubis m/y thighs. I shout your name whenever I am not made breathless by exertion. I do not hear your voice answering m/e. The sea murmurs. There are no bird-calls at this time. I seized with hoarseness which prevents m/y voice issuing from m/y throat. M/y muscles stiffened by fatigue eventually immobilize m/e. Then I submit to the power of the waves. The water enters by m/y mouth by m/y lungs, I cannot spit it all out again, the pressure grows m/y intestines m/y stomach are invaded, m/y parietes burst, the skin of m/y belly splits apart, the water enters and leaves m/e. An obscurity develops the night of m/y body redoubling the other, suddenly it seems to m/e that you are the water which comes and goes in the closest confines of m/y body m/y very glorious one m/y most eternal beloved, it seems that you are that which engulfs m/e now and for ever without m/y desiring any of all you others to implore the goddesses for m/e.