

working for the planning office a few days a week, but mostly I worked 'at home.' I'd helped redesign the local park system; now we were talking about planting gardens together and trying to generate energy locally, although none of us knew much about gardens or windmills.

The woman was carrying a bag of wooden puzzles, delivering them to a play school near my neighbourhood. Afterwards, we walked our bikes along the paths through the houses to the future gardens.

"You were a pioneer," I told her. She shook her head. "No. I did what I had to do. It was difficult sometimes, we had to work so hard. But it was never hard to figure out what to do. There didn't seem to be any choices . . . then." She sighed.

"I'm older now. I get tired. Now I wonder if I was wrong. Maybe there were choices. Maybe we should have got together and camped on Parliament Hill with the children instead of renovating the houses. Maybe we should have elected women and taken over newspapers and demanded resources, demanded that society produce the things we needed. Maybe we should have created a political movement, supported those women who did, instead of 'going home.' "

"But we've changed things this way," I replied, waving my arms to include the boarded-off street used as a basketball court, the neighbourhood 'laundry house,' the four neighbourhood cars beside the 'machine shop house.' "You can actually see it. We are producing the

things we need . . . well, some of them. We've made a new world here. We can't go back to the way we were."

The woman looked around, nodded, adjusted her frayed jacket. "No," she said.

¹Dolores Hayden, "What Would a Non-Sexist City be Like?," *Signs*, Vol. 5, No. 3; and Marge Piercy, *Woman on the Edge of Time* (New York: Knopf, 1976).

²See Gerda R. Wekerle and Suzanne Mackenzie, "Reshaping the Neighbourhood of the Future as We Age in Place," published in this issue of *CWS/cf*.

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DISCOURSE

learning to trust me
took you years
still
I touch a nervous
and silent body

another caffeine high
reveals shadowns beneath your eyes
as you read
the breakfast paper

you split
the orange just so
"the sun orders everything" you say
I bounce
racket balls
across the kitchen

I say
the universe is nothing:
you cling to that flute
ears bleed
a 2/4 vibrato

we explore sunday streets
you delight
in discovery
yet another bookshop
the quiet you say
helps you think
linearly

Robin Potter
Montreal, Quebec

CONDITIONING

What could I know of horses
when the only ones I recalled
were the mare that pulled the milk wagon,
or the fruitman's filly,
or that poor nag
blanketed with wretched patchwork,
stopped shame-faced before our door
and door of neighbours,
while aproned housewives from cold flats
came to pick and choose the largest
sawdust-covered block
of ice on which to seat
their milk and meat
for comfortable freshness,
or that Belgian stud, rich-muscled,
heavy-penised,
which advertised the Beer of Men.

What could I know other than
that a horse could draw a load,
was patient for an apple or a carrot
or a pat between the blinkers,
weathering all seasons,
and enriching newly-fallen snow
with hot and gleaming sparrow-fare,

or the unreal image
of that powerful and potent satisfier
of a shameful thirst . . .

Shulamis Yelin
Montreal, Quebec