

Your friends say that you're this food, and then you're this food, and your form is an accident.

Cantuccini, don't let your drip out, and stay mainly of flour and pine twice-nauseated and twice-cooked, where i landed and stood, surrounded by the copyright holder, your use and distribution of the essence of electronic works that could be of little doubt but the feeling of excitement rises twice, puts in.

You're seated at an unoccupied table with probability 1.

When you start to bake in the codomain of the function, anything can happen. A sudden mania to became pianists, or a swindle ringing like a blaze in the membership lounge or the Chinese restaurant process.

Embedded and related, you're a loaf cooked and recooked uniformly at random to sit at one of the following $n+1$ places. n looks over and welcomes you.

Being a biscotti is essentially an accident, but your friends could have seated you with infinite capacity.

You have agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the ferry as promised by the latter, which you almost called long and once after a period of patient waiting when you find yourself coerced and elected by the other way, older and exuberant, proof of the Universal Exposition, edible for centuries.

*best read while listening to The Beatles'
I forgot to remember to forget, recorded
live for the BBC, 1964. Song originally
recorded by Elvis Presley, 1955.

This is a story about remembering and
forgetting. Forgetting as a set of practices
and devices. {2015} forgetting does not
exist.

{1827} pivoting paddles, encoded by their
varying positions. Pages of positions.
Codes of positions. Codes first found on
pages. Now found on webpages. Detailing
the now dispensable. An etherealised
memory in the cloud.

{1876} Alexander Graham Bell invented
the telephone. Not long after wires
stretched out across the world, under
the ground, below the soil, at the foot
of waterways and eventually here, where
they have made me redundant.

I'm not sure when I first realised that
it *had* happened. Firstly your signals
subsided. A few less each day, here and
there. Then a noticeable shift—to barely
a whimper. {1880} nothing.

Before. {1811} a time of value. Following
smoke signals, here and there we stood.
Announcing the ships who come and go.
A theatre of remembering. Two players
remembering, to converse. Talking
without speaking. I reported them to
you over there. Comprehending without
listening. You reported them on. Elevated
links on peaks informing the hollows
below. Conversations across mountains.

{1836} what a time it was. Flags, rods,
textiles, disks, boards, hands, gloves. At
first I had two arms, then three, then six.
These arms formed thousands of codes.
Codes to be remembered.

I am here, you are there. {1848} arms
raised and lowered to set positions.
Messages of «140 characters sent and
received. In 15 minutes batches. All day,
everyday. 6am until 9pm. I can see only
what I need to know. I see the outline
of your signal, preserved in my memory.
Visions of these signals, these codes, are
all that's left of you. Are all that's left of
me.

{1911} I dreamed I walked across a
bridge. I built a giant bridge. I stretched
out across the bay. I built a tunnel, a
tunnel through the ground. Burrowing
below. Hearing the sweep of air next to
your cloth, the flutter of your wave, next
to me.

{Date unknown} waiting silently, no use
to anyone. No use at all. Watching the
endless stream of clouds—a strategy for
existing.

I renegotiate my relationship to time,
memory, history, text. {1880} signal code
No.343 sent, announcing 'forgotten'. But
forgetting is a fiction. In my mind, The
Beatles play over and over.

**future/additional viewing:
Monty Python, 'The semaphore version
of Wuthering Heights' (1970)
youtu.be/6oHw6niE9e8

I was recently made aware that the Freudian slip doesn't necessarily refer exclusively to language. Apparently, it can also take the form in action: boy trips in museum and punches hole through million-dollar painting.¹

In a conversation of a very different nature, I was also told that everything happens for a reason and not by chance: man jailed punching HOLE in £8 million Monet painting despite claiming heart attack made him fall.²

Perhaps an American tourist apprehended the present security guard with a question regarding the location of the toilet at the very same time that the boy, who was said to be carrying a milkshake, walked toward the entrance of the gallery. This could

have been a hypothetical coincidence that was meant to happen. Maybe the dissatisfaction the guard was feeling in his job—a cocktail of low pay, mind numbing labour, the persistent question 'but what does it all mean?', and a newly discovered aversion to decadence—was also something undeniably unstoppable in the trajectory of the scheme of things. It could also be that such dissatisfaction was a precursor for the boy and his milkshake slipping Freudianly through the cracks of the reign of the security guard, and wandering toward the \$1.5 million vase of flowers where, for a moment, he paused for a sip, before losing balance and tripping over the balustrade—which was meant to be there—fist-first into the painting.

And what then could be said of The Man from Snowy Ireland, who had an attack of the heart in front of a Monet? Or of the Priceless Picasso left dangling from wall after bump by patron?³ A disruption in the zen alignment of the social fabric so visible it is unbearable to see. 'Who can resist straightening a crooked painting?', I wonder, and what bigger metaphor of the times is there than standing in front of an image exclaiming 'It's not straight! It needs to be straight!'

The main rigour of art is its value, the newspaper always seems to tell us. 'Only a small class of people are interested in its access', thought the boy as he got too close.

1. Holmes, O 2015, 'Boy trips in museum and punches hole through million-dollar painting', The Guardian, August 25, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/25/boy-trips-in-museum-and-punches-hole-through-million-dollar-painting>
2. Bloom, D 2014, 'Man jailed punching HOLE in £8million Monet painting despite [...]', The Daily Mail, December 8, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2865984/Man-jailed-punching-HOLE-8million-Monet-painting.html>
3. Coleman, O 2014, 'Priceless Picasso left dangling from wall after bump by patron', New York Daily News, July 31. 2014, <http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/picasso-art-crooked-unintentionally-moma-article-1.1887723>

I was thinking of Luce Irigaray's *This sex which is not one* but actually I am thinking of *When our lips speak together*:

How can I speak to you?

She writes, *You remain in flux, never congealing or solidifying. What will make that current flow into words? It is multiple, devoid of causes, meanings, simple qualities ... These movements cannot be described as the passage from a beginning to an end ... this body without fixed boundaries. This unceasing mobility. This life—which will perhaps be called our restlessness, whims, pretences, or lies.*

Those pronouns defining relationships of one thing to another thing, all of which conjoined. Virginia Woolf comments: *'I' is only a convenient term for somebody who has no real being. Lies will flow from my lips ...*

Really, I am thinking of Chris Kraus writing in the first person but I detoured as I couldn't remember when the penny dropped. The detour took me past Hito Steyerl and her essay *A thing like you and me* and back towards Woolf and her comprehension of an inviolate, private self which could be obliquely articulated in relation to others and is its own objecthood. It exists as a sentient thing that Steyerl notes: in which senses merge with matter. However, I came back again to the moment when who is speaking turned. The speaking subject is a one way street as Steyerl writes: *The subject is always already subjected. ... the feminist movement ... worked toward claiming autonomy and full subjecthood. But as the struggle to become a subject became mired in its own contradictions, a different possibility emerged. How about siding with the object for a change? ... why not be a thing? An object without a subject?*

Why not be a thing? An object, matter to be remade and fluid (as Irigaray), not just two things but many things, overlapping. The 'I' which is not one. The being which is not one. The image thing being not a representation but a thing to participate in. Which makes me return to Kraus: *... There's no fixed point of self but it exists & by writing you can somehow chart that movement.*

I am detouring again, moving. Only things move, like planets or images, flung out in endless array. As a writer Kraus drifts through tenses and personas, her anchor in the real is real enough to a reader who also wants not to be subjected. Woolf paced Oxbridge and London pondering lectures she was to give on women and fiction which became *A room of one's own*. She writes: *... and the greatest release of all came, which is freedom to think of things in themselves. To think of things in themselves.*

I get the message from Kelly on my phone: *Pick an object, any object, all objects are winners.* It's 7am and I'm lying in bed scrolling through Instagram. I like a few pictures, sending the little heart alight, all of them posted by friends. Half an hour earlier the phone sounded an alarm and I reached across the bed to silence it. Now I click out of the app and check the time on the home screen: 7:13.

In the shower, I start thinking about Julio Cortazar's prose poem *Preamble to the Instructions on How to Wind a Watch*. It ends with the line "they aren't giving you a watch, you are the gift, they're giving you yourself for the watch's birthday." My phone buzzes against the side of the basin.

I am my phone's person. It runs my days and my nights. And I'm not just speaking about being connected because this phone, a five-year-old iPhone 4 barely keeps me connected anymore. Its system is incompatible with some wireless networks, it no longer holds music, it needs to be power cycled frequently. Sometimes, when I'm typing a text message, the keys disappear and

I'm left fumbling through my symbolic memory. It's surprising what my fingers remember. The question mark, the round yellow emoji – ever on the brink of collapsing into hysteria.

Like Cortazar's watch, the iPhone4 is romantic. It's the right weight – heavy enough to feel substantial, light enough to feel new. It's the best proportioned of the iPhone family and still seems to belong to an impossible, cinematic future, where the rough edges of the world have been caressed – or forced? – into enduring smoothness.

But unlike the watch my phone is passing fast. Cortazar writes, "Fear will rust all the rubies, everything that could happen to it and was forgotten is about to corrode the watch's veins, cankering the cold blood and its tiny rubies. And death is there in the background, we must run to arrive beforehand and understand it's already unimportant", while I'm already studying new models. With the iPhone glitching in my hand, I feel invincible. Perhaps the creation of objects we're sure to outlive was, more than anything, just another bid for immortality.

The blue dress worn has buttons all the way up the front. Elbow-length sleeves. It has a collar. The collar enables a direct plunge of the gaze down the décolletage if the top few buttons are left undone, which is the designer's intention.

The blue dress has a tie for the waist. It's the same blue. Bright blue. The waist must be tied to secure the precarious balance between the masculine business-like dignity and feminine light-hearted intrigue that the dress juggles. The woman's waist should, ideally, be on show. The waist-tie serves this purpose when the dress so requires it. It could be said that the waist-tie is used when the cheapness or ordinariness of the dress means that no excess will be spent on tailoring a waist. Like a dressing gown, a simple long piece of fabric serves the purpose. Yet, because the dress has buttons, the tie is functionally redundant except as the facilitator of the obligatory feminine waist.

To accompany the collar and the breast pocket, the dress must sit above the knee of the woman. The woman's knees must be exposed in order to ensure she does not appear frumpy. What is ingenious about the blue dress is that it combines a collar and elbow-length sleeves, made for modesty and work, with a waist and hemline made for a woman. It's a killer combo. Almost androgynous. Certainly irresistible.

§ Evidence is a funny thing. It's funny how it can exist without one being aware of its existence.

The blue dress was once innocent enough. It was

purchased from the Gap. The great global generaliser. American. Wholesome. Blue. The colour of the Democrats. I wonder if she chose that colour dress when she got news of the internship. Or was it a choice already made with the knowledge that a particular combination of male certainty and female beguilement would be irresistible to the President? Was she simply wise to the fact that these skills, to say the least, were necessary for any working woman? Was it a pre-meditated purchase, or was the blue dress a coincidence that became evidence? An innocence, a piece of untailored commodity that would normally be tossed after a season, which – possibly due to sentimentality or unconscious death drive – a young woman of twenty-two held onto, unwashed.

§ Dry cleaners are funny. Friends are funny. A friend who pretends to be one but in fact manipulates and lies, hoarding information to be used at a later date, is a sad friend, indeed. If this was the young woman's best friend and closest confidante, could it not be said that she in fact had none?

It was this friend who told the young woman not to have the blue dress dry-cleaned. You may need it to prove your story, the friend claimed. The young woman, unconvinced, seriously doubted she would need to prove anything. Anxious, the false friend on the end of the phone resorted to desperate means— means that hit the core of a young woman sensitive about her curvy body and desperate to please. Her eager, toothy smile and sparkling eyes,

telling of her love and naïveté, were no match for the false friend's resentment. Desperately: you look fat in that blue dress, you can't possibly wear it.

§ It worked. The young woman wore something else; the blue dress was never dry-cleaned. The conniving combination of collar, cleavage, elbow and waist remained stained, hanging limply to await its fate. Its path to fame uninterrupted by toxic chemicals, and opened wide by a false confidante's claim that the dress was guilty of producing the appearance of fatness.

The guilty blue dress, the innocent evidence, and the unknowing young woman who chose her fate by choosing her wardrobe. She wouldn't be the first. The woman – *that* woman – is an easy target because the blue dress, as with any piece of women's clothing, is already guilty. And this piece of cloth comes to have a stronger voice, make more unequivocal statements, than any embodied female ever could, whether in whisper or shout. Nothing will be disrupted if she's silenced for the sin of her appearance. Borderline crazy. There can be no further questions. The shadow of that blue dress hangs behind the President in his official portrait. But he's still a man in the foreground of an official portrait. The young woman will always be a blue dress, and always a young woman. No matter what she says or does, her body and voice will never be enough to change the blue shadow he wants to hide.