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## **She Tries Her Tongue: A Blueprint for Women's Collaborative Writing**

### **The 2 am Collective**



*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem  
Somehow she doesn't feel so alone.  
Envisioning kindred silhouettes slouched  
transparent figures of her sex  
channelling floating histories,  
our sticky souls,  
onto the collective page.*



Jodi Derkson

*Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem  
After years of hesitation, she writes past impossibilities  
Complex losses and grief interrupted  
inhabit her body  
Sadness seeped bones  
Rage the taste of blood in her mouth  
Regrets ever-present, heavy  
Too many hard truths  
The flow of ink a healing salve  
exorcising old ghosts.*



Debra Sutherland

*Somewhere*  
*a woman*  
*is writing a poem.*  
Mostly naked  
in the still dark hours of the morning,  
warmed by the sound of rain increasing,  
cradled by her lover's slumbering breath,  
she wakes alone  
with the taste of poetry  
on her lips.  
Obligated by her hunger,  
she moves to the page  
and feeds.



Danielle Arsenault

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
feeling cheerful and cherishing her new lifestyle  
no longer dependent or in need of protection from folly  
back in school  
mature  
a model for her daughter  
suddenly, she stops writing  
tears roll down her cheeks

it's midnight  
morning on the other side of the world  
today, her daughter has a class presentation  
who will assure her she looks just great?  
tomorrow, her son has  
an interview for his first job  
who will give him that supportive hug that only she gives?  
next week, her mother goes to hospital  
who will tell the doctor what he really needs to know?  
and next month, her husband has a three-day board meeting out of town  
who will be home in case the children need help?  
long distance lines are the only arms she has to mother everyone

the tears stop just as suddenly  
anger wells inside her  
anger against her husband  
why does he tell her all these things?  
does she really need to know?  
yes, knowing keeps her connected to the family she has left behind.

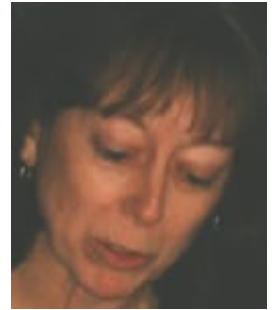


Emma C Kishindo

*Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem*

She  
is  
writing  
in  
the  
margin  
of  
a  
shopping  
list,  
Hunched over,  
Scribbling on the back of a parking receipt,  
Doodling in a duotang as the professor digresses,  
Filling the pages of a coil book in a café,  
Lying on her bed,  
Contemplating a journal entry,  
Dreaming of poetry as she falls asleep,  
Reviewing her poem in the shower,  
Running,           to a memo pad by the phone,  
                  dripping  
She is typing slowly, then quickly at a computer.

Everywhere, women are writing poetry. . .



Lori Austin

*Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem*

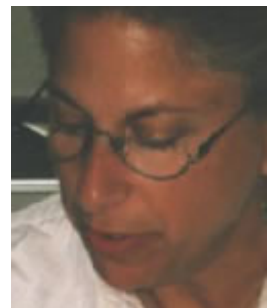
For her sister  
Friend  
Audience  
Herself  
Sitting, lying, standing, in any position  
Given a pen, a pencil or a lipstick  
In the living room, under a tree, by the beach, atop the mountains  
Writing love, life, work  
Writes as she wishes.



Lien Tran

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem,*

gazing into opalescent bubbles  
as she unravels the spidery layers of time.  
She renders the past transparent  
and embraces indigo and silver slivers of her younger self.  
She is an artist who can, at will,  
appropriate the vibrant colours she finds there,  
swiftly applying them more richly and with greater intensity  
to the contours of her present.  
Even so, she stands cloaked in wistfulness  
as she stirs the spaghetti that will feed  
her hungry daughter.



Sari Weintraub

*Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem*  
while under her table  
    between her ankles  
sits a baby  
    playing with the fringes of her skirt  
and  
    drooling  
        onto her toes



Monique Richoux

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
thwarted, not by crying children or angry partner  
angry children or crying partner  
four tiny feet surrendering to the sky, tail unmistakable,  
rat  
death is on my carpet  
my cat hunting his own poem  
epitaph: life-cycle accelerated  
One poem used to scoop away the other  
Both now compost  
Two lives interrupted.



Nicola Doughty

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
her heart bruised like a peach  
f  
  a  
   l  
    l  
     e  
      n

unveiling masks of desire and despair  
She breathes staccato

Striptease

Cover closed, her watermark blurred,  
she picks up her journal, and walks away,  
fully clothed.



Shannon Bourbonnais

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
she looks out the window  
in the reflection captured there  
sees the girl she once was  
the woman she hopes to be  
rain on the windowpane  
streaking a tear caught in the curve of her cheek  
she wonders why her eyes do not yet reflect  
the anticipation of journey flooding her heart veins.



Karin Lee

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
Liberated from critics and precautions.  
Moments open unapologetic  
Ancient voices beckon salted thoughts undone  
Merciful release  
Seduction of pen, triumphant metonym  
Whirl of creation  
A stanza danced to life.



Jacqui Gingras

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem.*  
I see you, your pages spilling out  
Sitting underneath the pear tree.  
You pull round the branches to bind you  
to the place where your babies toddled.

Stretching out my hand you wriggle,  
memories trickling out of our girlhood.  
When I pull harder to take you into  
other worlds of knowing, you fall back,  
refusing to get up.



Nadia Grunwell

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
adding ingredients beyond  
the yellowed, hand written recipe

the flavor of her secrets  
ancient recipes of mothering and widowing  
hidden in each batch

sweet lemon squares  
for her grand daughters to taste.



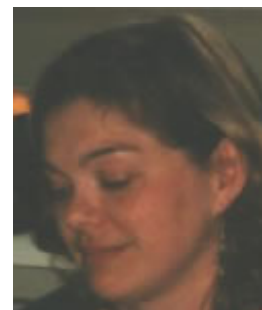
Liisa House

*Somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
reconciling rhythms of her world  
filling the blank slate –  
swollen-bellied,  
breathless,  
fists towards the sky –  
rhyming the red ink of  
silenced voices  
crying  
    sighing  
  
somewhere, telling a truth.



Maricel Ignacio

*somewhere a woman is writing a poem*  
tasting, glimpsing  
desires long ebbed  
flooding memory  
coursing through her body  
flowing recall onto her page  
merging, moments narrating  
her current  
her life



Lara Kaburda

*Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem*  
Breath and being entwining each letter  
Clock ticking, pen sliding, nose-dripping, tears gliding;  
Choking out words, memories, moments  
Thudding through brain cells, bloodstream and bones  
Eyes bleeding memories  
Melding and molten –  
Ink and snot  
embracing as poetry.



Eileen Edwards

*Somewhere a woman is writing.*  
Her poem  
    prose  
        story.  
In her head  
    her blood  
        tumbling from tongue  
            flowing through fingers.  
  
Shards of her soul  
Spilling onto the page.  
Free her  
    Save her.



*Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem*

in the twilight hours of history, lavender turning to ash,  
as time spills over and the moon unfurls her white-pitched fever in  
the songs of jasmine winds. The young woman I was climbs the  
stairs, the moon's pale alphabet filling her. She tucks her child into  
bed, bends over her desk in the yellow lamplight, frees her hand  
to write, breaking through the page like that Dorothea Tanning  
painting where the artist's hand gashes through the canvas, fingers  
and wrist plunged to the bone. She writes a dark, erotic psalm,  
an elegy, a poem to grow old in, a poem to die in.

Somewhere, a woman is writing a poem,  
as she gives away the clothes of her dead loved ones,  
stretching crumpled wings, her words rise liquid in the air,  
rosaries of prayer for the dying children, for the ones who  
have disappeared, the desaparecido, and for the ones who  
have been murdered. She writes through the taste of fear and  
rage and fury. She writes in milk and blood, her ink fierce and  
iridescent, rooted in love. Somewhere, a woman who thought  
she could say nothing is writing a poem and she will sing forever,  
blooming in the dark madness of the world.



Rishma Dunlop