

Myles/Driving

Eileen Myles

I was leaving my job at UCSD and I gave a rather moving speech to a small crowd who had come to the going away party. I bought a little recorder to have in my pocket. I had some purpose for recording my own remarks like I thought of it as related to something I was working on or would be working on. I thought I might use it for a novel I would write in the future about the academy. I was bugging myself for art. But the little recorder didn't do what I intended. I don't know if I knew how to run it. After that I started occasionally flipping it on when I drove to LA from SD and vice versa. It was fun. I had no idea if anything had recorded until I visited the gathered family of Susan Bee and Charles Bernstein last summer in Provincetown and all of them except for Susan knew how to turn sound files into something I could hear. It happened.

Earlier—a few years ago—I was caught in a park in SD without pen and notebook and left a poem on my cellphone. I called it in. So I've been imaginatively involved with the idea of transcription since then. Really always. I use a digital camera a lot, or did, and would compose texts as I walked and thought that it felt like a fleshing out of the idea of a poem as a score. A talky instead.



#1 (with music)

This is the emerging
possibility of writing
this way
down a thimble of
a street with a cake of a
view
bushy imported trees
& the pop music given
to me by some young
person in fact
the one person I know

#2

Those cars
enter like
a spider drizzle

look at me
sun drenched black

using my foot instead of my toes for a change
I count this road
I read that chain where you sit down
is easier fat than
fast food
what do you know red trucks with their hiccup front
grant wood roads
I know you're not a microphone
I know you're god
I know what catches me & stops me all the time

and fills the rest
and fills the bill
and swells
and comes down

#3 (Peach...)

My need to meet the new technology head on

Tommy's restaurant

San Clemente State Park

a red car zipping past a lump of cheese

wall they built for some purpose
to look like the houses they built
overhead

peach!
peach!
peach!

#4 (PALM TREE)

I use my nail to write
the pressure of my hand

I mark time by palm trees that are
and live next to one that
that was

a tall brown dead stick
poking the sky that I use as a marker
to say turn here

right now

#5 (DRIVING)

Driving
wiving with the
land

#6 (EILEEN...)

that ride took at least an hour
longer than it usually does

big brown clown mountains
to my left the last part of the trip
here is wide open sky
and I forgot this
and I forgot that
and in my freedom
I forgot why I leave
Eileen,
I leave
my name.

#7 (DARK WATER)

big parkways so disturbing to me
some cars seems to erupt from the
the tar itself
they seem to pull
themselves up
from below the surface of the land
though I don't think land. I mean something flat, something
black
almost like a water that we're on
though a dark water that
holds us.

#8 (CAR CAMERA)

my bullet regular
my two-fisted slim little
gun of a man

now to touch a button
and turn the entire outside of my
car into a camera
so that everything that's going
on out there could be coming in
could be held and recorded
cause I don't want to point the camera

I want it to be as open as I am

what's moving be the thing
that holds it all
I think that dot is me

ferris wheel, bridge, trusty grey & pink scarves
of secondary color decorating
the light blue but as we
know darkening sky.

#9 (DESTROYING US)

I don't mean to romanticize
this thing that's destroying
us all

I would happily drive
more than two hours
no

I would drive. . .

romanticize this thing
that's destroying us

I would drive
a couple of hours
for friendship.

#10 (BALL)

Is there anything about oil we don't
know already
like we're driving on our own limited past
something that's ancient like the history of
this ball we're driving these cars on
the fluid of everything and everybody
that ever was here
we're draining that
to just get around

and it's nice that
I could feel around in
the dark to say
these things
to touch a button
to make it light
and then
go out

#11 (THE LINES)

We're both here
in the dark and I can't
feel you

I don't know what
you're saying

just stay in your
lines

#12 (MAN'S BEAUTY)

we go this way and
you go that

things are a lot better
for us now

a man's beauty
remains the one thing
you are absolutely
not allowed to
discuss

it's not a subject
he'll tell you
so his beauty winds
up being like that of god

you can be yammering
outside of the castle
god's not going to come out
just so you can see what the

oh shut up