

# Takes Guts and Years Sometimes

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## She's Back

She's tasting a boy's first  
wet appetite, like the girl  
she once was

strutting on  
a tenement firescape  
in the protection of marital wars;

On a rock blast of Elvis  
swings into a blacklisted country.

Busy with bread-in-the mouth arithmetic  
parents, depression era refugees  
they saw only poverty.

A man old enough to  
be that girl's father  
now holds my hand past  
the pretense of skin

kisses a woman's mind out of lips  
in a Greenwich Village bar  
smack into another boro/home,  
and she,  
drum pulse in every cell, she's  
giving him a girl's new body.

As though a heavy boot wish  
stomped out years...pact  
against her womanhood.  
She made against her mother's slavery.

Before she knew  
the price of that murder.

## When an Editor Praising My Poems Asks *but why* & Do You Have Any That *are more*

what can I tell her  
this is New York not Oregon  
my metrocard only takes me  
so far most of it underground:  
Brooklyn Manhattan Bronx/  
thru conductor's  
announcements of police action  
meeting people so programmed  
they don't even know  
kids warring up for the day  
pushing: death god music  
off track rhythms  
my poems pick up &  
grab an editor out west  
if only i'd discard  
the *bumped out...dead lives...*  
the *desolation*  
couldn't see the rhythm  
is the sound of the image &  
can't be separated  
as I from this city...  
                        underground  
where I choose to live  
my poems are born  
& real is a pain  
in the butt nagging me  
for spare anything my  
space...REAL

## One of the Ten Best

One blue sky week in September  
the sun didn't burn or leave me  
wanting to take the chill out  
and the dying which began 2001  
had come to a halt: been months  
and no one...

seven days my lover would have called  
one of the 10 best for each  
if he were still here;  
I kept seeking out the sun  
any vacant bench on the promenade  
overlooking the East River,  
a few hours storing up ammunition  
because soon

the second anniversary would strike  
and all day in New York City across America  
the dead would be killed one by one.