

THE SECOND BODY IS A SHIELD

This poem was composed in 12-point sans serif font while the poet took place
In the past, doomed to remember the world as it took place outside
The detritus of heavy metal music in her mind, orchestrating a school
Of second graders eating sushi on a sidewalk in Park
Slope, in the neighborhood in which she spent the
Summer in heat in a bed in a room overlooking the neighborhood
Drug rehabilitation institute. Unclothed, the first body
Came, touched her skin, and her mind grew
Diseased by its eroticism. Now she carries a dense
Second body in her brain, a second body not unlike
The first, whose material form encompasses every facet of
The world, yet is not the world, and her desire rises and falls, rises and
Pauses and thinks to possess a very fine mind, expertise with regard to
Sex, the fruit of geometric pliability and a knack for crafting dialogue
From everyday speech - should have been a playwright - but the best
Circumstances are never the best.
Literary influences include the former's untamed aggregate, the reality
Of whose experience is formed by combining several disparate parts, then shouting
'You don't know where I'm at?! You don't know where I'm at?!'
Within this faux-fucked 8 and ½ x 11"
Static electricity. To which the second body
Responds: 'Imagine a pure gold ring. Divide it in half, then keep
Dividing and dividing and dividing.'

— Claire Donato, originally published in *Aufgabe*