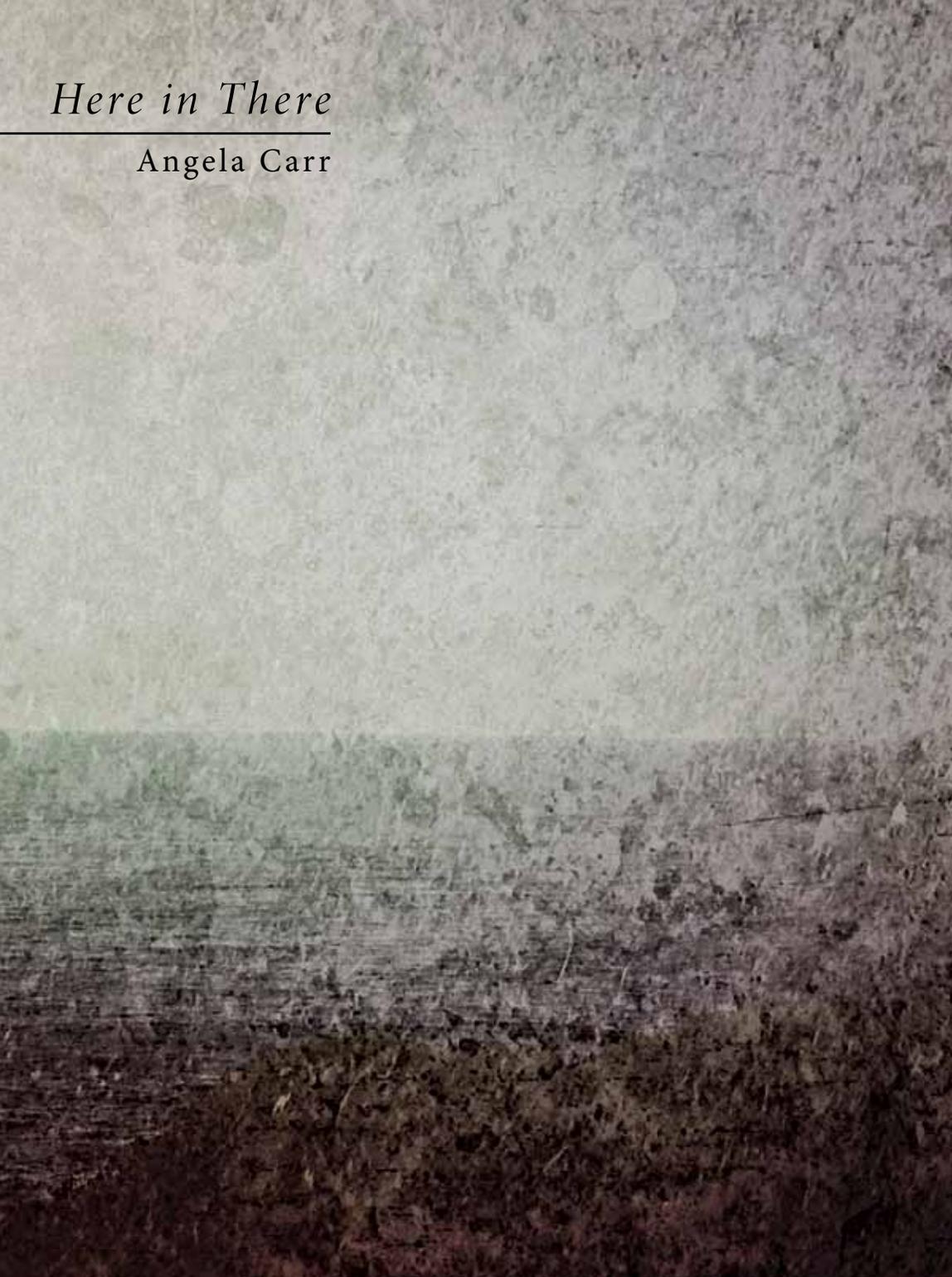


*Here in There*

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Angela Carr



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*Signs of Interest*



Iris gave her attention to the news. Iris gave her attention to relatives on the telephone. Iris gave her attention to writing letters. Iris gave her attention to protests. Iris gave her attention to the institution. Iris gave her letters to officials. Iris gave her time to relatives. Iris gave her letters to institutions. At last the storm was passing. Iris was late according to her relatives. The meal was nearly over. The car was damaged. Her experience was documented in a letter that described the future passing over her, beyond reach. There was no ceiling within sight. Interest was floating over her. It was another name for time. The herd is numberless. Since to whisper is grammar. It is a description of time. It underwrites everything. It is simple and declarative. It is red and digital. It is the emptying

of contingency – an escape. Iris gave herself to laughter. Iris gave herself to rejecting the apparatus while fantasizing about convent life. Iris characterized the nation's sudden and unified decision to vote differently as a residual Catholic tendency. The unrecognized nation within a larger, recognized nation had voted for an unknown, socialist, federal party. The unrecognized nation voted cynically and in unison and formed the official opposition within the recognized nation.

I gave my attention to the pause. I gave my attention to the frozen Skype image. I gave my attention to waiting. We were on hold. We could see but not touch and yet touch was composing us. We were broken only where skin could not answer. Iris' skin is ornamented with tattooed threads, mingling with each other in scrolls and coils, and alternating with straight lines. An image is truly raw and visible, fibres and sinews, strips and straps. The sense of beauty merges with and is consumed by the sense of reminiscence. Iris shuts down her computer. Iris stands up. Iris stretches her neck, shoulders, back. Iris shakes the cramps from her elbows, wrists. Iris releases, recollects.



I was directed away from the Everywhere Beautiful. I turned off my computer. I stood up. I stretched. I entered the kitchen. I gave my attention to the refrigerator. I sought its answers. I sought the composition of preservation in the cramped space of provisions. I sought the composition of attention. I gave my attention to an avocado. I gave my attention to a knife. I gave my attention to olive oil, salt, lemon. I cut slowly and meticulously, a soft human hand with its tools. I enhanced the details. Often I could recall nothing but our shared question. Its recurring figure was our uncertain future.



Iris gave her attention to the slow sun of the afternoon. Iris gave her attention to the vicious conflict. Iris gave her attention to the rule of one. Iris gave her attention to the silence of deliberation. Iris gave her attention to the signature on the paper. Iris gave her attention to the pen. Iris gave her attention to the yellow hue of the legal document. Iris gave herself a moment in which she could reflect. Iris found calm in this evaluation. Iris found silence in this calmness. Iris gave her attention to the shadow on the X-ray. Iris gave her attention to the calendar on the physician's wall.



Iris gave her attention to the calm of the signature. Iris gave her attention to the disinfected surface of a counter. Iris signed a cheque. Iris gave her attention to a stethoscope. Iris gave her attention to a white sheet of paper pulled over the examining table. Iris gave her attention to green lawns. Iris gave her attention to the herbicidal regularity of grass. Iris gave her attention to the brightness of the afternoon. Iris gave her attention to the invisible toxicity of the suburb. Iris gave her attention to the visible toxicity of the city. Iris folded the pollution of desire with care. Iris gave her attention to the fold. Iris folded the attention of brightness, of the X-ray. Iris folded the attention of visibility.



Iris unwound her scarf. Iris asked a question of an attendant. Iris waited in line. Iris saw smiling passengers. Iris saw well-dressed passengers. Iris chose a seat. Iris searched her bag. Iris misplaced a device. Iris closed her eyes. Iris pressed her head back. Iris stood up. Iris walked to the back of the bus. Iris sat down. Iris discreetly brushed away a teardrop. Iris picked up her bag with brevity. Iris entered the story. Iris unwound her scrutiny. Iris asked a question of the organizer. Iris waited in line. Iris saw smiling passengers. Iris saw well-dressed passengers. Iris chose the wrong seat. Iris listened to deliberations. Iris closed her eyes. Iris saw red on black. Iris evaluated and labelled her options. Iris made pencil checks in boxes. Iris took a sip of coffee. Iris listened to deliberations. Iris

wished the teardrops could flow freely. Iris chose to remain silent.

Iris desired silence. Iris' desire searched.

Iris walked away from the interrogation desk. Iris reboarded the bus. Iris gave her attention to the regularity of upholstery on the ceiling and chairs. Iris gave her attention to the dominance of upholstery. Iris gave her attention to the relative invisibility of patterns. Iris gave her attention to the detail of a voice and a signature. Iris gave her attention to the visibility of the irregular. We shifted our bags and shrugged off our coats. We attended to our travel documents carefully. We were re-emerging as individuals from persons with spatial origins. I gave my attention to the purse at my foot and to my leg stretched awkwardly into the aisle. I gave my attention to the volume of chatter, to untangling languages. I gave my attention to the coat folded under my head and to the pinched circulation in

my leg. I gave my attention to the smell of nail polish, of varnish. I gave my attention to the toxicity of full, inelastic and completely rigid forms. I heard the elevation of activity to durability. I heard canons forming from important consequences. I heard great upper structures supported by terraces. I heard intermediary figures moored at the bottom of thought, retaining meaning reductively and symbolically. I heard supporting parts of words, shadows and letters. I followed their indications. I heard an almost exclusively mechanical technique and a less frequent offering of poetry. I heard elements of *bottom*, *least*, *superficial*, of *profundity*, *terra* and *truth*. I heard truth in the word varnish. I heard the greater detail of the place name tear the fabric of language. I saw us through the gap

created by the place name. I chose to tear through the textile with the nail of that name.



We heard truth in the word, tearing. Banknotes, flags and passports could be torn but the hard material of coins, screens and credit cards could not. We followed glass, a material that cannot be torn, to its beginning with geometry. We secured rectangular windows versus the complexity of leaves, which can be torn. We heard the end of the poetic line as it turns relentlessly, whether cutting, breaking or tearing. We read *The Ear of the Other*. In any case the proper name is the only thing that does not change in translation, said Jacques Derrida. Even numbers may change. We read an essay by Norma Cole about Samuel Beckett who turns the ten nights of *Le Bateau Ivre* into nine.



We heard *green* tear in the word, ephemeral. Vertebrae of spring cast their shadows on the place name. We can follow this spine where the flesh of the greater body is ephemeral. We can follow the ephemeral and describe it from a point of view created by the place name. There is no more pattern in any torn fabrication. We can follow the hoax, be taken in, swindled. To be green, to be gullible, to be young. I heard the subway passing beneath the building six stories below. I heard the insistence of near and distant memories. Interest shuttled past rapidly. I gave my attention to credit. I inscribed my signature on the screen with a bare finger. I credited my senses with the accumulation of fluctuating reflections. Released cellularly, memory is sensuous, more exaggerated and raw.

I gave my attention to participating as a spectator. Credit erected a temporary structure over memory.

Iris leapt risky lengths joyously and fell into dereliction. This was her pattern. We descended into credit. We feigned communities of ownership and compared our names within the false safety of collectivity. We were the minions of solidarity or we were the champions of solidarity. We were compact, balmy, atlases. An enduring crowd of desire. Iris gave her attention to the nation. A hard surface is forever worn by a fluid surface that has no form. Iris gave her attention to the country. The country was not more or less abrasive than the nation, nor was it more or less abraded. Iris described the nation as a feeling of ritualized familial pressure. A vibrational fluid state with no visible imprint, however disputatious like the law. I read *metabolism, intellectual, depression*.

The descriptive function was monophonic and joints in the city's water pipes were made of lead. Iris described the coat of arms that belonged to her atrophying family. It was ornamental but void in the centre. Across a vacant middle ground, swords majestically raised and a lion's head emphatically repeated. Ribbons, sharp points of blade ends, a curling yellow frame, a billowing leaf, the first three letters of atheism, a splinter of wood, ether, a glazed roof, a support, a cavity, an allergen, an email, holding up the heavens, cruelty, extremity, exclusion. Oh coastguard, oh snowcock.

Here begins as I am questioning its softness. Here children are sleeping. Here, citizens, asleep. Here is inhabited the relief of home. Here brocades resilient surfaces of sleep. Here the tireless border guards. Here the nation is a fog that does not disperse by mid-day. Here labour invokes the focus of attention. Here is the intention of wooden furniture in a forest. A production of semblance. Poetry, distillation, desire. I have invited you here. Here is the way attention folds on itself. Light indisposed to beauty. Iris is a messenger in these lines cast here without characters. We are not our names but the residue of advantage there perceived as disadvantage.



The library ceiling was aqua and gold. Iris waited for a rare book to be brought out from a closed stack. Iris gave her attention to surprising 19<sup>th</sup>-century colour prints. Iris gave her attention to symmetry. Symmetry was a factor of excessive influence, a flat weaving of desire. Symmetry bides its time for a perfect illusion. Yet the act of waiting has no parallel: it is an instance of asymmetry. Iris gave her attention to the singularity of a unique action. A bias is a systematic distortion in the social fabric. Ambition is a determination, an upward measure. Iris gave her attention to the century. Let's compile an index of its errors. Iris gave her attention to suppleness. Not truth but the fact of weather without borders. Here, pages were cracking. Water creaked through the pipes in the

building. There were 156 units. Every amatory relation contained within the urban ambit both vast and minuscule. Iris and I were the creation of parts of an amorous whole or a composite beast that could express nothing more frightening than love's unrelenting desire for beauty. Whether in the symmetry of agreement or in symmetry of judgment, we were blushing.

