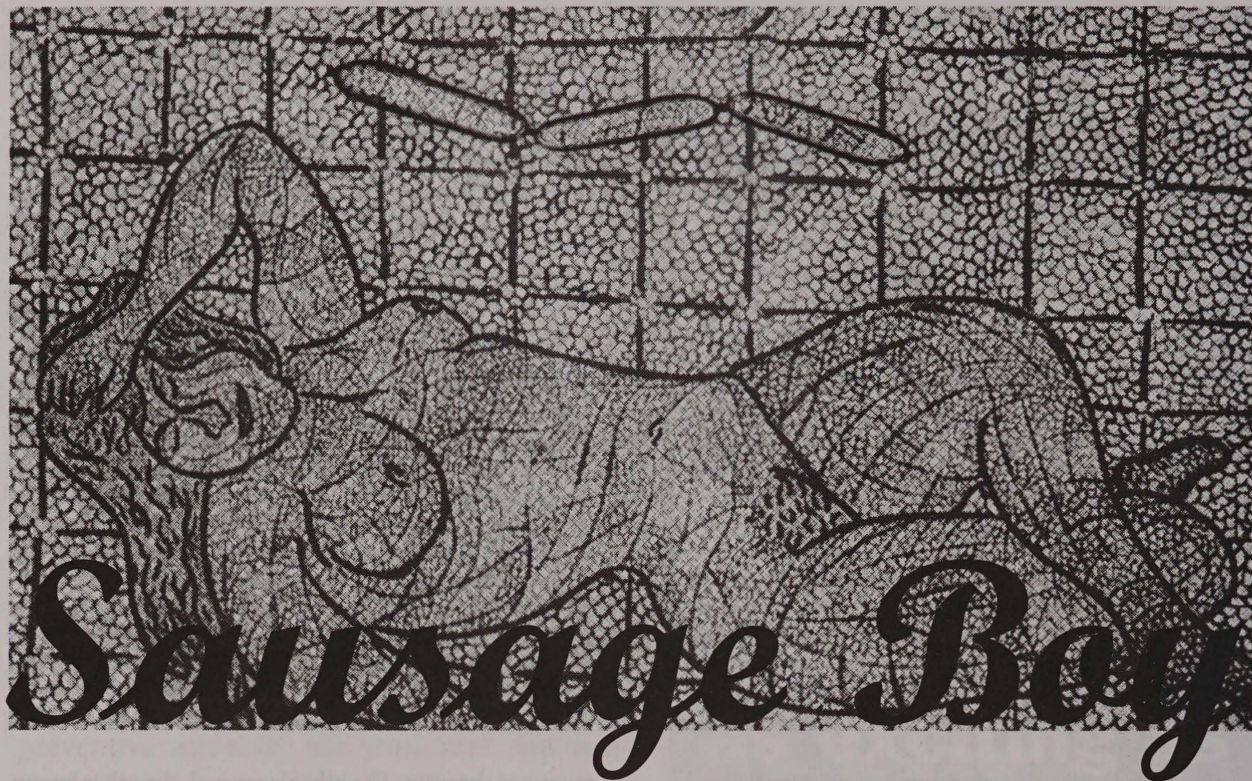


Robin Coste Lewis



by Robin Coste Lewis

She tells her that her fingers feel like sausages. They've only known each other for five days, and already they're fucking. They are having an affair. It is both horrible and delicious. Everything is a secret, a whisper.

It began as they all do: in a meeting, at a restaurant, on a walk, in a supermarket. It began in an office under the guise of a requirement. Apprentice and mentor.

The younger woman is wettest when she has her two stubby fingers worming lovelily into the older woman's caverns. It is the perfect drama. It gives the sausage-fingered girl exactly what she needs: an older woman with breasts, for-

ever-warm, to have and sidle next to all for herself. And what the older woman needs right now, more than anything else, is a large round mind to put her words into. So she concedes and lets the sausage-fingered girl call her "mama," just as long as they can talk the whole way through.

In their weekly afternoon sessions, Sausage Fingers pretends the older woman's breast is a plank of

wood, and her own mouth a course sheet of sandpaper. "Mama," the girl says, smothering the older woman's nipple with her tongue. Mother. Mamere. Mamon. Sweet Pussy.

The older woman, Mrs. Sweet Pussy, loves all of these names, but she wants them to be worse than all that. She wants to hear words no one would ever imagine calling her in any other position. Words like: *bitch, my bitch, my sweet little whore, cunt, rotting cunt, don't move, don't you fucking move*. She wants to come slower, harder, faster, in no time. She wants to be turned over, tied down, beaten like a ferret in heat, spanked with

a stingray. She wants to try to come while tied to a chair, in a straightjacket, in a room, by herself, using only words.

"Mamon" is just the first little dirty letter. "Mother" is the beginning of her alphabet.

They fuck in the car driving along the turnpike. Their fingers are hungry blue crabs burrowing into each other's panties. They fuck in the library—upright—between books, with half eaten apples, green and sour and browning in their hands. Sausage Fingers's breath smells like sweet corn tortillas. Mrs. Sweet Pussy's skin like slowly warmed milk.

They've only known each other for one week and already they have invented their own private language.

Sausage Fingers put Mrs. Sweet Pussy across her lap, "Repeat after me," she orders. Mrs. Sweet Pussy loves the switch. Finally someone else wants to take control. She arches her back into the air and waits for Sausage Fingers to continue.

"Mother," Sausage Fingers says. "M is for mother." Sausage Fingers's other hand is beneath Mrs. Sweet Pussy, palming her mound, diving like a sandpiper's fluted beak for a runaway sand crab.

Mrs. Sweet Pussy opens her legs without Sausage Finger's permission. The sausage-fingered girl throws her hand down onto Mrs. Sweet Pussy's ass, and whispers, F is for French Angel Fish. She traces her Fingers from Mrs. Sweet Pussy's crotch, up towards her anus, but stops just when Mrs. Sweet Pussy starts to sigh.

Sausage Fingers is from the Caribbean. Mrs. Sweet Pussy was born on the edge of the Pacific. The only way they know how to get nearer to each other is by going off-land, away, under the sea.



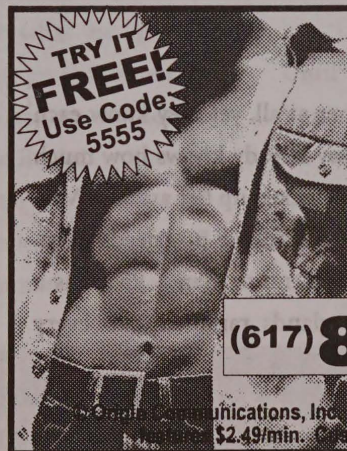
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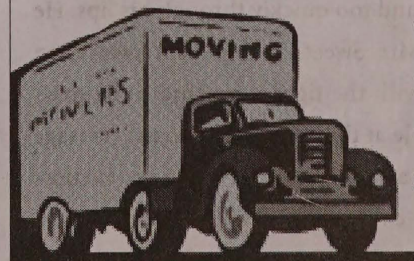
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"P is for Peacock Flounder. S is for Stinging Sea Cauliflower. T is for Throbbing Pink Moon Jellies. A is for the Atlantic Spotted Dolphin. D is for Farming Damsel Fish."

They drown in each other's language. They tickle each other's bellies with their own little pectoral fins.

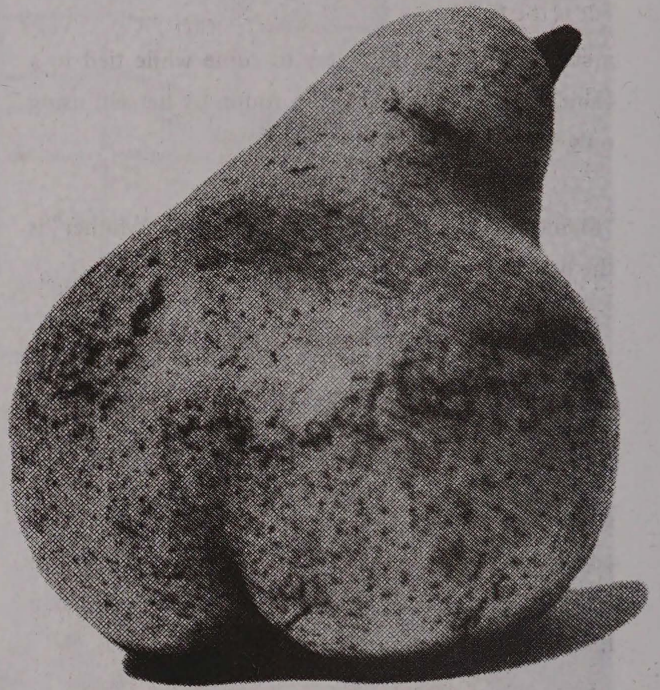
Mrs. Sweet Pussy is coming like an old well-traveled estuary: a little fresh water, a little salt, a little oyster, and a little Mother of Pearl.

"Are you my little one?" she asks, "Are you my Sausage Boy?"

Sausage Boy is too somewhere else to answer. For the first time in her life she is wishing she had a penis, a dick, a hard, stiff stick. She is having what Mrs. Sweet Pussy calls a phantom. Sausage Boy is like an amputee who still feels the thick throbbing limb years after it's been removed.

They don't know each other at all, yet they know each other very well. Sausage Boy already knows how much Mrs. Sweet Pussy likes to be fucked up her ass, and Mrs. Sweet Pussy knows that what Sausage Boy needs most, more than an apprenticeship, more than a Ph.D., is a mouth-full of mammary glands rammed into every crevice of his throat.

Late, that first week, one night in the kitchen, Mrs. Sweet Pussy hoists herself onto the counter and opens her blouse. She takes out a breast and offers Sausage Boy a feeding. Sweet Pussy teases Sausage Boy, passing the hard raised mound too quickly through his lips. He clamps down, but Mrs. Sweet Pussy pulls it away, then spanks his cheeks with the tight, tiny sand dune masquerading as a nipple at the edge of her breast. Sausage Boy lifts her by her ass, and pins her like a sea cucumber down onto the cold, wooden floor. He's trying to put his knee in her, and she doesn't mind at all. She can



take a knee, she thinks, a knee, a foot, a leg, an elbow, an anything. Every part of her wraps around his torso, as if she is a monstrous squid. Mrs. Sausage Pussy, Sweet Boy, Boy Sausage, Sausage Fingers, Fingers Pussy, the older woman thinks, sweating, disoriented. "Mother, Bitch, Cunt, my little whore, filth, sin devil in a brown body," he answers.

Sausage Boy is all apuddle. He feels his phantom. Mrs. Sweet Pussy's body throbs on its own accord. She pulls every spare molecule of air from the room deep into her own wet cavern. Her thick purple ink syrups their entire world.

The best part about the affair is that they are pretending they know each other better than this. They are not ready to admit that what is actually happening is that they have never fucked anybody's body this way before. They have never let anyone in this way. And the joy of it all, the unleashed boredom finally taking its authoritative way, is a greater pleasure far exceeding any salty word or properly seasoned whip. Better than coming. Coming would be incomplete without the confession of each other's private little historical dissatisfactions.

It is the Game of Life, but Sausage Boy thinks it's called Love. It is a Trick of the Wrists, but Sausage Fingers believes in Happily Ever After. She wants to believe in something more than a warm wet slightly sugared strawberry. Mrs. Sweet Pussy is only willing to think this game is called How We Get Through the Night.

Mrs. Sweet Pussy is bored and likes her little Sausage Boy because he is honest about his needs. He comes to her office once a week and gladly writes a check for her services because he is getting what he really came for: not a better understanding of his issues, but the actual thing he has wanted all along: a Mother, a Mamere, a Mamon, to fuck. All Mrs. Sweet Pussy has to do is open her legs, and he falls right back in.

They pretend they are faggots meeting in the woods. She drops

her skirt, wraps her arms around their imaginary tree, ass exposed, puckered, tight and beaming for the world, and he's in, way in. So in that Mrs. Sweet Pussy can feel him coming up, in, through her mouth.

He's the best client she's ever had. He learns more about his issues in one session than ten years of psychoanalysis could ever teach him.

But Sausage Boy only thinks about Mrs. Sweet Pussy in relation to himself. My Pussy. My own. Sweet Pussy is just what he needs to help him forget that vast howling canyon in the middle of his body. She is exactly what he doesn't know he desires: an elaborate fantasy to fill his gaping motherless wound. Sausage Boy only wants to see Mrs. Sweet Pussy as his own personal convenience store. She is a microwave turned to its highest

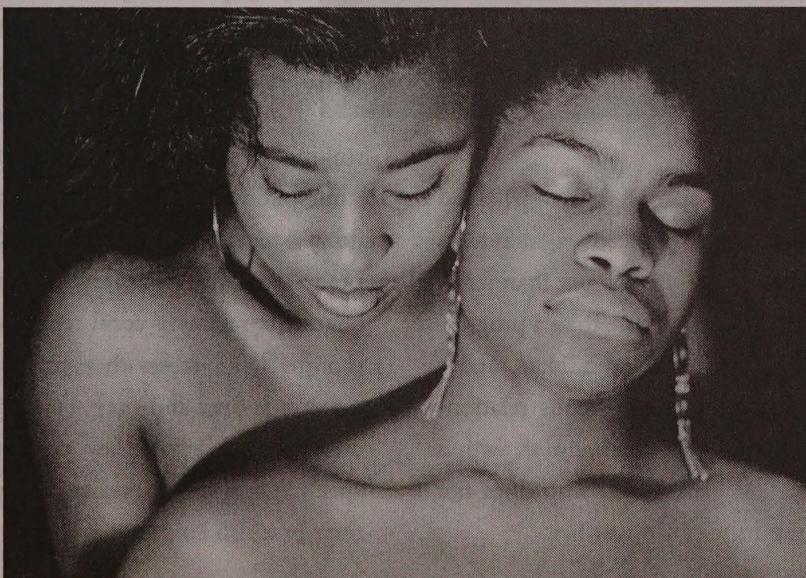
setting. Opened twenty-four hours a day. A place to stop for uncomplicated coffee, condoms, and high-octane fuel.

Mrs. Sweet Pussy has her own Monument Valley to contend with. She's ignored herself for so long, so busy milking herself for the world, that she's developed an art, a career of not listening to herself. She doesn't know the word *no*. She doesn't even know the letter, 'n'. Her *yes* is automatic, something she can't help. Her breasts leak milk at the very first glance of a mouth.

Mother. Mamere. Mamon. Sweet Pussy.

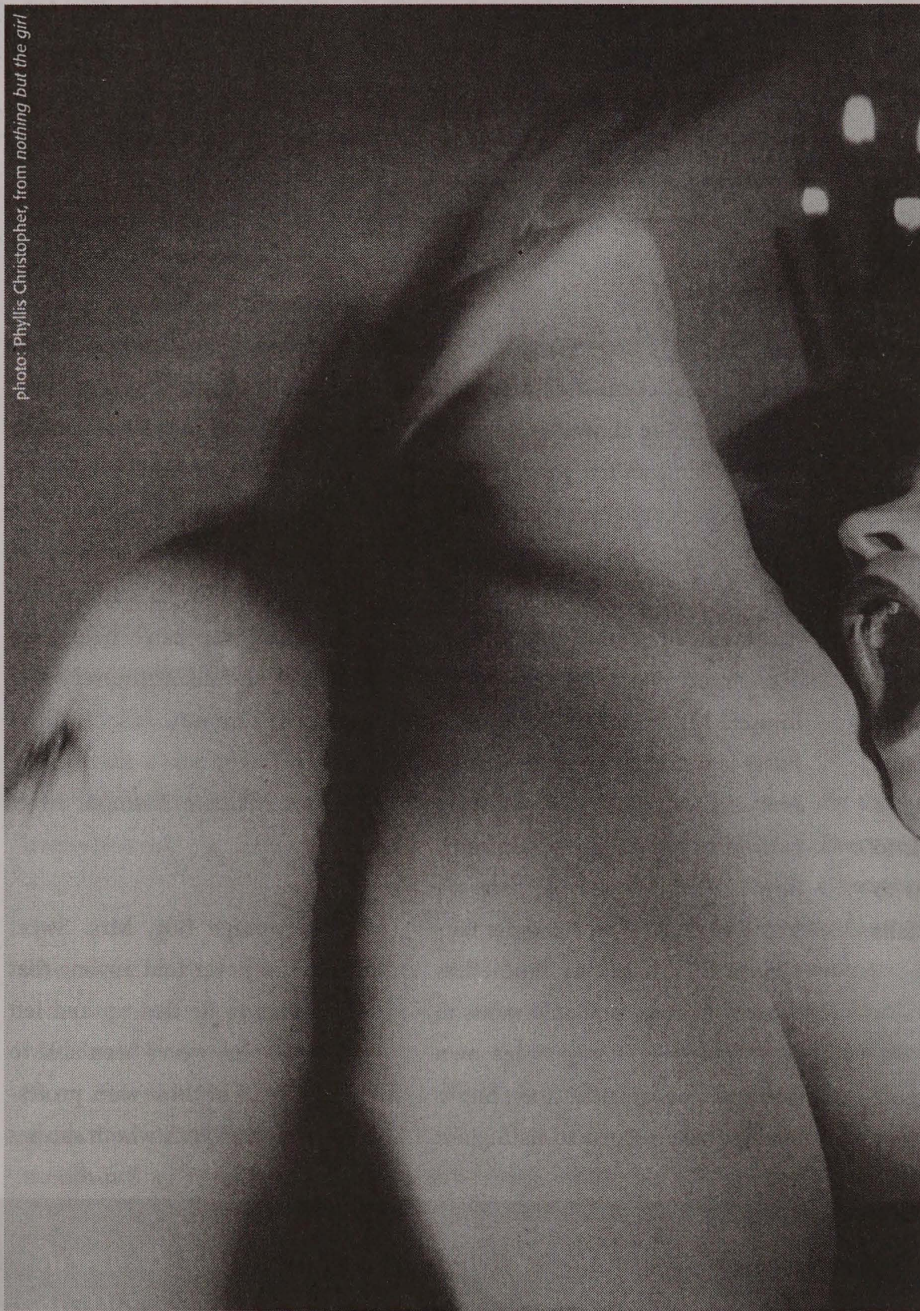
Until Sausage Boy, Mrs. Sweet Pussy has never told anyone that she wants to be tied up and left there. She has never been able to admit to all of those safe, professional women with whom she has

photo: Laurence Jaughey-Paget, from nothing but the girl



She is trying to work her way up to telling her perfect, old-school, lefty girlfriend that what she needs right now...is someone, anyone, with a tightly packed fist, who does not want to get to know her.

Robin Coste Lewis

photo: Phyllis Christopher, from *nothing but the girl*

traveled, taken home and purchased property that what she wants is rough and simple. Cell to cell. Southern, or not at all.

Mrs. Sweet Pussy is trying to admit that she is dying to be fucked properly, serviced regularly, lubricated on a ritual basis. She is trying to work her way up to telling her per-

fect, old-school, lefty girlfriend that what she needs right now—more than safety, more than feminist rhetoric, more than a progressive presidential candidate, and a long-term monogamous relationship—is someone, *anyone*, with a tightly packed fist, who does not want to get to know her.

Sausage Boy had never known a mother. Mrs. Sweet Pussy has never been a child. Sausage Fingers is trying to remember. Mrs. Sweet Pussy sees immeasurable value in forgetting. Sausage Fingers is a little boy trapped inside a young woman's body. Mrs. Sweet Pussy is an older woman, trying for one last time to get the animal in her right.

Three months later and their fucking gets ruined by their discovery of love-making. They slow down, having remembered how to think. Their gestures become complex. Intellectual engagement and elaborate calisthenics are not enough to keep them afloat.

Their boat is only one solitary plank of wood. And they have splinters and Mother of Pearl chaffed into their asses. They are sinking like two large volcanic stones, and all they know how to do well together is fuck like young randy dolphins playing Grown Up beneath an ancient coral reef. Six months later, when the apprenticeship is over and they see each other on the street they do not speak. Only their bodies know their brackish language.

Mrs. Sweet Pussy is walking with her wife and grand-kids. One of the children pretends he is playing volleyball with a purple balloon. Sausage Boy sees the balloon and remembers that thick dark ink. Sausage Boy is with her partner. They are carrying signs, on their way to a rally. The girlfriend has no idea that the graying, older woman walking towards them, dripping in coral and fresh water pearls, has fucked her partner on several occasions in positions she herself is too landlocked to imagine.

They all pass each other like two friendly schools of fishes, the air around them mingling like warm currents in a small tidepool. Mrs. Sweet Pussy nods, Hello , and thinks that both women are younger than her own daughter combined. Sausage Boy nods back, like a dolphin pecking with his snout. Mamere. Mamon. My Pussy.

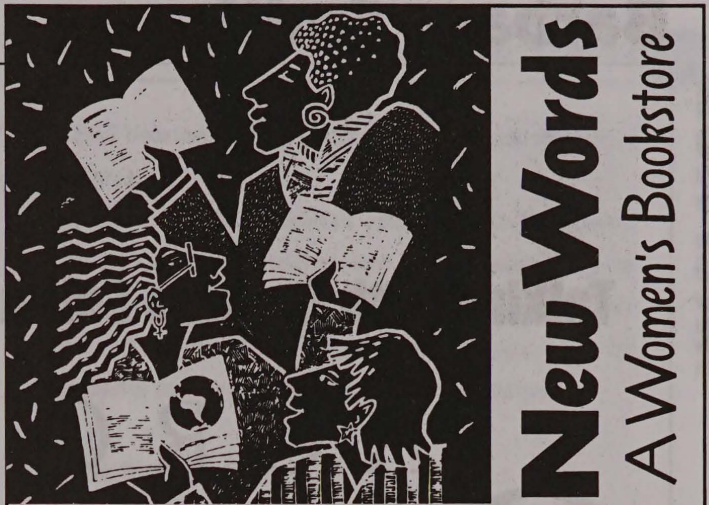
They don't know each other at all. They fuck each other very well. Their bodies have a secret language, a private little alphabet. "Mother" is the first letter. "Father" is a dead language they laugh about no longer speaking. "Pussy" is a letter like an 's' or a 't'. They use it all the time.

The young woman's mouth smells like warm tortillas and her fingers feel like tightly packed blood sausage. The older woman's breasts are like a million mothers. She is a walking ocean of sweet warm milk.

Orca. Pectoral Fin. Throbbing Pink Moon Jelly. Hawk's Beak Turtle. Sargasm Weed. Stinging Sea Cauliflower. Farming Damsel Fish. Peacock Flounder.

A stingray. A jellyfish.

Robin Coste Lewis teaches fiction writing at Hampshire College.



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