

BOMB

Black Lace Bra Kind of Woman

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Source: *BOMB*, No. 40 (Summer, 1992), p. 50

Published by: [New Art Publications](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40424558>

Accessed: 03/08/2013 10:06

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Sandra Cisneros

I AM ON MY WAY TO OKLAHOMA TO BURY THE MAN I NEARLY LEFT MY HUSBAND FOR

Your name doesn't matter.
I loved you.
We loved.
The years

I waited—
by the river for your pickup
truck to find me. Footprints
scattered in the yellow sand.
Husband, mother-
in-law, kids wondering
where I'd gone.

You wouldn't
the years I begged. Would
the years I wouldn't. Only
one of us had sense at a time.

I won't see you again.

I guess life presents you
choices and you choose. Smarter
over the years. Oh smarter.
The sensible thing smarting
over the years, the sensible
thing to excess, I guess.

My life—deed I have
done to artistic extreme—I
drag you with me. Must wake
early. Ride north tomorrow.
Send you off. Are you fine?
I think of you often, friend,
and fondly.

12/03/90 Ann Arbor

Sandra Cisneros was born in Chicago, Illinois and currently lives in San Antonio, Texas. Her books include "My Wicked, Wicked Ways" (Third Woman Press), "Woman Hollering Creek" (Vintage) and "The House on Mango Street" (Vintage).

CLOUD

"If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper." -Thich Nhat Hanh

Before you became a cloud, you were an ocean, roiled and murmuring like a mouth. You were the shadow of a cloud crossing over a field of tulips. You were the tears of a man who cried into a plaid handkerchief. You were a sky without a hat. Your heart puffed and flowered like sheets drying on a line.

And when you were a tree, you listened to trees and the tree things trees told you. You were the wind in the wheels of a red bicycle. You were the spidery *Maria* tattooed on the hairless arm of a boy in downtown Houston. You were the rain rolling off the waxy leaves of a magnolia tree. A lock of straw-colored hair wedged between the mottled pages of a Victor Hugo novel. A crescent of soap. A spider the color of a finger nail. The black nets beneath the sea of olive trees. A skein of blue wool. A tea saucer wrapped in newspaper. An empty cracker tin. A bowl of blueberries in heavy cream. White wine in a green-stemmed glass.

And when you opened your wings to wind, across the punched-tin sky above a prison courtyard, those condemned to death and those condemned to life watched how smooth and sweet a white cloud glides.

8.10.91
San Antonio

BLACK LACE BRA KIND OF WOMAN

*para la mujer de fuerza—la Terry
who today is thirty-one*

!Wachale! She's a black lace bra
kind of woman, the kind who serves
up suicide with every kamikaze
poured in the neon blue of evening.
A tease and a twirl. I've seen that
two-step girl in action. I've gambled bad
odds and sat shotgun when she rambled
her '59 Pontiac between the blurred
lines dividing sense from senselessness.

Ruin your clothes, she will.
Get you home way after hours.
Drive her '59 seventy-five on 35
like there is no tomorrow.
Woman zydeco-ing into her own decade.
Thirty years pleated behind her like
the wail of a San Antonio accordion.
And now the good times are coming. Girl,
I tell you, the good times are here.

6 de julio, 1990