

1-1-1997

Nighttime Religion

Salita Bryant

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/yr>

Recommended Citation

Bryant, Salita (1997) "Nighttime Religion," *Yalobusha Review*. Vol. 3 , Article 12.
Available at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/yr/vol3/iss1/12>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the English at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Yalobusha Review by an authorized editor of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

SALITA BRYANT

Nighttime Religion

In her first passion woman loves her lover.

In all the others, all she loves is love

Byron

Don Juan, Canto III

All the time now, I wake up
having been fucking in my dreams.
My nipples tight, my body damp and weak
knowing what eighteen-year-old boys
must feel--wanting it all the time like that.
Just fucking, with no pretense of love.
Not remembering, like I don't remember
the dreams. I don't know if he is huge or blond,
tall or kind; I only know that man-smell.
Like some woman in the middle ages
telling time by her spice clock--
her smelling cinnamon and knowing
it is almost dusk--time to feed a child
or milk a cow.

Lately I have begun to breathe deeply in
the cedary outdoor smell of me.
I have begun to look at them boldly
on the streets, in grocery stores, I look
hard and think:

Yes, it is possible.

I can imagine that the dreams are like that--
me standing in an elevator and breathing
him in. I would reach up to his face,
run my hand down the soft beard to rest it
on his chest and tell him:

Nothing is hidden but my heart.

I kiss him while the doors are still shut
and we are rising up into the building.
I touch my tongue to the roof
of his mouth and he knows I have told him
the truth. He leans back into the wall,
his whole body hard against his jeans as I
get off on the ninth floor.

Or I take him home and have him
lay me down on the white flannel.
I pull from him mud and blood
and stars enough to taste his smell,
my hair falling like nest
of lemon grass across his body.
Later from my bed I watch him.
He stands in the bathroom brushing his teeth,
his left hand resting on the sink
the right working the brush,
his beautiful ass, slightly dimpled at the cheeks.