

BECCA KLAVER'S

NONSTOP

POP



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**NONSTOP**

**Pop**



## MORE LYRICS FOR MY FAVORITE BAND

I was clapping for your dance / I was dancing for your clap

I was skooching around in my anger / fainting into a nap

and the girls on the train with their Warhol tote bags  
and the girls on the train with their space! gusts  
and the girls on the train empire-wasted  
and the girls on the train shitfaced-ed!

I was scowling for your benefit / I was benefiting from your scowl

I was facepainting by number / hardsetting my jowl

and the girls on the train go

*doo-da-doo / doo-doo da-doo*

*doo-da-doo / doo-doo da-doo . . . .*

## ON THE NIGHT BEFORE TV GOES DIGITAL

PBS is playing *Chattanooga Choo-Choo*

ABC is playing the NBA finals (Los Angeles v. Orlando)

On NBC, the greenish light of a hospital room

CBS follows a tan blonde smirky genius

FOX's local news is sponsoring a conversion box giveaway

I am playing a dirge for my friend and tomorrow morning's charges and  
tomorrow morning's pleading

*Frasier* reruns, *Cosby* reruns, cell phones spandex and storms

You say this is trivial but I take the long view

*that was the language we were hearing all night, the poetry of this tall blond guy  
who spoke like the movies, stopping and starting, making a joke, a kiss*

The poetry of television done up in Spanglish and white suits

This is a commercial-free hour

Baseball announcers play themselves

I play myself and Pavement's cover of "The Killing Moon"

Charlie Sheen and his patina

It's April in June, I've got bullion and butter as consolation

Little green flecks float to the surface

My instant / soup and its patina

What can I tell you that will exploit myself and no one else

The man with the red Indian on his cap has won the girl

Oh it's Charlie

*Mennnnnnnn*

The way to the surface is slow

Morbid, I'm leaving it on all night

## A THE BEAUT

Here we go again, A—

time to lace your bonnet, buckle your galoshes,  
glide with me headlong down the Slip 'N Slide—

A, I sewed up the hole in my stretchy teal skirt just for you.

I needle-pricked my finger just for you ess ay

& we became bros.

.  
. .  
.

Hand me the mic. I'd like a word with the rallying forces.

Read book Oprah toldja?

Check.

Can they sell that for you on eBay?

Double-check.

Seen kid-wishes pinned to balloon bouquets  
drifting into the lighthouse's gaze over the lake in the fog?

Check again.

.  
.  
.

In spite of my eyes on the sidewalk  
avoiding yours  
in spite of small towns avoided  
in spite of large swaths of town skirted

we are nightly flying door to door  
as a fridge door glows, as an engine stalls

This city's not just a play your mind puts on while you sleep

## NEW, NOT BLUE

Today the sun is too bright  
to know the moon  
so I look it up on my calculatorcat  
my automated phase display  
my e-modulated moon  
my interwebbed sky  
and the moon is zero percent of full  
zero percent of full  
and I think  
*what an optimistic little moon phase*  
not empty  
*a bright and shiny moon wrapped in cellophane*  
not new  
*give that moon a pretty little bow*  
zero percent of full  
zero percent of full

## DIRECT ADDRESS

A cougar was shot dead in your alley this afternoon.  
I'm not kidding—a cougar was shot dead in your alley this afternoon.

He went off on a six-minute tangent about *Battleship Potemkin*.  
I'm not kidding—he went off on a six-minute tangent about *Battleship Potemkin*.

Famous people are reading poems on TV right now.  
I'm not kidding—famous people are reading poems on TV right now.

One time it came to blows over *Das Boot* vs. *Das Boöt*.  
I'm not kidding—one time it came to blows over *Das Boot* vs. *Das Boöt*.

It's like the *Yo! MTV Raps* of *Cabaret*, Andy said.  
I'm not kidding, Andy said, It's like the *Yo! MTV Raps* of *Cabaret*.

Your mom is my ideal reader.  
I'm not kidding! Your mom is my ideal reader.

At the risk of being forward, I'm here on a dare from my friends to ask you out.  
I'm not kidding. At the risk of being forward I'm here on a dare from my friends  
to ask you out.

## PAVAROTTI LIP-SYNCHED LAST PERFORMANCE

I love a phony  
at the end of his life  
in the bitter cold  
at the opening ceremony  
of the Turin Olympics

Famed Figaro faker  
tender tenor  
synching

*Nessun Dorma*  
Let No One Sleep

Every day  
I have a lot to say  
about What's Real

*The farther north you get,  
the more real the people get*

but most auditors  
won't stay silent  
and instead react  
by way of

*Okeeeey*

Hey you  
of the eye rolls—  
Hey you, mega-concert—

You might postpone five June dates  
or cancel eight shows in April but

I  
will  
not  
let  
you  
sleep

## MONDAY PIZZA \$9.99

the banner boasts I'm sure Monday  
pizza is better than most whatever  
the price because it's unexpected  
who gets excited about Friday  
pizza I guess I do but I'm  
excitable or hysterical or some  
other word erstwhile tossed at  
women who could not sit still

"A Woman Who Could Not"  
(YOU fill in the epitaph  
don't you LOVE party games)

A. would agree and sometimes  
grabs the back of my shirt when I  
try to get up from the (fainting) couch

What does he think, that I'm  
getting up to "greet suitors" or to  
"pace the widow's walk" or because  
"my uterus is wandering" only to  
"sit back down again"

Until then I will go Frank lunch-  
breaking I will go Virginia street-  
haunting I will go a-Klavinger  
I will eat Monday's pizza  
for the rest of the week because  
I am succored because I am

suckered because the Victorians  
couldn't because I can  
can you

## SCHWARZENEGGERY

She leaves the room and mutters *I'll be back* in a Schwarzenegger sort of way so it comes out more like *Aisle be bach*, shallow in the throat, and this is just a way around the ordinary, this is just a pump on the pedal to keep rolling along, more awake than before and starcrossedly in love with hurried skirts in doorways, a plate in each hand, a yellow glove, a sponge, a rack, gliding, opening, shutting, championing a lesser-known sculptor. She knows she's not supposed to love it but knows that's why she does, why playing a part with the gust of history at its back evens her out like batter settling, even when she plays it badly. She makes presumptions from the kitchen and she presumes today to be a muscleman.

## B®AND LOYALTY

I was like so . . . Geico

And you were like so . . . Activia

And together we were like so . . . GlaxoSmithKline

In an effort to be so . . . Ann Taylor Loft

We end up so . . . Cross

And sometimes we're all like so . . . Ambien

When we mean to be so . . . Lemon Pledge Aerosol Spray

Although we're perfectly fine being Pilot G2 Retractable

We'd much prefer to be Crayola Classic Washable

Some days, we must accept, will just be Glad Press'n Seal Plastic Wrap days

I was Kotex Maxi Pads with Leak Lock Medium Flow with reluctance, but still  
I was Kotex Maxi Pads with Leak Lock Medium Flow

Even though you expected things to turn out so Comcast Triple Play

There's a communal relief to being so Verizon Wireless Nationwide Unlimited

In the end I'd just like people to remember me as being as iRobot Roomba 570  
as possible

## FOXY

If I've never heard of  
The Sexiest Woman in the World

does that mean  
I'm past some threshold  
of body-consciousness

or does that mean  
I'm out of touch

What dude is in charge at  
*FHM Magazine*

who's ever heard of it anyway  
and what does it stand for

## IMAGE UNION

A man introduces the next clip.

I call across the room.

“If you were a gamblin’ man  
you’d gamble on the one  
where the foppish lad  
screams berries & cream.”

“I’m just in pain  
so I’m makin’  
faces.”

## LIVING THE SECRET

I am happily celebrating my Secret one-year anniversary this month.

Could The Secret do something for me that's contrary to my friend's wish? Or, could The Secret change my friend's feelings for me?

I decided to "test drive" my power of attraction and started with small things. My first wishes were a cup of coffee and a new pair of shoes, and guess what? Today I have received them!

Just today, an item which I wanted to order online lowered the price by \$10 and added more color choices!!

I no longer am picked last, I'm picked first. Everyone notices me and helps me carry my bags to my car and everything. Finding a parking spot is no longer impossible. I get right up front.

One of my co-workers said to me, "You are so lucky, you always win," and I just smiled.

Then I started to use my imagination. I started to tell people that I worked for a FIRM. Sometimes I got really specific if someone asked, and said I work for a Law Firm!!!! I became happy about it . . . . I felt so full of happiness about my dream job!

About a year later my dream came true, she met the man of her dreams! They are married and now I have a loving father and little brother that are a regular American family!

A few weeks ago I got a catalog of chocolate-covered strawberries in the mail. I am an "in the closet" crazy nut for chocolate-covered strawberries.

Every day I looked at the catalog, and thought “yum, yum” (not intending this would be one of the things that would manifest). Saturday morning arrived, and sitting at my door was a big box. Inside there were 12 strawberries and 4 cookies. Just like Jack Canfield, I heard the theme for *The Twilight Zone*. I was so amazed, I cried for 30 minutes (hysterically).

A year later I found The Secret, and realized that I had followed The Secret without even knowing about it! I asked, I believed, and I received!

I then added a picture of Billy Joel to my vision board, as well as writing in my gratitude journal that I already had the tickets and loved the show . . . . A day or two later a woman I work with mentioned that she got tickets to the Billy Joel show on the day of my anniversary. Yesterday as I got out of bed I told myself that today was going to be a great day and how grateful I was for being able to live it. When I got to work this same woman approached me and asked if I feel today is a good day. I replied in the affirmative and she handed me an envelope.

I decided to completely change it around, while adding some mini Secret challenges. I said, “(r) I want to just run easy errands at work tomorrow. 2) Before I receive millions from the universe, I want to hear/see something about pandas, and see a hot pink car which will jump out at me.”

So far, I'm thinner, my skin is clear, my bank account is bigger, and my love life is shifting.

Loving it!!!

## NO COUNTRY FOR YOUNG LADIES

A caftan  
with extended hard-on  
was Oscar.

As plebes fit to any movement—  
qualities  
from her breastplates tonight:

*Why good image,  
it's that of swagger  
and segmented wit.*

I look, camera.  
I looked all  
together, pregnant, and close-fitting.

Fit breastbone, consumption fit,  
darker,  
funereal.

They got the  
red-dresses-will-eradicate-yr-heart  
memo. Right.

Think public:  
down  
the up premiere escalator.

## INSURGENT COUNTRY

Freeway billboard children  
stick antenna tongues out

Air's poised  
sound on grass

*What praise?* sang the  
microphone headset

Pious ashen depots—  
their ache in tune

to somelips' want  
for giant camera rolling

Drunken hills, child actors  
dead marbles

& brownbagged  
privacy of home-script

America so vast and  
usable

## PLOT POINT TWO

I love so much to arrive blubbering upon plot point two the part where the protagonist is driving in the rain or her lover has been unfaithful or his mother is not really his mother or all three at once It is then when I clutch my cherry cola and bite down on the straw and am so grateful

for the Hollywood Formula for Syd Field and those men in black glasses who sat in back rooms tapping cigars charting the hills and valleys of story I love to anticipate the sad part 60 minutes in when everything seems hopeless but really you know the rain is manufactured and the hoary

old man in the garret will get his memory back and reveal that the hero's mom is really his mom and his best friend's mom too and all along the love they'd loved had been tucked like a script inside their cells And when I think how in life I don't know when plot points will pour down from above

I tug at my hair and gnarl my eyebrows and offer desperate frantic praise for the staged break-up under the antique lamppost haze No praise for flat coke and wrinkled straw and the sick-sweet ache my stomach gets warning me of the bad thing that hasn't come but is coming one of these days

## I WAS A WATER BALLERINA

A water ballerina starring in  
*Marti's Last Stand*

A humorous quality to it not because  
my father was a big-band member nor

because of my days in the water  
pretending to be a contortion artist

but because  
girls learn their own layers

A humorous quality to it not because  
gum and borax in a heat proof bowl

(I use Pyrex) but because if  
Lina Lamont had mixed it with milk

instead of gold, or EVA-Foam  
Material instead of with

artists, the girls who play with  
artists, the girls who play with

figurines, waterglobes, snow  
nods to art in the Chanel show—

my days in the water pretending  
to be a contortion artist

would be over. The girls who flashback  
for gold, who play with EVA-Foam—

he would never see  
my days in the water pretending

he would never see  
mother was a water ballerina starring

in *Rich Gold Material*  
(10 to 16 August 2003)

not because women are  
tutu globes escaping orbit

but because playgirls make  
excellent display artists

## LESS FINESSE, MORE SPANK

less *Twin Peaks*, more *Ru Paul's Drag Race*  
less velvet, more velour  
less Dom Pérignon, more André  
less diamond, more zirconia  
less UV, more Faux Glow  
less sugar, more Splenda  
less manchego, more Velveeta  
less treadmill, more Skechers Shape-Ups  
less café, more Facebook  
less grass-fed beef, more T.G.I. Friday's potato skins  
less pitch, more Auto-Tune  
&c.

## THE SUPERLATIVELY DEROGATORY COLLOQUIAL EPITHET, *SHAMMY*

You low-down shammyies can put a gun in our hands but who is able to take it out?

Make one move, shammy, and I'll blow you away.

Oh, Life's a shammy, Bruce.

So I keep concentrating very hard, helping the pilot fly the 250-passenger shammy.

Eight milk-shakes (why had he bought eight of the shammyies?).

Where are the harpoons on this shammy?

He said who put this hole in this shammy's head. Who could the murderer of this poor man be.

Ain't that blackshammy beautiful.

I'm one shammy that don't mind dying.

A prudent shammy like me has an IRA account, some short-term T-bills, etc.

Have I got a shammy of a stunt for you!

The Berkeley quartet opened its set jamming and vamping. From then on it was a shammy . . . .

I could turn and run like a shammy and dodge my way back up the hill to safety.

Squeaky-voiced and foul-fuckin'-mouthed as a shammy.

You a bunch of jive shammies.

Leonard Carlo is so upset, he can't even curse properly . . . 'shammy!' he says at last.

## RED ARROW DOWN

Quarterlife bodies tap toes  
picture foreign airports at Christmas  
imagine Japanese characters for

*connecting flight*

tattooed on our tailbones

bitchy reveries  
evolutionary tailspins  
dream the dream of averages

sticky bar stool on the eastside  
hatchback for weekend errands

We are falling off

We think “America”

and “eye contact”

are the best ways to stay on

The more we get to know you the more  
the overlong petticoat of pettiness scratches our ankles  
nips at our heels

sinks in, fangy

Everyone laughs at our lunchtime propositions  
and begs instead for travelogues

Choose-your-own-imagination-replacement

NO VACANCY

IMPLIES A FULLNESS

sputters neon in passing

## BOHO WRAPPER

this urban outfitters  
monogrammed candle  
is inciting a vague sense  
memory nostalgia is  
flexible and cheap  
you can buy it all over  
america though i'd  
recommend a college  
town there is nowhere  
to sit and relax anymore  
just sandwich shops  
full of manufactured  
vintagey gimcracks  
and a chorus of sassy  
voices hollering  
through the fonts of  
signs that want you  
to believe that jimmy  
is a downhome lad  
like you i am neither  
a lad nor at home  
there is nowhere  
to while away an  
afternoon any longer  
and there's nothing  
metonymic about  
saying bank of america  
took it all away nothing  
hip or glossy about this

tragedy people not  
being able to relax is  
as real as problems get  
meanwhile across town  
you keep open the last café  
and thank you and  
bless you though your  
fingertips are calloused  
and you cannot sit down

## DEFINITION OF DESTRUCTION

(b.) Along with its pal, Creation.

(ca.) The Big Bang.

(colloq.) The Big One.

(superl.) The Biggest One.

(accus.) You ruin *everything!*

(educ.) A Bunch of Children Left Behind.

(ant.) Gussying it all up.

(syn.) Dressing down, down to your bones.

(onomat.) *Pow! Crash! Pkwww!*

(naut.) Walk the plank.

(paleontol.) Caught between a rock and a hard place. Forever.

(agric.) Too many clear blue skies.

(K.J.V. Job 18:12) His strength shall be hungerbitten, and it shall be ready at his side.

(pseud.) Cap'n Catastrophe.

(euphem.) Pervasive lack of upkeep.

(interj.) Shitballs!

(bibl.) Horsemen come a-ridin'.

(univ.) This pomo moment has been shattered for you by Derrida.

(masc.) You wanna take this outside?

(fem.) Bitch bitch bitch.

(derog.) Unless you weren't really a fan of all that *order* to begin with.

(Confed.) You say *United*, we say, *Y'all's states*.

(meteorol.) We do this every day.

(mil.) We got you beat.

(fut.) Time to disarm, little big boys.

(dimin.) Bomblette.

(d.) Universe smooshed into a suitcase.

## PEOPLE ARE SAYING THINGS AGAIN

people are saying things about  
Canada & France & Argentina

maybe los desaparecidos = us  
*quizás, quizás, quizás . . .*

maybe the host grandma  
calling me *pura americana*

maybe The Island School  
maybe baby

it's time to zip up yr bags  
& come home

to my folk song  
where the nights are felted

with plenty of gutters  
to do the catchwork

while I smash my cheek  
hot to the window

to show the world  
I care what's next

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“No Country for Young Ladies” —*Columbia Poetry Review*

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“Red Arrow Down,” and “Boho Wrapper” —*Eleven Eleven*

“People Are Saying Things Again” —*Ghost Proposal*

“I Was a Water Ballerina” and “New, Not Blue”—*Finery*

“Brand Loyalty” and “Schwarzenegger”—*InDigest*

“Less Finesse, More Spank” and “Plot Point Two” —*Jet Fuel Review*

“Insurgent Country” —*Somnambulist Quarterly*

“Direct Address” and “A the Beaut” —*Super Arrow*

## NOTES

These poems were inspired by television, movies, music, pop culture, politics, shopping, the internet, America, and other poems.

The italicized section of “On the Night Before TV Goes Digital” comes from a blog post on *Harriet* by Eileen Myles about Steve Carey.

“Definition of Destruction” borrows the form of Matthea Harvey’s “Definition of Weather.”

“More Lyrics for My Favorite Band”: my favorite band is Destroyer.

“Insurgent Country” was inspired by the film *Jesus Camp*.

All the text from “Living the Secret” comes from the testimonial section of the same name on the website for the book *The Secret*, [thesecret.tv](http://thesecret.tv).

“Less Finesse, More Spank” is for Tasia Milton.

The sentences from “The Superlatively Derogatory Colloquial Epithet, *Shammy*” come from the *OED* online’s sample sentences for a superlatively derogatory colloquial epithet.

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**Becca Klaver** is the author of the poetry collection *LA Liminal* (Kore Press, 2010) and several chapbooks. She is a PhD student in English at Rutgers University and lives in Brooklyn, NY.

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