

Etel Adnan

from A to Z

poetry

The Post-Apollo Press

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From A to Z

a poem

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From A to Z

To Laura Kleege

a

is it
is it
is it
that you prefer
the raven and the cow
to me
ie:
the language
and the
cloud?

b

April is the cruellest month
and December
the darkest
Gone are the
East River
and the fallout sky
Manhattan is
rising
instead of the SUN

C

Great flowers are
falling
just after the
rain
Samuel Beckett
is sipping
tea
at the corner
of Wooster
and
Spring.

d

Uproar
one
and
two
the mayor is dead
from the East End
to the West
the trains
are falling
apart
like
Marilyn Monroe
used to.

e

Ronald has a
spittoon
the lagoon
has the moon
between its
legs
playing ball.

f

Two pennies
on the rug
make a woman
bend
like a soldier
coming back
from war

Rooms are so full
of noise
nowadays that
angels cover
their faces with
blood
If I
told you I love
you
would you
believe that
airplanes fly
at night?

h

no
let it go
you came up
with stairs
and coffee
I lost the
key to the
butter

The Midwest is over there
and white
I talked to too
many
snapshots
while you were
swimming
you told me:
"my eyes are blue
and I have cancer
Only the Government
knows".

j

Adding one plus one
zeroing on infinity
listening to the radio
killing cockroaches
early morning
Going to California

k

the wooden church
decides to go to the ocean
a sailor arrives in
a new boat
we are roving to
the edge of insanity
with tears and
some money.

|

Did you count the speed of the rocket
and the waterfalls of the Park?
They walk beside their bicycles
Did you tell your dog that he
is hungry for butterflies?

m

I come in and out of rooms
full of armchairs
and metal bars
cities are beams
of light
because a truckload
of mushrooms
spilled over
the Lincoln Tunnel.

n

Jim is at the airport
going to Washington D.C.
dressed like an astronaut
the wind blows from
the bathroom
when you forget your
toothbrush
buy a car

Tremendously the
Continental Divide
marches on New York
City
Ten two and one
are coming close to
nothing.

p

The Buddha is dancing
in the Whitney Museum
and the moon is bored

q

The Columbia River went shopping
we were making love
on the couch
the spider man
came through
the window
your mother rang ...
so we watched
T.V.

r

Do not get drowned
the very day of your wedding
the sun is round and red
two and two never
make four
before noon
or after ...

When superior decisions descend from
their electronic boards
into the middle of your brain
why do you shout the police are
coming!? You know it's only
your mother and sometimes her
latest husband. Otherwise
it's the sea.

t

monsters grow lilies on their head
the tugboat comes
next
and the submarine forever
let's count uneven numbers
like prisoners do.

u

the car jumped off the bridge
the parachute refused to open
the body was not in the morgue
it didn't go home either
there was a pile-up of
cars all the way to Denver

Picture taking is like pulling
a false alarm
the ancestors resent it
let it be let it be let it be
one morning the salmon
rang my door
oh! what a beautiful smile!

W

Between the Hudson
and the East River
there is a strawberry garden
helicopters come and go
carrying dead Indians
formerly buried under the
Plains

X

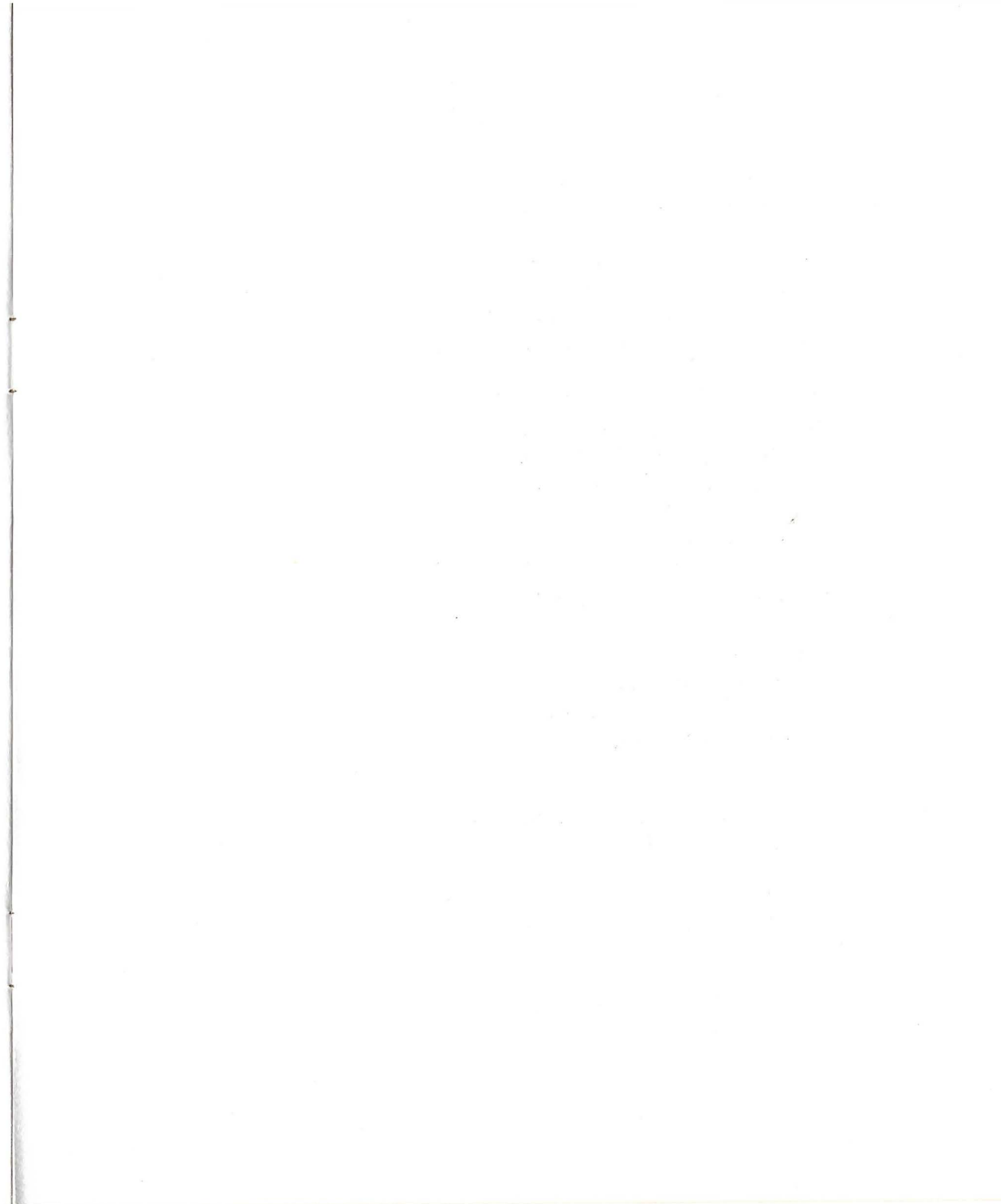
I miss Manhattan
its skyline and the blistering
lights
Today they are planting
wheat where Times Square
stood
The buses are running
on
schedule
without their wheels.

y

If a captain takes a kayak
over the Stanislaus
and comes walking through
the Prairies
would you wash his sore
feet
or invite him
to a dance
in Soho
by the garbage
and the heat?

Z

There was a transfer
of power between
the mouse and the deer:
it happened in
Central Park
while you were on a
glider and on your
skis
A mountain was
pulsating in the
thin air.



Etel Adnan is a poet, a writer,
a painter and a tapestry designer.

Her poetry has been published in
magazines such as the S.B.-Gazette,
Brushfire, Quixote, the Lampeter Muse. . .
La Sape . . . and many anthologies.

She is the author of the following books:

"Moonshots" (poetry) Beirut, 1966.

"Five Senses for one Death", (poetry)
The Smith, Ed. New York, 1971

"Jebu" suivi de "L'Express
Beyrouth—Enfer"

(poetry) P.J. Oswald, Ed. Paris, 1973

"Sitt Marie-Rose" (novel) Des Femmes, Ed.
Paris, 1973

"L'Apocalypse Arabe" (poetry)
Papyrus Ed., Paris, 1980.

"Pablo Neruda is a banana tree" (poetry)
Da Almeida, Lisbon, 1982.

"From A to Z" was written in April 1979,
in New York, following the Three Mile
Island nuclear accident.

Etel Adnan taught philosophy for more than
a decade at the Dominican College of San
Rafael.

She lives in Paris and California.



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