

Cento after Bernadette

Vani Natarajan

gossip is the queer archive
brown girl on the floor of the world
you called, so now I'll live a hundred more years
the heart wants what it wants
8 strawberries in a wet blue bowl
how is your heart
baby baby baby baby baby
at the end of my suffering, there was a door
I'll go and come back
it is complicated, both can be true
I stop to see a weeping willow
I am not nostalgic
to never get used to the unspeakable violence
to study the self
complex personhood
I like to dress up to visit the dead
do you sweat when you write?
don't you ever get a curiosity

Jose Muñoz, maybe paraphrased
Bhanu Kapil, *Ban en Banlieue*
my mother
mid-Manhattan therapist
Solmaz Sharif, "Vulnerability Study"
various friends
assorted singers/lovers
Louise Glück, *The Wild Iris*
Tamil leavetaking phrase, translated
mostly everyone
Patsy Cline, "Walking After Midnight"
Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return*
Arundhati Roy, *Cost of Living*
Dogen, as shared by Ryan Wong
Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*
sweet crust punk, West Philly ca2003
Ntozake Shange
Slant 6, "Don't You Ever?"