



The Healing Center (Electric Literature's Recommended Reading Book 76)

Catherine Lacey

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"'The Healing Center' begins with the two women gazing into a single mirror," writes Natalie Eilbert, Editor-in-Chief of The Atlas Review, in her introduction to this issue of Recommended Reading. "Sylvia, the other woman, is described as voluptuous and desirable; the narrator presumably does not possess these traits. Rather, she describes her body only once in the story as bland, manufactured: 'the color pantyhose companies mean when they say nude.' While Sylvia inspires 'earth-shaking want' in people, it is also presumed that the narrator does not. The story is at times a meditation on Sylvia's dreamy abandon and at other times an admittance of the narrator's ongoing failures to communicate with her own body, with doctors, with the one-foot-out-the-door Sylvia.

"Lacey delivers in cool, laconic language the empty sounds of a household, the feedback loop of a relationship turned sour, and an understanding of the loneliness of being a female body. There are countless stories in which a couple may settle their scores and inevitably part ways, and this piece is no exception to that fact. However, the mind behind 'The Healing Center' is so sharp, exacting, and pleasantly unusual, we come to experience the universally familiar as a charming, inconclusive mania."

About the author:

Catherine Lacey's debut novel, *Nobody Is Ever Missing*, will be released in July 2014 by FSG. Her work has appeared in *McSweeney's Quarterly*, *The Paris Review Daily*, *The Atlantic*, *The Believer* and others. She was 2012 NYFA fellow for fiction writing and is a founding owner of 3B, a cooperatively-run bed & breakfast in downtown Brooklyn.

About the Guest Editor:

Founded a little more than a year ago by Natalie Eilbert and Jillian Kuzma, *The Atlas Review* is a biannual print journal that publishes poetry, fiction, essay, visual arts, and interviews. The journal seeks to explore merit through a blind submission system as well as a small pool of solicited authors/artists. We read for the magazine twice a year. In the past, we have published the poetry of Eileen Myles, Kathleen Ossip, Shane McCrae, Anna Journey, Christopher DeWeese, Rachel B. Glaser, and many others; the prose of Catherine Lacey, Benjamin Hale, Gabriella Ambrosio, Mike Meginnis, and others; and editor Dolan Morgan has conducted interviews with George Saunders and Amelia Gray. We run a monthly reading series hosted by Monica McClure, which displays the collaborative efforts of writers and artists. This past summer, *The Atlas Review* co-hosted a marathon reading of Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris* with Marina Abramovic Institute (MAI) at the Wythe Hotel. We are currently reading for our third issue. You can subscribe [here](#).

About the Publisher:

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