

**W.F. LANTRY**

## Explication de Texte

She said, “I carry you with me through my day.” Forget her eyes for a moment, William, and think on what she may have meant. You’re such a bad listener, always considering ankles and such, or metaphysical explanations. Forget the hum of that voice, or the way her face almost glows when she hears certain chords and sees you watching her.

Perhaps she meant she carries on a conversation when you’re apart, sees something unusual and means to tell you, or thinks on what she said, how you responded, what she might have heard. Perhaps she whispers to you in the darkness words she cannot remember at dawn.

Or maybe she meant she carries your taste on her lips through the day, can still feel the touch of your hand on her fingers hours later, can still see your eyes as you see hers continually, or remembers some almost delicate trace of her outlined shoulder, or some imagined hint of you inside her hips.

You don’t believe it means she has some part of you with her, a few strands of gathered hair, a folded leaf of paper you wrote on, a tiny ornament you kept close at hand on your desk, or a few eight-petalled flowers taken in the early darkness from your autumn garden.

More likely it means she carries you as the sea may be said to carry the Pacific sky, touching at every moment, filling in between each swell, even at moments becoming one in the cresting foam of waves, behind the tern’s wing when the dawn is just coming up and the world seems ancient and new.

**W.F. Lantry**, a native of San Diego, California, received his *licence* and master’s degree from the Nice University Sophia Antipolis in Nice, France, and his PhD in creative writing from the University of Houston. His poetry collections are *The Structure of Desire* (Little Red Tree Publishing, 2012), winner of a 2013 Nautilus Book Award in Poetry; a chapbook, *The Language of Birds* (Finishing Line Press, 2011); and a forthcoming collection, *The Book of Maps*. Recent honors include the National Hackney Literary Award in Poetry, CutBank Patricia Goedicke Prize in Poetry, Crucible Editors’ Poetry Prize, Lindberg Foundation’s International Poetry for Peace Prize (in Israel), and in 2012 the LaNelle Daniel and Potomac Review Prizes. His work has appeared widely in print and online, in journals such as the *Wallace Stevens Journal*, *Valparaiso Fiction Review*, *Cha*, *Descant*, *Gulf Coast*, and *Aesthetica*. He currently works in Washington, D.C., and is an associate fiction editor at *JMWW*.

**JUDY MENSCH**

*Memory 3, 2011*  
Photo etching and drypoint, 7 7/8 x 17 7/8 in



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