



Nothing

Melita Schaum

I enjoyed your reading very much. Your poems are wonderful. What did that woman, the one you were talking to just now, what did she call them? *Hypermasculine yet tender*. Oh, that's all right, it'll come out, it's only wine. Yes, I'd like that. I get off work at four. You wouldn't mind really? Well then, all right, I'll bring some of my own writing along. Sorry. No, I haven't called back. I've been busy. Well, that's not

really true. You're right, I was a little disappointed. Rougher? No. More perceptive? Maybe. It's just been such a long time since I've shown my work to anyone. Sure, I'm drawn to you too. Only not exactly in that way. Let's stay open with each other. Let's be friends. Okay, I suppose if I had to define it I'd say it's how you stand, move. The way you smiled that afternoon, when the waiter mistook you for my husband. Of course you'd never betray him. I know you're not that way, you don't have to shout. This new work is amazing. Your poems are marvelous. My God, you throw yourself onto love like a Roman onto a sword. Sorry. I just don't feel like it this week. No, I just think I need a little time away. Why do you say I'm lying? Do you really think you're in a position to judge me? You treat everything I say to you as if this was a writing workshop. What do you mean, 'all form and no content'? Fuck you. How's that for content? Look, this isn't going to work. Tomorrow maybe. I do value your work. Your ideas are wonderful. Let's be friends. Of course he's good to me. Let me tell

you a secret. Your poems are like hands. I've never read writing as sensitive as yours. Why haven't we spoken? This silence is unbearable. I know. Sometimes I do long for you. What does that mean, 'a dangerous woman'? You're insane. Your words don't make any sense to me. My heart hurts. I've always been honest with you. I've always been honest. I don't comprehend these emails. Why don't we talk? Your poems are so passionate, like dark stars exploding. I think you may be overusing the word *misery*. Your writing is wonderful. I don't understand your attitude. Of course I'm happy. What are you accusing me of? Nothing is going to happen between us.