

# An Exhibit of Nature

by Jerry Ratch

*Few could have foretold what a fine stone intelligence you brought with you into the world. You were like a festival, bringing water to the mouth, the birth waters exceedingly fine-shaped that one ordinarily has to sail to the moon for. To become wet, to moisten between the limbs and be soaked. The excitement that made me hurl myself forward as I stepped forth into light, the life, the brightness.*

*The sea and its undying music making things said in passing seem trivial, the star weakness travelling under the surface, unshaven, childless. Our desires, our nerves, weeping, sighing, drawing ourselves near the flames. Seen completely from all sides. My body see-through, clear, transparent, like an exhibit of nature.*

*Me undressing at the side of the road, broken like an unstrung Sappho, blood lust going full force. Sexual organs like living rooms, exposed before God and everyone. Lights came on across the reservoir, and I was down on all fours in the cinders and dust, searching the earth for another love like ours. So good. But I see now it was no use.*

*You could see all that was alive in the night from the rise we'd drive up to in our cars, in the hope that our mutual skin would survive the heat between us when I was in your arms. The long heat of that lovely summer. The crickets in the fields having sex, a frog having it out for his sweetheart, and myself, recalling that pressed wetness in the arterial dark.*

