

## WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS BOOK:

- \* *tentacle sex*
- \* *Kathy Acker*
- \* *the violent deaths of male genius artists, philosophers and theorists*
- \* *zombies*
- \* *sirens*
- \* *biohacking*
- \* *rampant plagiarism*
- \* *cop killing*
- \* *spells you can use at home*

# VIRUS

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VIRUS, 2015

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Cover artwork by Linda Stupart  
Illustrations by Linda, Tom, Tia and Isla  
Design by Zhao Granger

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ISBN: 978-0-9926747-8-6

With additional editing by Ray Flar & Arcadia Missa.



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Signed by the author

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DWELLERS IN THE REALM  
OF THE LIVING DEAD



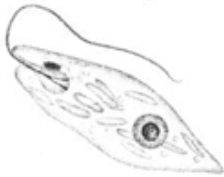
VIRUS



PYRITE CRYSTAL



VIRUS



EUGLENA

**NEITHER FISH NOR FOWL**

Until the discovery of the virus, scientists felt that even if life was difficult to define they could at least distinguish between animate and inanimate matter. But the virus cannot accurately be described as either. Some are shaped very much like pyrite or other mineral crystals; others resemble living organisms such as the euglena. The virus has no means of locomotion, it possesses no source of power and it cannot grow. On the other hand, a virus contains vital DNA or RNA: like living matter, it can reproduce but not until it has commandeered a cell. It can reduce a healthy, productive cell to a mere nursery that fosters a new generation of viruses.

I want to show you a body.

They are sitting on a rock that is covered in moss. The body is holding a knife and wearing Doc Martens with flowers on the sides and they are whirling something out of dead wood. They are whirling a 3d model of a pulsating blob GIF out of dead wood. It has too many dimensions, and so they are struggling to get it right.

As the knife separates the layers of woodskin they are softly chanting the word "caress," because this is the future, and the world has become a war cry, or a weapon.

The knife slips and cuts a minuscule chip out of the brown wood and of their brown thumb. They are smiling and they are bleeding all over it.

There is a body and they are sitting on a rock. Let them narrate this story for you, this story of the future.



Prelude (1985): A death drop/after the fall. Once upon a time there was a shadow, or a silhouette; silica - *they carve a shadow out of wood, the cut scabbed over but always threatening to open up—* once upon a time there was a shadow and her name was Ana Mendieta.

Men were angry because this shadow appeared to become real before their eyes; to enter language and also art galleries. Men became angry because this shadow grew a body from the mud and trees and the cow's heart it swallowed. Men became angry because the shadow became naked became a woman became a name, became Ana Mendieta and so she dropped, she fell.

After Ana Mendieta fell from the window of the apartment almost all of the bones in her almost naked body were shattered. After she fell from the window of the 34th floor apartment all of her major organs were split open. After she fell from the window of the 34th floor apartment on Mercer her body was never photographed, which is strange since that was her practice. After she fell

269 feet from the window of the 34th floor apartment on Mercer a male pathologist dictated to stenographer Dorothy Stevens that her body was white, which is strange because brownness and skin were her practice. After she fell 269 feet from the window of the 34th floor apartment on Mercer in 4.21 seconds the male pathologist cut open her chest and took out her heart and weighed it; this was also her practice.

There is a body and they are sitting on a rock and they are telling this story. In the future there is a body and they want to tell a story of the decay of figure into ground, larvae playing under skin shining many eyed flies popping stitches in her chest alive malevolent snakes churning open mouthed waiting for revenge in the earth beneath the still performing silueta. But after she fell 269 feet from the window of the 34th floor Minimalist apartment on Mercer in 4.21 seconds, what remained of Ana Mendier's body was cremated.

After she fell 269 feet from the window of the 34th floor Minimalist apartment on Mercer in 4.21 seconds at a velocity of 120 miles per hour male artist Carl Andre, her husband of only eight months, suggested that she might have suicided because he was more famous than her, which is strange because he had fresh scratches on his nose and forearms and because people had heard her screaming and because she had called friends to say she was scared of him and because she was so scared of heights and because he changed his story so many times and because he had left

her before in 1983 because she refused to turn down the Prix de Rome in sculpture and its yearlong residency, which would have made her more famous than him, for a moment.



Some decades later and an American philosopher-explorer, Alphonso Lingis, is standing in front of a packed lecture theater. Panpipes are playing a simulation of world music and behind him there are huge projected photographs of black men and black women and a man has a spike through his nose.

By venturing literally from the First World to the Third World, Al Lingus has tried to reconnect human consciousness to his external reality. As a wanderer and a cosmopolitan philosopher, he is perpetually in search of sensations and constantly giving expression to the sensualities he encounters in exotic far away spaces. This sensuality is not only sought out in each of Lingis' travels: it operates as a condition of possibility in his philosophy.

*Al Lingus speaks:*

I look out my window, past the curtain, my room a third floor apartment in Downtown New York and I see her, as she walks along the street. I cannot touch her... she cannot

touch me... we, do not touch each other. I do not know what she thinks, how she feels, her worries, her loves, her..losses. She cannot know what I think, as I watch her through the third floor window of my downtown apartment, my feelings, my yearning. No contact, no caress, no touch, no intimacy... and, if she were to mount the stairs to the third floor of my apartment, pass the threshold and walk into the room where I stand looking through the window, even then, even then, we would not touch, there could never be a true touch or understanding between us. Merely a cold caress.

I see many people walk along the street through the window of my third floor apartment in Downtown New York and yet we never touch, there can be no contact. I touch myself, I finger the cuff of the sleeve of my jacket where it hangs down creating a cavern below my arm... but it is no true touch. If another cannot touch me, cannot truly know me, can I ever touch myself? Sometimes, I walk down the stairs and onto the street below and I walk along the sidewalk. I brush those who I pass on the street... a soft caress, a momentary hint of intimacy but it only increases my sense of a lack of intimacy with its faint promise. If only I, in the third floor apartment could see me walk along the street, then perhaps there would be an impossible moment of contact, of a final knowledge, that which transcends carnality, the communion of the caress....

Behind him, projected men who he has photographed are dancing with skeletons painted on their skin, showing through their skin. A man with dirty feet and clear eyes is looking straight out at the camera. His lips are wet. He spits; a curse. And now the pale worm American philosopher-explorer Alphonso Lingis is losing colour. Veins show through his skin blue and wriggling. He is talking about contact, about touch, about the weight of the body about the moment of caressing language, caressing a body,

*caressing*

*a*

*woman*

who he sees under his window.

He is slowing down and his skin is leaching out. The warm dribble from the body above and behind him flows over his white thinning hair. Flows over The Body, gets caught in its wrinkles, rivulets in between its toes, its pale testes, under its dilapidated foreskin or translucent circumcision scar. The toxic saliva is eating at the flesh of Alphonso Lingus, the philosopher-explorer, who reinvents philosophy through his unique way of looking at the FAR AWAY COUNTRIES  
He  
Regularly explores.

Al Lingus the philosopher-explorer is starting to disappear on contact with the image he shot first.

The philosopher-explorer is degrading as skin begins to peel.



The audience backs away from the crumpled object, the dead man, the body. They retreat, mumbling, towards the back of the lecture theatre while the faux pampipes continue to make contact with the limp grey body of the philosopher-explorer, Al Lingus. The audience barely discerns the hum of the lecture theatre lights, the microphone, the static now-dead crackle. Their skin prickles with the air conditioning common to the university and the morgue. The audience attempts emancipation, and escapes via the fire exit.

After they leave they lock the door and slowly vines and ferns and alien trees begin to grow over the lecture theatre. The fluorescent light has been left on and its rays dapple across what is left of his now squirming skin.

Those who find ecstasy do so not by visiting the shrines of civilization but by trudging in the swamps of human destitution and misery.

This is the beginning of the virus.