

R H Y T H M O F T I M E



A . F . M O R I T Z

I'll write the story of my dead sister again,
but this time whole. She won't appear as if
alive, with no path or bridge behind her,
its single end sunk in death. She'll be real, disinterred.
The ground will groan apart in front of the rose and gray marble
and the rose geraniums, under the sunburst locusts:
it was our grandmother who caused them to be planted
along the lanes of that cemetery. The molded steel
casket will open – there will be the checked skirt-suit
she never would have worn, and her rind,
and at the same time the fresh face of the girl,
the human-garbage-lying-there, the excited springing-up from rest,
the young woman with her night-wind thicket
of heavy hair, her high massive breasts
on the twisting torso, and the mouth, inexhaustible
fountain of melody and irony. There in tow will be
her cute psychologist, the fool unable to see her,
husband-redeemer of her twenty-third year,
betrayor of her twenty-fourth. The rhythm
of this line of mine, which I have pulled and forged
out of my mouth and hers, out of our town, our gut,
this rhythm of mine where she stalks, skips, or cries, asking for comfort,
for adequate gear that I don't have, to equip her foray
into the menace of men, where she was broken by a car. . . .
this line of mine in which she moves in her body
any way she wants, will be known at last to all
for what it is. The images and words, lying scattered,
hear the line's mute shape and come dancing
to make up a body for it, visible and solid. They crowd

into it, fit precisely yet spill over till it becomes
infinite lines from before itself and after, an ever
reproducing earth of music, to release the hurt mind
and give it a home at last – the mind that for some reason
on the old earth, the old home in which she lies,
will not admit all the directions of her passing.