

Fake Music Re-Anticipations
Clarice Lispector – Meeting with reader
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In her translator's note for the 2012 edition of Clarice Lispector's *The Passion According to G.H.*, Idra Novey recounts an anecdote told to her by a friend in Brazil of a Lispector reader who was sure that if she and the author were able to meet, they would feel a profound connection to one another. The young woman managed to get in touch with Lispector, who agreed to meet with her. When she arrived at Lispector's apartment, the writer sat and stared at her in silence until the reader finally left out of discomfort.

In her novel *Água Viva*, Lispector includes an epigraph from the Belgian painter Michel Seuphor: "There must be a painting totally free of dependence on the figure – or the object – which, like music, illustrates nothing, tells no story, and launches no myth. Such painting would simply evoke the incommunicable kingdom of the spirit, where dreams become thought, where line becomes existence." Any meeting with an artist whose work one admires is precarious for both parties, and it would appear that in this one, Lispector sought to avoid the burdensome affair of transferring the writer's voice from the page into the mouth of the speaker. She offered instead a wholly uninformative interaction – one that, according to Seuphor, was therefore musical.

We do not necessarily consider this meeting a viable model for engaging with members of one's public, but we applaud Lispector's commitment to a difficult piece of music, as this was undoubtedly a tense and awkward performance. As committed as we are to our field, we are passive scholars who prefer to avoid confrontation and would not wish this reader's difficult position on a friend. We decline to attempt any reproduction of this work.

"Where does music go when it's not playing?" asks *Água Viva's* Joana. The character answers herself, "may they make a harp out of my nerves when I die,"† but we forgo the response (there is no place for absent music).

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† Stefan Tobler's translation