

Poetry

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**A mother's advice**

Don't get attached to postmodernism, it'll  
break your heart.

I know it's seductive darling.  
Who wouldn't be taken in by its  
shimmering chimera of subjectivity  
and capacity for re/constituting itself  
in/through language?  
Remember, performativity does not equal performance.  
Just ask your father.

Your grandmother was glad to  
become a person, thought it  
meant something, was worth the 'pains and  
penalties'; she knew the truth  
of Truth's 'ain't I a woman?'  
Would have been incredulous  
to be thought a 'fluctuating identity.'<sup>i</sup>

I don't want to sound like a snob,  
but consider pomo's promiscuous  
origins, its traipsing through  
all disciplines, its utter disregard  
of proper form. You deserve better,  
sweetie, than a dream that will always  
be deferred.

I'm not saying don't flirt with it or  
even have an affair.  
Just pack something else in your suitcase,  
there's more than one story out there.

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<sup>i</sup> See Denise Riley, "Am I that name?" Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.