



PRESS RELEASE + 09 DECEMBER 2014

NEW MICHIGAN PRESS announces the release of Laura Bylenok's new hybrid prose chapbook, *a/o*. Well, we couldn't say it better than the blurbers, so we'll leave it to Melanie Rae Thon to describe the experience you're in for: "*a/o* is a glorious, terrifying, tender enchantment—an immersion in a world made strange through the alchemy of metaphor—where approaching noon might become a horse, breathing hard, glowering. Here, it is always noon, falling snow forever filthy. Only the body is new: gaining a tooth, losing a vertebra, suddenly old at the wrist where brittle bone too easily crumbles. Through the magical confabulations of language, Laura Bylenok unconceals our infinite mutability and our gorgeously human capacity for kinetic empathy. Compassion alone can break the spell of endless noon: by the grace of fear, a red sweater becomes a woman's body, the fallen woman a vision of our own desperate possibilities. Free to love and die, we are resurrected in time, restored by desire for changing light and changing seasons, joy and loss, the pleasure and grief of our fragile, transient, miraculous world."

Yes. It's available by mail, at excellent independent book-sellers, at Amazon, or best, from our storefront at: newmichiganpress.com/nmp. Perfect-bound, 72pp., ISBN 978-1-934832-47-9. For information & bookstore orders, email us at [<nmp@thediagram.com>](mailto:nmp@thediagram.com).

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Yes! We love you, Laura Bylenok! Send me [] copies of *a/o* at \$9 per copy + \$2 for postage (in USA). I've enclosed cash or a check/money order made out to *New Michigan Press*. Please send my book(s) to:

& AN EXCERPT FROM *a/o*:

After discovering the equation, I sank into a deep depression. There was no more work that could not be done. It was easy enough to go back to that morning corner, when the snow fell filthy from the slit belly of sky. The telephone hunkered in its booth. The receiver was still warm from someone else's ear, and it smelled sickly, the thick smell of cough drops and cheap musk.

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Shortly thereafter the anomalies began. It began with the seventh cervical vertebra, the knob at the back of the neck. I was brushing my teeth, my very back teeth, a molar in particular that I couldn't easily reach and I reached the brush back and tipped my head back, eyes on the discolored tooth in the mirror, neck awkwardly bent to see and to brush, to get the bristles in the gap—there it was, the nerve twinge right at the root and my neck popped. I felt my neck. I felt the back of my neck. Something was missing. The skin was warm as it should be, smooth, too smooth, something was missing—no—something was wrong. I let the toothbrush go, let it hang from my cheek, let it trail its string of spit to the sink and I counted the ridges at my neck. One definitely gone.

