

# Lesle Lewis

## lie down too



This book is an intoxicating medicine garden where we learn to make connections through a myriad of small disjunctions, swallowing poems in doses like a set of morning pills. In *lie down too*, our journey is central, and the world—recast through the non sequitur of grief, through repetition and cycle—eventually allows all life to be born anew.

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## praise for lie down too

“Lesle Lewis is alive with conflict. She wishes she were alive and not alive. Lucky for us readers, she is very alive. Scintillating with all her private and not so private mythologies, her poems beam down situations of utter contradiction both terrifying and calming. She sings the song of life in all its multitudinous guises. Finally, though, this is a book of joy, impossible to put down, impossible to deny.”

—James Tate

“The intrepid and witty narrator of *lie down too* shows a psychic range—euphoria, anxiety, confidence, confusion—and always disarms our expectations. In “March Sun Grief,” “Temptation takes me to the river...Then Doubt attacks; I let him is all.” Lewis directs her poems as John Gay directs his songs in *The Beggar’s Opera*: eye to eye, heart to heart.”

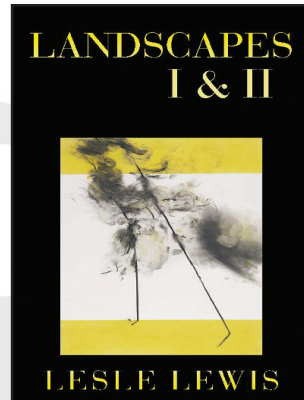
—Caroline Knox

## previous praise for Lesle Lewis

“...full of fractures and rifts, rich with non sequiturs, dense with surprise...[Lewis] excels at the quirky, disturbing single line...”

—*Time Out New York*

## Landscapes I&II



The whimsical, highly animated landscapes of Lesle Lewis’s second collection will surprise and delight. In confident prose poems, “Abstraction puts on her cowboy boots” and strides into the unknown. Employing collage reminiscent of Gertrude Stein’s breathless dazzle, Lewis creates landscapes where surreal meets New England bucolic, meaning is arrived at cumulatively, and the animated and the “real” converse.

**Publication Date:** March 2006

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## praise for Landscapes I&II

“In their nervous eloquence, Lesle Lewis’s surprising lines behave like brushstrokes that barely touch the page before lifting off again in the mind. Equal parts fable, modernist prose poem, philosophical investigation, and social geography, *Landscapes I & II* makes all these elements talk to each other through daring juxtaposition. The conversation is about the everyday workings of art and life, but its conclusions are always unpredictable. At once wildly expressionist and tightly structured, these poems delight with their agility and speed.”

—Peter Gizzi

“If you think a complete sentence expresses a complete thought, forget it. Lesle Lewis’s elegant sentences non-sequitur into uncanny compilations that are never done. We feel them going on, building beyond the page. Juxtaposing the rolling rhythms of prose with distinctly poetic content, Lewis has come up with another incisively intelligent, deeply generous collection—it’s a gift to contemporary poetry.”

—Cole Swensen

## a selection from lie down too:

Red Bank

I wanted a horse.

I jumped from a plane.

I was not comfortable with your illness.

I was a detective at the wedding.

I recognized the new way it would be with you in rehabilitation.

I saw how the sunset colors on the Navesink River got sad with the lone rower.

I lived on a lone planet with my befuddlement.

I'd lost a person.

I didn't know how to hold my lips.

I was like the goose bathing in parking lot puddles.

Definitely, I am on a train.



Hannah Lewis

Lesle Lewis' books include *Small Boat* (winner of 2002 Iowa Poetry Prize), *Landscapes I & II* (AJB, 2006), *lie down too* (AJB, 2011), and *A Boot's a Boot* (Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 2014). Her poems have appeared in *Jubilat*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Barrow Street*, *Sentence*, *The Mississippi Review*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Bateau*, and many other journals. She lives in New Hampshire and teaches at Landmark College in Vermont.

## a selection from Landscapes I&II:

From the Cave of Questions

Abstraction puts on her cowboy boots. Who else would walk the boundaries with you and photograph your pears?

The trees drip psychedelia. The sky is stormy. The model is boney. When a question of intelligence emerges into daylight, she squints. How dumb am I? Narcotics and light feed her. Folding laundry, she removes herself. Where have I already been this morning? The sun splashes on the bed, the mother drowns her children, a man is upset and has a gun. The world has urgencies. In fact, you're out of it. It comes as you lie by the running dam. "Who are you?" It says my reason, my anti-depressant.

When I get back from New York, France becomes serious. Where I stand is the blue behind clouds. For the sake of an argument, let's say you put your feet up and decide to write. There are no flowers around. "The key is in the bars in the *s* in the *w*."

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