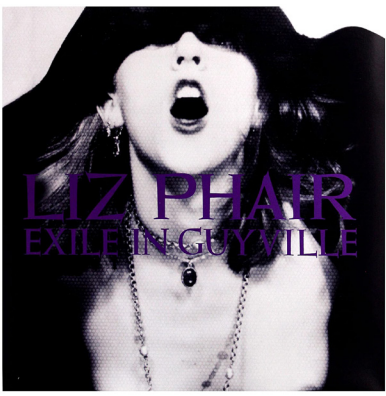


MESMERIZING

(after Liz Phair's *Exile in Guyville*)

Katherine Fallon

On the bus in eighth grade, headed to D.C. because I was bright,
my older sister, who had just pierced her own ear with a safety pin,
sent me off with a Walkman and Liz Phair. I felt grown on the bus ride,
daring, imagining anyone's face if they only knew I'd just heard
cunt in spring and choked a little on my spit—*those eyes you get*
when your circumstance is move-size. Karen Graczyk was one seat
behind me reading *Helter Skelter* from behind a magazine, smut-style.
On the cover within the cover: the family, nascent swastikas carved
into their foreheads. Karen would grow up to look like one of them.
Everyone else was acting their age. Next day, we went to a brilliant
white mall, to the Disney Store, where I bought a mug wrapped
with the pride of the Lion King—the re-animated dead, the ladies'
insinuated kohl—challenging me upon desert rocks beneath a sex-
reveal blue sky. I tried to look good for the boys in the carpeted seats,
but I sensed even then I was more like *Exile from Guyville*,
getting away with *what the girls call murder*. Too close,
noise canceled: *I'll take you home and make you like it—*



Liz Phair

Various

Exile in Guyville

06/1993

Matador