

Lisa Chen

INTERIOR MONOLOGUE

I have had something like affairs with rooms.

—Claes Oldenburg

To incite jealousy in a room, introduce matchbooks logoed
with the names of taverns, sundry establishments.
Casually deposit souvenir pens, tiny facsimile
monuments, the occasional hotel soap dry
in its wrapper. Exclaim how beautiful his house was.

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Tease the light switch voluptuous, jiggle the knobs.
Drag the chair by its arms, nomad after light.
Fritzed, lounge parcheesi in an opulence of magazines,
tea bags, of slippers and postage stamps.

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Notations on the iconography of plaster cracks.

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If only working the room meant just that and no
people, I'd be debutante of the year. But no.
To the one at the gathering I might have loved, blurt,
How like the world you are, how unlike a room!

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Every room an installation.
Residents: burrowers and transients.

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It was standing room only. I had the floor.
It grew on me. The whole room looked up.
I was being shown the door. I made more room.

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Key to the floor plan: Dark room. Walk-in.
Nook. Broom closet. Leg room.

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Whisper the password. Step across the threshold,
recidivist. Long passages will get you through.

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Leave house. Walk five blocks to bus stop.
Take bus across town to industrial strip,
board train. In another city, enter a room.