Bathroom Songs: Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick as a Poet

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When In Minute Script (1969–1971)

1. When, in minute script, small children write of torture that must always end with castration, their blank cheeks and brows will darken only at the after dream: to wake in terror and find it done, in a white bed, without desire, surrounded by loving friends, empty, inconsolable: with even the fever of torture not to be regained. Warm children give up, when they sleep, to the tight blanket and the pillow that makes them blush the warmth of their dreams and bodies. So that when they rise they surrender it entirely, the shell of warmth, and go out trembling. And you, when you collapsed in the lethal desert, may also have wondered what would remain after the liquefying sleep. The years in which Abelard had awakened in your brain from sudden sounds on the stair, to find it done, stood over you in a feminine intuition. You turn to yourself like a hermaphrodite and blackout in dry-bubbling speculation.

2. Aristotle, tell me please how is a very small polis different from a very large hermaphrodite?