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three six five: prompts, acts, divinations (an inexhaustible compendium for writing)

by Lucy Ives

with drawings by Nick Mauss

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There are 365 exercises for writing in this book, but it is not simply a book of writing exercises.

three six five is a “how-to” book of questions—not answers. It is an ars poetica of expanding possibility, a tarot deck of acts instead of images, a book of bending hours, a diary of contemplation and imagination, an antidote to consumption in the shape of care and attention.

These prompts, acts, and divinations—in alchemical combinations with new drawings by Nick Mauss—invite both aspiring and experienced writers to learn and unlearn, to mine memory and forgetting, to enter impossible spaces and create new ways of telling time, to inhabit multiple, other, and conflicting perspectives, to discover the elasticity of language and its constraints, to write by drawing, walking, listening, and even by being distracted.

While this is an inexhaustible compendium for writing, it is also an enduring reservoir for those who have no desire to be(come) a writer. Many exercises take the form of play, encourage collaboration with friends, strangers, and non-human beings, and operate off the page, often in the world, in the spirit of discovery rather than result. All intend to nurture and cultivate possibility.

Tracing the lineage of Yoko Ono’s *Grapefruit* and Raymond Queneau’s *Exercises in Style*, novelist, poet, and critic Lucy Ives offers encouragement, candor, and a deep appreciation for the vagaries, wonders, and challenges of a writing life.

lucy ives is a novelist and critic. Her most recent books, both from Graywolf Press, are *Life Is Everywhere: A Novel* and *An Image of My Name Enters America: Essays*, winner of the 2024 Vermont Book Award in Creative Nonfiction. Ives’s work has appeared in *Artforum*, *Harper’s*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Paris Review*, and *Vogue*, among other publications. A recipient of an Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant, she has taught at Brown, Cornell, and New York Universities.

Ives previously collaborated with siglio as the editor of *The Saddest Thing Is That I Have Had to Use Words: A Madeline Gins Reader*.

nick mauss is a multidisciplinary artist working in drawing, dance, performance, ceramics, and other media. He is also a writer. His work has been included in gallery and museum exhibitions worldwide, including solo shows at Kunsthalle Basel, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, and at 303 Gallery and the Whitney Museum of American Art, both in New York City.

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