

1980

To Albert Speer

Linda Gregerson

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Recommended Citation

Gregerson, Linda. "To Albert Speer." *The Iowa Review* 11.2 (1980): 191-191. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2608>

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To Albert Speer · *Linda Gregerson*

We like the way you look, you see. It's more
what we had in mind. That fellow with his mouth
all to the side, and the one
working eyebrow, he makes us feel absurd,

as though our notions were at fault after all.
In a well-appointed room, one's thoughts
are shapely too. But you know! You were a builder
of rooms. Of room. (Forgive me.)

We're learning to read the generals' maps, mysterious
as money: A line may be held, but not in the hand.
There are sliding populations,
so we've had to invent a screen: *Who won*

*the World Series? What's the capital of the state
you're from?* The men we took
for figures of speech turn up at our table,
passing the salt, are rather the hosts

than the company. Who knows no history
is also condemned. The macadam leads straight
to the armchairs we've slept in.
Of perfect contrition, a lamp and a shade.