Modeled after work by Roland Barthes, Maggie Nelson, and Marguerite Duras, among others, Storied Women pushes against the limits of auto-fiction, combining critical and theoretical writing with fictional narrative. The story follows Willow in the wake of a break-up as she processes her grief by reading books written on a to-read list her ex-girlfriend left behind. These books, coincidentally, include works like A Lover’s Discourse by Roland Barthes, The Lover by Marguerite Duras, and Written on the Body by Jeanette Winterson, inviting her to begin troubling the subject-object dialectic as it relates to romantic relationships and representations of love in literature. At the heart of the novella is a desire and failure to write new philosophies of love—new poetry—free from unnecessary gendered binaries and their patriarchal cultural contexts.

Tuesday, February 20
3-4pm
339 O’Shaughnessy

Presenter:
Abigail Burns

Abigail Burns is a second year MFA candidate whose short prose uses slipstream literary motifs to engage with queer and feminist theory. Her stories and essays negotiate the bodies of women and girls both through, and beyond the male gaze. She is primarily interested in writing through the liminal space of grief, the interplay of humor and melancholy, and queer forms. Her work has appeared in (b)OINK zine, Entropy, Longridge Review, and elsewhere.