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GRUNT OF BEAUTY POEMS

Erienne Rojas
CUNY City College of New York

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GRUNT OF BEAUTY

POEMS

Author's Name: Erienne Rojas

Mentor's Name: David Groff

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I.

“a kind of feminine inferno, a citta dolorosa...”

Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria*

MERRY-GO-ROUND

His irreconcilable right and left brain hemispheres I endured
with the bridle of the belt, while riding the merry-go-round.
He always threatened me with the sight of the leather
and when he would catch me, not even my snorting or kicking
could contain the wrath of the rotating platform. Bars and handles
were not enough to forfeit the brute strength. Didn't he know that?

Whinnying was no match to the cackling whip. Didn't he know that?
I fell ill against dad's slope of the belt and the manic clacks I endured.
My carousel, thwarted with grunts and welts, formed conveyors. Bars and handles
that my mother could not cling to and save me. I galloped like a merry-go-round.
I tilted and he whirled the belt. My weaving and wall kicking
failed as I tried to fray the looped and braided belt of leather.

Circus music nudged the reins to brand my temple with leather
bashing. Mushrooming skins sift in bi-colored coatings. Didn't he know that?
He pulled my mane upward for precise blows and I bucked and spun. Kicking
the ridicule flustered on my face and thighs as I rode and rode to endure.
He beat without mercy. Daddy's little girl in a drunken merry-go-round.
My porcelain horses shed the blotches like rust on bars and handles.

Roundabouts with a center pole are mom's arms like bars and handles,
but she could not support my carved jewels. His merry cussing was burnt leather
on my tossed coat. He'd call me bitch to perpetuate the merry-go-round.
I wasn't built with bevel gears and offset cranks to flee. Didn't he know that?
Man-hating horses with chariots traveled wearily as they endured
the pathos; dad with trashed eyes playing little war, kicking

my spirits into full gallop. Pipe organ music pivoted his frame, kicking
the galloper into full ring-tilt under a fatherly chassis of decorative bars and handles
intended to attract the wind under pressure and amplify the electrical sound I endured.
Percussion instruments bellowed, shaken and scraped, as they followed the leather
suction to my face. Striking me to produce sound in his deaf ears. Didn't he know
that? My dad couldn't speak Latin but he translated percussus into my merry-go-
round.

A horse ballet now saddled with the beast; flying pieces of my merry-go-round
were herds of mustangs in my dad's head; they escaped healing trails by kicking
the arid wounds of the ponies. I was his yearling. Didn't he know that?
Flying horses powered by walking in circles. I ran in circles. No bars and handles
to pull me out of the spinning in my dad's head. Pulling and cranking of leather,
my body began to take shape to the majestic horses and the labor they endured.

The beatings I endured were flashing organs in my merry-go-round.
His leather marked me a finished horse; he bound my saddle and his kicking

rough-cut my animal parts with bars and handles, didn't he know that?

OF BABEL

"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground." — (Gen 3:17-19)

The soaked bed sheets are infected with last minute repent schemes. And hands placed on chest in reverence to yesterday's dreams promised at birth and at the sake of mirth, these last moments are your first words. Scattered upon the face of your restless sleep are weeds of love. Oh beloved father, you are no shaman but you speak in fire shaped tongues and though a drunken smeared lip is no god, you cast out devils with every high. If *perfect* referred to you it would be confused, conquered and destroyed; because only when you drink the altar wine, do you dare profess divine truths to a non-believer. I used to trust in your scripture, when you'd say "I'm sorry, I'll change" after blackouts led to handcuffs and restricted transport belts on stretchers. On the days you didn't make it past the front door, you created instruments carved of bones. Your bones: chilling ivory from childhood with your own forbearer, where ligaments did not hide injury and harsh ebony from dislocations—when the ends of bones were forced out of position, you pushed till the end was near—in rehab, in prison and in your room composing suicide. You'd flesh out the allocation of high and low voices from having too many sounds in the brain respond to disharmony of the spheres. I learned how to cringe at your bellows, even when your insides were uniquely human. But I question if in fact men worsted by addiction can plead, when every other day you are subdued in weed. Melancholia once polished and oiled in liquor colored body now act as fuel for fire and my dolls are invaded—their skin and guts vibrating on the outside for everyone to see. And just like your illness mutters honesty but hears no forgiveness, forcing redemption on your daughter is pitiful and I hope you never rise from the dead.

BUTTERFLY KISS

I go to sleep in
the wilted eyelashes
of a braved gnome who
can't see up any longer.

Cells die due to isolation.

I wake up to you
beating on my head
as if every time was
the first and last.

I puff out in mahogany.

Fists I bear
with bare eyes; my face
prunes against
your blink.

I rip roots of hair as elastic layers of malady.

No purpose in attaching to underlying
bone when deep cuts are made. Foreign bodies
pull my eyelids, so I am no longer an arch
to your lashing winged sensation.

VENTRILOQUIST DOLL

Early Necromancy

On the anniversary of death
the bone-conjurer spoke in tongues to wire mesh cheek
and welded the gravity of plight to a low hum.
Dressing the doll in his wife's virginal wedding dress,
he placed unsalted black bread around
her neck and grape juice on plastic
for legs to welcome the thirsty ghost.

He threw over and over
without once moving his mouth.
"speak through joints and arms"
the medium Endor
whispered to his wife's spirit:
"bend so we can see that you are here with us."

A smeared smile painted on papier-mâché
slowly parted from the pressure of his intruder
fingers moving wood up and down her back
to arouse her high-pitched laughter.

With his wandering tongue,
he smoothed out the stiffness and desired
thickness of her crafted objects; the taste
of cardboard flesh still harsh against his pit
of fire as he recalls the time he dug up his wife
and her damp corpse protruded a jelly-like
starch onto his lips.

THE WRETCHED NIGHT BIRD

The sun sheds her solar winds,
streams of positive and negative
particles attempt to neutralize
the sulk in my heart while I am awake;

her thermal energy pushes the night bird's tail
away and he can't stroke me with his plasma.
But when the moon crystallizes overhead,
the tail emits the ice dust to blind me and
meteoroids flourish on my naked planet.

He pecks at me while I sleep,
brushing his beak over my skin:
the deep, blanketed crust of rape
where vaginal tears are fracture zones,

separating my ravaged landscape from the pure,
unpainted hills and boundaries, he leaves
me straddled on two abyssal plains:

live or die as an unkempt woman.

Icy moon bodies
color me all over,
red into blue collisions; manic
death, the night bird's black tongue
cracks my aurora borealis, but I fear no death,
death means zero and I have nothing left.

He wins. I shrink.

BUFFER CAVITY OF THE BODY

You pressed my thighs on cold slab
only to feel a rusty tusk hum low
but please push its beating head too; hoe
the weeds so your throat can swallow scab.
Swirl the wound to glaze my slices of ham
as a lotus bleeds to nurture, you bathe in its glow
and pride the suction feeding to a heavy flow.
Delta-shaped blade swivel my lamb.
Pull through its fleece and sweep the flat edge
of tiny bones, just under the blood blister.
Cut through alien fibers and remove the wedge
of body winding in a conical twister.
Snap its silver cord and silence the edge
of cries when he asks about his sister.

OVER THE FALLS

Yeast colored tiles hoisted
a leaky faucet; the metal varnish
marred soft and subdued shades of yellow
in the tub. Drowned in a pool of uneven faux finish—

wet plaster limbs with textured bumps
and swirls soaked up the chalk pastel
and milk paint of the narrow wall—
a bare body coated in black mold spores

sculpted the vertical grooves of skin
in her hips and torso, only to dismantle
the flat, flush surfaces in the hanging veins
of her face like thick limonite clay.

SHROUD OF WOMAN

She cried the muted hues of the ocean
though her stonewashed face felt no warmth
of color. His bulge markers buffed her threads

into a second mouth—a dissymmetric sheath
distorting sacred canvas. Dampened linen
feared the shatter of his winged falcon fists

that battered her skins into a maroon tempera.
Afraid to see grinding seals of shape and edge,
her dry powdered pigments assorted with milk

and plant gums smeared—expunged of surface.
Her stenciled design dilute of every dye stain
of beauty. Strong and decided lines on the four

walls of flesh sacrificed to a thick stream of muddy
water; the smell of dead paint newly exposed.

With no air to breathe and expand, her currents of glaze
bled so he'd be unable to recreate the nature of the body.

ODUSSOMAI

I let you crawl through the nipple
one last time, just so you could break

my bony thorax and trample the sound of memory

but your vinyl tongue also scratched my cervical
rib, scattering all of its earthly salt into hunting ground.

My ceramic middle had no desired shape
just so you could spoon the hollow end of me.

LIFE AND DEATH BY TONGUE*In memory of Sylvia Plath*

Sylvia bit the canker
sore in her cheek:
the lateral wall
gnawing at an infection
where blood and saliva
would paint his t-letter shape
on human mouth
and for each cluster that burst, his shallow
white fluid would kiss her cotton lips
to swab a silent pelvic bone
burned by sexual fever;
their blistered halves clumsy
to the asphalt of unreason that smeared
their nomadic tongues into magenta colored clay.

II.

*“For the female of the species is more
deadly than the male.”* Rudyard Kipling

THINGS TO DO IN THE MIND OF A MAN

Kill the angel in the house.
Bleed all over, he won't long
for your pin-up, pristine flair.

Burn the faint couch. Throw lice
in the curls of your wig; he won't
fancy you then. Silence the stirrings;
he won't consider your desire for other men.

Thump the image of metal corsets hiding
a boyish figure, so he is intuitive about anxiety
of knife in heart. Erase the need for an heir.

Mar his walls with scar tissue so he won't feel
propriety. He need not demand your throne. Expose
melancholia in veins so black on paper may chastise
nobel winning literature as a mind long in contradictory.

Ravage his hollowness so he can stumble at the sound
of rape. Deny him right of orgasm so he can experience self-
loathing. Remind him of when he locked you away as unreasonable
for child-bearing; unnecessary to mending the ethos of a man;
unrequited for the vote in society.

SUICIDE GIRL

Pin-up pristine flair
is the duchess herself,
who lays on her faint couch.

A burn of her wig,
the scandal to her stirrings
and she chokes in a bodice.

Melancholia
eliminates the need
for air, the heir

to throne. Imperfect
is the growth of scar tissue
in her throat that makes
grunt of beauty.

Foolish are bent
wanderings of her womb
fueled by intellect

but failed by rhetoric.
Locked in the asylum
of a barren body is hysteria:

a toxic uterus thought to be
sexually excessive
and untamed by orgasms.

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A WOMAN

I

She grooved in mother tongues
as her lotus sized breasts
shifted in wide arcs.

II

I was of wrinkles and overlying skin,
like drained curds,
when a woman breaks into pieces.

III

Surrounding nose and mouth engorged;
a woman's soft rubbery shell is removed
before consumption.

IV

The woman writes her peppermint body
on the page of a man, only to overflow
with ink stains
all over the dark continent of narrative.

V

A woman rode the ridicule until the red melted;
confectioner sugar smeared legs stiffened
to his graham cracker walls and roof,
for sake of satisfying the colonial sweet tooth.

VI

For when I fathom, horny and unveiled,
they will know the martyr is a woman.
A muse.

VII

Hysteria—
derived from uterus—
equals a woman wandering into exile.
Unnecessary to mending the ethos of a man.

VIII

You made sure to cut my tear films
into segments with your fists,
so the embroidery in my eyelid margins
could isolate drops into a controlled chamber.

IX

As an ovary ripens,
the woman breaks out
a cone shaped head,
and becomes the flesh surrounding
his core.

X

Mother's flowerbed of trampled compost
held a gauze over the open wound of abortion;
the bitter tasting germ removed at the time of harvest
using a hollow needle. A woman witnessed the regret under there.

XI

Skin chafing like veins of lettuce
revealed trails of burnt coal cinder
in the woman's crack stem.

XII

A woman's belly spreads
between each rib of the organism
as the ripened seed has
adhered to its membrane.

XIII

A slow rattle of the chest gargled down
to a hum, as the silver cord snapped
the old woman into a rustling silence.

MONSTROUS FEMININE

The phallic-woman
penetrates your concrete
silhouette. As the biggest
nympho, she glides on zig
zags between your hips
and traces the milky way
in the brisk moonlight.

THE VIRAL FEMININE

Quintian was governor of lust. He longed to be a celebrator of women
 in Sicily. He forced a face of love; but only an animal could serve
 cruelty. Womb-less he knew nothing of the middle life and death. Only
 idol-
 making in the habit of a penis though St. Agatha was neither earth nor
 nation for him to worship. She was not his to faith. "Hell hath no fury like
 a man spurned"¹

and he betrayed
 her body with a scourge. Skin chafing like veins of lettuce:
 removed flesh is a snake de-shelled.
 And if pain was his triumph, he burned St. Agatha with red-hot irons and tore at
 her
 ability to nurture. Her breasts: of burnt coal cinder and raw with
 glass.

But she redresses like a bitter tasting germ of seed head; running
 through him like a biological entity of wild type; sucking
 at her vessel's rubbery range. He infected. She mad.
 And so St. Agatha harvests his bone with a hollow needle and obtains
 core.

Tracing the contours of this pagan, she tucks her bell-shaped
 breasts into his wound
 so his cells can remember the places of purity
 he once mutilated, each nipple at a time. And drained, she
 breaks her ghostly embryos into pieces.
 The martyr is a muse.

¹ The Martyrdom of St. Agatha (About Men, Phyllis Chesler)

MADAM'S ORGAN

In a swell-box, she opens
and closes shutters
of flesh to adjust my loudness
as a lunar woman. I speak with a curved brass

tongue,
her winds moving
through my pipes
to lure the male gods—

she plays me like her mouth organ, each key
pressing down the fruit of my body; a goddess-
monster. I devour men and give birth
to corpses.

IN THE BELL JAR

In memory of Joanna of Castile

Joanna rolls tongue in sleep.
 She applies pressure to her
 pomegranate and ignites fuse
 in his internal walls by fastening
 the handle member on her pivot of frame.
 She was madly in love after all.

She booby-traps all the women
 whose curved fixtures were lucid of foreign policy
 in bedding her husband. By exploding all the half shells
 positioned on his shaft, Joanna would spread
 her acetous seeds, so civil war could plague
 bodies with famine and surface
 landmines for reign of the New World.

And when her spells still failed to pulverize
 Philip into sheet metal and flatten
 all his spring actions for other lovers, typhus fever
 secured fidelity at cost of his stinking flesh
 and with parts broken away; Queen of Castile

and Aragon bursts open her cast iron corset
 to set ablaze her clarity for center—
 "a widow who has lost the sun of her own soul
 should never expose herself to the light of day"
 and so she becomes *Juana la Loca*.
 Disguising her base with Philip's T-shaped corpse,
 she wears dry sores as said lady-in-waiting.

MIRROR MADNESS

"A woman in the shape of a monster..." Adrienne Rich

In the attic an angel-
woman is mirage fruit;
as desire is hardly soft

on unearthly bed.
Satan's vagina
is the eternal woman,

shrieking little death.
Her fingers are porcelain
fiddles with phallics

both under
and over snow-
white walls of flesh.

In the attic she is medusa;
her hair like wily tongues
carve each crystal breast

to mirror a castrated mother
petrified in grave perfection;
Woman is a creature locked in.

CREEPING JUNIPER PLANT

Corners
of my mind
drowned
in creeping
juniper plant.

I cry the weeds of low-
vigor shrubs at the cusp of
mediocrity: nasal patterns
of a faceless tongue
with no motor skills.

With no bloom period,
clusters of foliage
turn purple
in the shade
of my head.

Hysteria is too close for comfort.

Rationality
does not attach
to my dead branches of
thoughts and leaves.

Crooked stems have no thorns
or spines. They are bruised,
thin; voices entangled.

My mind leaves till next winter.

Needles die when
I starve my tree's top.
Cutting any growth
heading to an evergreen spring,

I have only but a moderate lifespan.

TELEVISION MIND

When a woman opens
for consumption, realtime
has no endpoint for her pendulum
and she is free to rotate. Her light

limbs transmitting moving images,
sometimes grey but often multicolored
confetti. She functions on nonlinear
frequency to capture the beats of insanity

in her right and left brain; a noisy narrative
broadcasting beginning and end. Her cone-
shaped head decaying in brightness with a slow
phosphor coat to omit the spiral spectrum of memory.

She measures her heart rate and smears the edges
of her rustic tongue because the Chinese believed
calming a confused spirit would restore the mind
and body but this woman is not rooted to surface;

just data living on graphs. A face not read by channels,
she sleepwalks in free space. Mounting her softness
outside the screen as an antenna searches for stations
but her wrongful screws block clarity. She is lost

in her defective frame with no signal to control
a hanging position. Betrayed by multibody, she flickers
in dissonance. Outofsync. Reason slips in and out
from the center of her curve. She cannot rest

even if she is down. Her energy lies captured
in a switching device with a need to feed on high
voltage pulse as if mental scanning could signal a ghost
long denied—to ensure this woman remain in shock.

III.

"because she was an independent woman who did not let men dominate her, and who continued to defy the aggressive males to her last breath." Ilana Fine, *Women Reading the Bible Backwards* (in Hebrew), p. 86.

PORTRAIT OF THE INSANE

“a man who’d let her act it out,
but who wouldn’t let her drown.”
— Emma Forrest, *Your Voice In My Head*

He was *that* man.
The type who’d let
his wife sit in the corner,
estranged with surface
and chewing on her thumb,
Jupiter, Saturn, Apollo
and Mercury fingers; her clenched
knuckles like a newly opened
pomegranate. 613 seeds of tragic
heroine. Though he refused her
to tauten around breath and bone,
he’d make a woman get close enough
to bilateral symmetry before achieving
a spongy hide. She would work her demise;
proceed with separating her stem from his
just to act out the chilling of body—
while performing as his asphyxiating
double—she’d get to the meat of her
masterpiece right between the slope
of insane wit and the curve of self-
fulfilling stagecraft. A wife merely
floods to peel off her costume.
A husband who allows his wife
to survive only to occupy her:
a lovesick as jest.

NOT QUITE A LOVE STORY IN SWITZERLAND

*"All seems infected that the infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye."* —Alexander Pope

Trekking to Switzerland with much haste,
because Ludwig Minelli has been anticipating

my visit to his Dignitas clinic for years now—
since the 1961 Suicide Act.

Minelli's motto, "Live with dignity, die with dignity"
is my voucher for death by sound will

not disquiet the grandeur of human fate
because women are moon sick. Macabre.

Allow me to nurse melancholy and deliver
the uncharitable space of end. I swallow

tablets of flame because venom is denatured by heat—
bluebirds and yellow jackets

dissolve in fruit juice,
anticipating my *coup de grâce*.

PRINCESS LEIA

"The line between the life I want to live and the life I'm expected to live is about as thin as a Hutt after a buffet." —Leia Organa in her diary, c. 9 BBY

She was not born a Jean Nordquist
doll with painted doe eyes, though
the palace dressed her up in clown hues.

She was dipped in wet color for pink lip
and cheek tones, though she longed for blotchy
dead areas like a warrior: the viral feminine.

She did not fit the string hopper mold of a princess;
Noodle-thin just didn't fit her frame. So she cut all strands
with a palette knife, just above the surface of vanity.

She was not resistant to deformation; her stuffing was a fleck
of red like an open rebellion of body. Peace treaties
signed in plastic sleeves of flesh. Darth Vader was no creator.

THE FEMALE EUNUCH

No one expects
disarray but gender
is fucking the other
until your insides
give in and you grow
a brand new pair. Maybe
touching the membrane
is love. Even animals
are capable of symmetry.

You insist on sex.

I make sure to bite you
with my vagina, just so
the womb wouldn't go
mad. Isolated from bone,
life is lost in dead space
because desire is the cause
of all movement. I am one
for solidarity but you
happen to be every part
of none. Honing in a body
of mushiness right between
bitch and needy. Do you feel it?

Right there in a moon face,
just waiting to explode a full cycle.

Only when the bleeding stops,

I am you again.

Just empty.

CHEMICAL APATHY

“Out of passions grow opinions; mental sloth lets these rigidify into convictions”—Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844-1900

The word fracture, according to the Oxford English Dictionary is defined as "the act of being broken" and you've already dislocated every bone that was once touched by your lovemaking. I once believed in your tongue as much as prayer but both only drove me mad to once more leave me alone in my head. Some say it's my imbalance that pursues confinement but these limbs are void. Phantom pains. Intact bodies are nowhere to be found and I lose a brain each day; my sin is complete sensory loss. How can you localize ache when there is no spirit? Death is the condition of sloth when passion becomes hysteria. The opposite of love is without. I'm too lazy to jump. I'll just wait for ambush. God can't love me as his hobby anymore. His Jasmine wings are useless; there is no awakening the still mind. I can't make good energy and there is no cure for apathy—or bad. I am in no state to argue psychology. When my nerve cells can't communicate, I am a vocation of silent flesh just turning color to burn. There is no changing round in bed sore or relieving pressure in tedium when sorrow is substance. There is fever when I sit and take everything in—or give the world everything and sit in. To lack is evil. Inertia is.

WOMB-LESS

A bitter membrane
like water in the brain.
Like a snake ridding
of its apathetic skin, I slice open,
to expose ovaries
and then ripping—the ends—with my own
two hands, every permanent
coloring of hysteria. Mischief, as if
all orbit of body
is lustful. Malleable.

PAYNE AND PAIN

In memory of Marilyn Monroe

“Rest and relaxation,”
they said while escorting
her through steel doors.

Payne Whitney’s rubber room
would ease the weight of Marilyn’s
head with padded cells. And to shoo

the voices away, the mildewed ward
hummed her to sleep with barbiturates.
And when the euphoria dissolved

to a grainy paste, the tongue twisters
hid once again behind her ears:
“stick your finger through your throat”

and she swallowed the sandpaper black
on her forearms, the sniffs of belligerent blue
on her patient gown signed Monroe.

Between the cushioned linings,
she saw Norma Jeane Baker
at the orphanage, before the Kennedys.

Gladys Baker, screaming and laughing
at the sanitarium where she had spent
so many years not as a mother should.

And great grandmother dead
by the chasm of chatter
slowly sobbing out of her.

Standing naked she giggled
at the violence of patients
in burlap patterned jackets. And so

she reached all the way from her small
window to the Hollywood Walk of Fame
for everyone to see a female epic form.

THE MADWOMAN OF SAINTE-MARIE*After Otto Dix*

She was no Victorian lady but she frequented
the faint couch at the Pitié-Salpêtrière,

like a citizen-patient whose room was
not hers to own, like a body

striking its organs to exterminate; gone
like a system with no algorithm.

Watch as she kneels at the throes of nature
to feel her child bleed like dead wood

at its cuts. She is the wretched mother
whose head swells to cry purpose long

denied and with gases of decomposition,
she is weighed down to suffer unearthing.

So amalgamated with the Other, the Mad-
woman is an unwoman; a jezebel; excessively

illegitimate. A hyena. Non-person. Of painted
husk for she is tainted; only syrupy spirits signal

drunken cells all-focused on elimination,
when a mind is found floating in water.

AND THE INSANE HAVE MANY NAMES

As do a woman who has many brains. She wanders
 the space of occupancy,
 first like a soul that seeps out of a sick pore—transparent,
 and then becomes obsolete in folly's way. And as a woman
 who has many brains, she makes grief into a mass region of dead
 skin (unable to hold *it* together) like a garden of snapdragons that opens
 and closes in trance. Each mind,
 hanging out all over the place, like fallen
 tree limbs in place of escape. Inside your body,
 a head alone absorbs the metal varnish of disjunction *in-between*
 the threaded portions of each right and left wall, a woman who has many brains
 likes to dismantle burden and create an illusion of texture. Still,
 her multitude is an attack on anatomy,
 like allowing one's doppelgangers to touch the cerebellum and mirror alien
 control.

As a woman, she stirs in inaccuracy and the
 afflicted: burying
 the world of things in delusion and many names.

MAQUI-LOCA

*Es el vacío
del cuerpo
cuando hambre
es hombre.*

They consume her.
She is duty-
free after all.
Juárez, *la loca*—

a twin plant industry
whose fruits swell
to cry like dead wood
is inclined to bleed.

She is the border
leading between
first and last. Third
labor costs are no man's

dollar. Home is merely
commodity on her front;
she assembles his customs
with communities worth

of arms: automobiles
and armor, helicopter
and regional jet fuselages,
so patriarchy could burn flesh

with propriety. She is no longer
La Madre, who contains
the nature of thighs
as garden of Eden.

Though he still masters it.

She is no longer *La Virgen*
who bestows mother earth
to the image of his likeness
and garments popular culture.

Though he still masters it.

She is *maqui-loca*:
import and export
of chore equals the sum
of her moving parts.

She is developing economy
and prosperity is *corpus delicti*,²
when *el jefe* tills her landmarks
for capital equipment.

Her engine is a metallic
middle with electric
command. She is not
human design for *hisstory*.

Though he still masters it.

He deconstructs her portable
tools—*La loca* is toxicity.
Environmental pollution
is still public property.

Though he still masters it.

He will ultimately end her
internal combustion:
controlling movement
in response to all stimuli

but not factory. It shall
remain open as a work piece
for the other,
living skins of Eve.

² New Latin, literally, body of the crime
First Known Use: 1818
Merriam-Webster

**EVERY WOMAN
IS A MONSTER**

She appears capricious at your side.
A lamia—pallid, like an inverted
embryo at the cusp of imploding
any shaft. Male-devouring demon.
She's a hysteric at best and a sea-
monster at her very least in order
of arrangement and derangement.
Her serpentine corset anchoring
four-chambered hearts for each heir
of Edwardian society. She is creature
in no man's land. Superflous and un-
sexed, though she possesses a bleeding
empire. Her pith is all-serving of suicide.

IV.

*“the young girl herself breaks the magic circle of the exorcism
so as to rejoin, in an improbable place—in some versions she dies,
in others she penetrates a wall—Her predestined ghost, the young dybuk
eternally hers.”* Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*

WONDER WOMAN

“The obvious remedy is to create a feminine character with all the strength of Superman plus all the allure of a good and beautiful woman.”

—Charles Moulton in *The American Scholar*, 1943

As barbarians used hooks to capture their female prey
and colonizers declared war-fair on her Paradise Island,

Wonder Woman acted with the Lasso of Truth to bind
these cavemen. She’d infiltrate like rope body; controlling

mind in rough-and-tumble play, with her knots of desire and life-
giving, for coercing confessions rendered a release of naked

power. And Wonder Woman wound like butterfly coil to control
the “fires of truth”³ as said insanity though she as a neurotic would

relieve injury and become whole again. She’d articulate women,
expanding and contracting cable length fibers to attach man to

the end.

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wonder_Woman

KALI

She is Dark Mother. Every night a fire starts
in her head as illness is the most fearful symmetry.
Worship now. Death is a tongueful and release is
the greatest weapon of soft moon. Crimson body.

In her head, illness is the most fearful symmetry
so when she engulfs, hands become talking cures.
They crimson soft body with moon; the weapon greatest
in worship is a release of tongue. Death is now.

And when hands engulf, she becomes cured; talking
on the couch, “anatomy is destiny”⁴
and death. The release of now is tongue-worship
for Kali’s wilderness is where severed males draft movement.

Yet destiny is still the couch, where anatomy
forms wounded passions, she devours in confinement
all severed males of the brain. For Kali, drafting wildness
is between the emptiness of space and corpse. No veil.

Every night starts a fire. She is Dark Mother.

⁴ Sigmund Freud, *Collected Writings* (1924)

SELENE

Selene is *Domina Oriens*⁵
 and with every growing
 cycle, her roundness inhabits

as a sign of the vindictive,
 for every man who gazes
 upon her celestial bed.

She engorges only to become
 new again. Her fullness,
 threshold of tempestuous design.

And like a rotund fruit in the sky,
 she bursts with colossal zest
 just to free her need for madness.

She opens to reveal pale face;
 a body barely detected by feel,
 she insists on night as a reflecting

lover. He ever so lightly filters her long
 wavelength of a yelp, and like every male
 suitor, distorts her top until she is no longer

visible. But she covets the dark
 like a fit of hysteria, and protrudes
 all flat surfaces of linear philosophy

amid a shifting sneer: her lunar
 lullaby. Wearing a highly strung
 veil, she bears the folly like oxen

and runs with weight of zeal. And how
 she bemuses structure like a bottomless
 chariot, she offsets her need for violence

in a silhouette. And as she comes
 to end, the softest part of her lot
 encircles its yoke of confinement.

⁵ From the Latin for the Moon as a goddess.
 Wikipedia

MONSTERS & DOLLS

With the high spirits of visionaries, they possess
full jointed bodies like bulk packages of rapture
and seek the demise of assembly, so the house
angel can die down awfully and freakishly. How their
uncanny bones are muses labored in utter defiance. *On the loose.*
With the guise of craft projects, they captivate the cause
of human death. How madness is knocking against
objects of purpose and shaping self-will. Long live
the enamored female, they revere! How she separates,
like the once ago violence to the throat, so her movement
is unconnected to real discourse. And just like monsters and dolls
are muted creatures, cholera is a woman in mourning fashions.
How the riddling of nature is a life-like disorder so is raving freedom
in alien corpses, where the center is *off* like the softening of brain.
How there is no floating to surface after the burning signs of the wicked.

GRUNT OF BEAUTY

The woman writes
her body
in the text of man,
only to realize
the words
being forced
down
her
t
h
r
o
a
t

HORROR VACUI⁶

Aloïse engraved every part of betrayed.
 On the canvas of remains and
 prison-hospitals, her hallucinogen
 lair was embroidered. She'd feverishly color
 with the slow burn of a clumsy head
 just like when cells becomes neurotic.
 And with a solitude of mania, she'd bleed
 the Art Brut of affliction in all its entirety
 just to suspend the sickness of pure reason.
 Noblankspace
 is her occupying
 the urge, as if heaving
 would shrug an orgasm
 like the artistic demise.

Because the body is compartmentalized;
 so is the mind, a windowless
 room of one's own
 just as
 Aloïse Corbaz
 was once committed
 to fleshiness on the page.

⁶ From Latin "fear of empty space"
 Wikipedia

THEATRE OF THE GROTESQUE

“Tragedy, then, is an imitation...”—Aristotle, Poetics

Like a theatre of grotesque
beauty, she undergoes
the necessary character
transformation for his
entertainment. Male spectacle.

After all, he runs the show
in the man-made asylum
like Father, a self-styled Dr.
and healer; using stagecraft
like her purported witchcraft.

He invades her scene, so she performs
gender from de profundis⁷,
where she is groomed to hunt
as a shapeshifter, who digests
dead cells in the right and left brain.

So after lobotomy, her body courts
the likeness of a boy, and she is no longer
the Father’s haunting and fairy story.
Though as a prisoner, she still trends
the “agonized face”⁸ with a strait-

waistcoat. But like a fallen woman
with viral hair cut low, she embodies
the opposite sex. Skulking about
in the delirium continuum like a
wicked sex bender, she is a parody

in his theatrical production. Fixed
in the patriarchal image, so the mind
and body never reunite before a live
audience; she will remain admitted
to the dramatic arc as the catastrophe.

⁷ English: Out of the Depths

<http://www.thesacredheart.com/latpray.htm>

⁸ “a face of sex and woman's pain...” Mary Gaitskill, *Don't Cry*

WHEN A WOMAN DIES

“There are always two deaths, the real one and the one people know about.”
—Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

There’s the dying you do
when you are alone—

the type that plummets
when you touch

just to penetrate vein,
or empties its chambers

as said lady of the night.

Only because you are darkness,
Herself.

Second.

The way you are safe in body
when the moon is fully human.

How some unbalance often means
unaccompanied,

and is almost always unannounced.
How you are slightly and not wholly.

How being locked in the dream
is the unknown oasis.

But this *real* is otherwise his fairytale.
(Just the other dying for another)

The one
everyone knows because you’re history.

A true or false Bertha. This is his story.

First.

How you gave up the ghost
for natural light.

How your final abstraction
mapped color in the lunar month.

The way you slowly burned
the nervous system,

just to usurp clarity in circles:
as the “bright one”¹⁰

and how your mad pursuit was nature:
in constant “Wild Hunt.”¹¹

Because
when a woman dies, she keeps on dying.

¹⁰ <http://www.behindthename.com/name/bertha>

¹¹ <http://vovatia.wordpress.com/2011/02/27/oh-baby-baby-its-a-wild-hunt/>

JUMPING SPIDER

She mimics
your every move,
from a gutful prance
to the terrified stride
so the oscillating pendulum
between her legs vibrate
to lead you down her pale trail
of soft-bodied glands.

She dampens the array
of colors in your daddy
long legs with silk tether to mount
her abdomen to your surface
as peanut shell camouflage.

She hears drum rolls
and buzzes from the hollow
in your curved leaf head; the cut
between your rows of eyes
and plumose unibrow sense the dead
mosquito in her throat.

She climbs the imperfections
in your glass sternum with minute hairs
and claws your pill-like ridge, breaking
her crystal mass into a million jumping spiders.