

Cherie Geauvreau / SIX POEMS

THE SHADOW OF THE CROW

I he slipped in and out of blue rooms and basements a dangerous man between conjugal beds & i dreamed always in white with the radio on & i dreamed the little flower of jesus the redflesh of longing a child of the assumption i confessed blessme blessme father for i have and this is my first communion why am i not Immaculate Immacula when i carry this fist of faith in my vagina

but then i was Black Maria White Chanteuse and i danced the Rosary March on the 1st of May forgiving Them their sexual liturgy epistolean abuse and i chanted gaily in the rhythms of tainted saints 'o cum o cum let us all sing latin sing latin' genuflections of the heart custodies of the eye

father brother christ on earth of all the deaths i could've had but i was the Holy One the Daughter of Light swallowed in cassock black and now my long livid silence listens for the cross in the floor the hail & hymn of a sacred place where lies buried the soiled panties of a child blessed beloved relic of truth

II if i write it down if i make it legible readable speakable if i state it as truth will it be real will my mind

will my eyes the protectors be penetrated will light leak
in like acid and burn through the wall to my brain do the
pictures start then do the words come and come nothing
borrowed stolen usurped anymore

will these legs walk with me will these hands i've never
known reshape release and heal from the touching they've made
will these breasts stop burning and floating and freezing
in sound like soft bones

can i have years can i have times can i have the thing
arrested disarmed

will the thin tight lip of my madness bleed open open
will the words (broken skin) peel away whispers into wind
or will horizons steam into my mouth like dawn or love
or night

III he said the heart beats like ice under the shadow of the crow

IV and i answered in many voices: we are the face of
tribulation we are the mouth of the cave
Symptoms present: drive over a cliff pull a trigger roll
off a ferry in foetal position Out of order: time sleep
lists so many lists and eat eat eat hallu hallucinations
medications habituations the names all the names

And body parts: rage swells the shoulders fear howls
down the wrists pain sleeps in the heel fingers apprehend
torn bits of time the fugue Things never quite right:
yes we are Catholic good fat nun het het hetero sexual
mommy baby gone such a pretty face below that bright incisive
mind we tried to be born again good news wait
not enough charis ma caritas bent under the spirits
the tongues the healings the miracles and even then the
surrender would not come

V she ran backwards at the speed of night she didn't drown
in sadness she soared through it like it was sky Beauty
and obscenity cut her equally they were one a double-
headed burl-handled axe

VI cut the killing rope and up she went through slipstreams
and striata

VII but the writing yes the writing the undertow pulling me
back pulling me down and the writing a stillnes[s] and a
density and utterly without wing

THE ONION SONG

I

compelled if not by jesus
who waves at us with his friday arms
while kneedeep in the convulsions of that love

then by truth?
or the countenance of truth?

scotopic visions reduce
the eye constricts pulls in
and we stare at the blind spot
until light pikes the eyelid open

II

compelled if not by jesus
and his shock in giving birth
"They're coming!" his uterus slamming shut after us

then by fear?
or the memory of fear?

his surplice shifts
like scarfskin falling away
we are babies still keening against
the hock and heel of what has gone before

III

compelled if not by jesus
who looks just like me
his anguish distasteful his language stuffed into wrists

then by courage?
or the meaning of courage?

girls with golden brains
whose wombs are cracked and licked clean
sing valour between the lips of children
adagios before the music begins

IV

compelled if not by jesus
whose opulent heart plummets
and burns and scorches the airwaves

then by faith?
or the intimation of faith?

despite the burning tire
beaten black around our necks
a poet scripts fingerboned fire
a palladin ride like wind in her lungs

V

compelled if not by jesus
and his father's attempts to dulcify
our daughters' rocking antiphony

then by love?
or the transcendence of love?

i'll sing and you'll sing
and in the slightest of times
harmonies of birth will reemerge
the chant of a child already born without the pain

a poem for two sisters

your legs leibling
roped and snarled
to the spindle chair

your arms schwester
scarlet wings
that lathered the air

your simeon your dachau
your mother's incantative trance
your father's razor smile

your sister's heart
cured with lye
and stretched hard

over your round mouth

the skin of the drum they beat on

your tears
the sound of rain
slashing down
the throat of the sparrow

locus

having been given the scourges
along with the rooms

and each room with eight doors
leading out and open

revealing the levels of stairs
and every stair striding up

to the roof and its peristyles
we lay our blankets down

arrange our dial and stones
like simeon and hear

only faintly from the world below
suicides relentlessly turning

we've come up and away from obloquy
the sewn lip the blunted tongue

and their songs inciting us to joy
or to write until the dead are dead

so as not to offend
we've come up to you oversoul

sweeter and higher and deaf
to all but our very own

twentysome

she is so young she is pastel
pink meadows are her landscape fruity seas
dawn romps from her throat
and she laughs like a bell
her orgasms come back
pistol sprints in slo mo intensity

she holds everything in her eyes
her palliatives cook up like gold
under the sun of your need
hooves beat the air over your head
when she arcs and suckles old kisses
from your breasts

her fine arms spin you to sleep
your limbs twine
bloom wisteria in the morning
envined you are unlaced by
her tongue and roguish fingers

overnight she is Gaia strafing the moon

cantabile

you fuck in my ear with your tongue
sub lingua canticle of sweet patois

melodies bloom in this chamber
of the deaf vibratos on a pelvic drum

your breath wets my neck orgasm falls
plaited by my fingerbraids

we answer the upheaval the unseen
my hands sleep still canaries in a cave