

AMY BUTCHER / Extracts from *Le Désert Mauve* by Laure Angestelle, in translation by Maude Laure (1987)¹

Maude sits in Montréal absorbing words combined with glyphs
from a mirror-image desert song that engulfs
the desert is indescribable
where the long-man disrupts his face and drafts equations
innumerable numbers
a time bomb

Maude ignores the man relates all the quirks and yearnings of young Mélanie
from Laure's elliptic form sees both
women and wonders where the two collide they are
double intermediaries of teenhood dreams/energy
here is Laure's rendition:

the height of love and unreal
among the partridges and cougarix
what have we become in the present
of the present pretending possession of our awakenings and valiances
in full ecstatic narrative
caresses and world's navel combine
within the roots in us of reading and exuberance

today too many of *THE babes* are born
below the belt with a whole body of
girl or boy who keep tradition going
so many places of sentiment and solitude we need
vertiginous words animal names
the dream's energy that escapes all genera

A girl's first love? the wondering of an older woman? Maude sees texts of mind
that spin down
fast so fast, sharp so sharp to bodily concerns... of dreams and babes and birds

1 Translation of Brossard, p. 108.

that talk like cougars, morph like perdrices but mix up their pretense and
possessions
to confront the wormhole of the world

Suddenly parts scratched out Maude can't read much she sees
black lines and asterisks and finds this:

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yesterday: coconut milk shrimp, oysters again very salty
with many of *THE summers* sought from our emotions
and the horizon

The oystered summers that seep from Mélanie?
the horizon of coconut-salted, mauve-coloured bombs
emotionless seafood—Maude
shuffles papers...among shards of snippets and regalia she finds an oddest odd
passage:

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and without relying on democracy
yesterday me, and others in a Facebook photo, look:
a vulture waits for the child's body to fall
in a state of so many corpses

What is Facebook? A future self-story unfinished impossible?
She wonders what shapes await the child's vulture death...

Maude must make amends make chances turns
come home from the stark solitude of Mélanie/Laure's desert
where Mélanie stops and Laure begins, does Maude take over—diving divining
driving down
through the long-man's face
an all/mirror-face reflecting roots of sand

Reality is engulfed, light fast, looks melt