

Rosalind Morris / DREAMS OF LOVE AND WAR

Reason for Sorrow

What she said [] The wanting
of time, the keening of words (all that is left
where song was). What she left [
] hope [] is (?) hidden

Blooming in the desert, a fire promises
speech or at least signs. What message is rumored
seems like prayer: stubborn gods gone to silence
or petulant caves where to hoard sweet honey:

Come back. The boys have gone to war, with only magazine girls and memories of video games; no end to boredom nor ends for anger when the guns grow heavier. Hercules, stupid

idol of the bent man, our sacrifices
have no address, fail to make the sky weep. If
a poet, if [] she, if [] words
not doom, but some reason for the sorrow [

] error, not hate or (with or instead?) perhaps
sorrow itself, alone or with some other
abrasion, some ache. If, in love no holding
back [] what future might have been? A poet might

[not doom] by saying
we commit ourselves, waging one faith against
another [] and if in error only words
if the war had not been dreamt, we could forget

that we promised death, and [?]
unbound [] wanting [] time
time of mortals so briefly snuffed – but still time
enough for something other forever

is what she said, [says] could you
listen
for just a moment and then
some other sound or silence

echo come back.

Sappho's Foot

— for Yvette

Think of Sappho, her strange foot. The foot [
] is

] everything. To walk, stand [
Come to me. [] Footfalls:
 Ciphers

of arrivals and departures, quiet exits from
the bedroom where the sheets cool too quickly, or
the tender approach when night has overwhelmed
want and waiting is sleep. Say only
 goodnight.

I think of you this way: thin rind of callous
cupping the heel, or a new moon, silver &
sharp in winter sky, or (yet again) black earth
 under the gardener's finger nail.
 To be

so so close (if whispered, it would be enough).
and still [
] to fear losing
 as by forgetting, or (perhaps?) some
 ruin

when the interval would not imply return but
a vanishing, like her []
words missed perhaps a voice
but not silent, rather invisible
What

comes with age that need to be needed
and to know that one will not fail, not stumble
when everything depends on quickness – no blanks
...] no forgotten numbers
the telephone

unmenacing. To walk steadily and say
and believe in saying – with the gods – we still
have time and] love
after: promise you, promise me:
to survive

Now, other things come to mind: me behind you,
heat, a smoothness [] your back
cupped by me as by a moon, or a callous.
My breast flat, your arm reaching
back

] ear,
eye
hand and foot you
Come to me. [] dreaming as if
agelessly.