

(THE FROZEN GASP

Against the pale blue—
 dowager's paper—
words gestured shards
 from a memory's night

He felt her stirring within
 a shuttered room
hands as restless stalagmites
 scribbling furiously
within the russet beam
 of an ancient lamp
occasionally a pause
 for knuckles to rub
against the blindness of
 lashes clinging together
(helplessly)

I am civilized, he whispers
 at an impassive skyline
I never betrayed a woman
 without first ensuring
her joy in the Aftermath

There was a velvet dress
 whose narrow skirt
sliced itself open
 to reveal marble thighs
There was the glimmer of
 excavated black silk
that would come to approximate
 the surface of her eyes
when he left and she refused
 to cry—

There are thoughts articulated
 through hindsight

The blue letter lies, flattened
 on burnished leather
stretched over a mahogany desk
 where a crystal box
offers a stack of business cards
 which fail to identify
him. A gentleman is always more
 than the coincidence
of a name allocated without consent.

What good are titles? Especially
 a President qualified with Vice?
He identifies all these blows

pummeling his brain
He flattens fingers against
a silk tie—despite
the rhythm of geometric patterns
that would trap
an observer's eye, the tie
's surface is slippery—
it is facile

(ECLIPSE)

... fled

to an alien land

whose history has become

like you—impossible to be grasped

to feel the white-haired woman

I will become

(looking through a window and seeing glass)

I never entered a dark building

fraught upon the high heels you love

feeling the embrace of leers

a rip in space

where I felt you sculpting

a dispassionate embrace

How has she become

a shadow when there is no light

(THE KRITIOS BOY

The artist

with faint scratches

depicts locked eyes

between Achilles and

the Amazon queen Penthiselea

as his sword penetrated her breast—

unsure with metaphors:

critics and historians hail

“The Kritios Boy”

for immortalizing hesitation

Preserve illusion

with a polite silence

No consolation

in memories

that make one catch one’s breath

not since a well-intended gesture

eliminated eyelet lace

from a hand-me-down dress

to create something new for

a toddler blissful in her ignorance