

## (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