



Media Kit - *the secret book of god*

Excerpts

I sat on a couch writing

when a japanese woman
all in black with black makeup
severe bangs
& chopped hair
at the base of her neck
unsmiling, walked
into the lobby of a music school
& waited for the piano teacher
to bring her son
from his lessons
she never made eye contact
with anyone
& of course i know
the tradition of
the unsmiling
japanese
nobility
but instead
i felt
this mask she wore
(i imagined a stone
smoothed by a river
for a thousand years)
as one of resolute
negated resignation
to a world of men
(& women)
who were forever
hoping for that
electric spark
that quickening
of recognition
of a lover
of a god
of an opening
to another world
another dimension
a vision
an epiphany
how the gaze
(voyeur
predator

prey)
seeks
rescue
seeks escape
or entrance
a magic passage
through the eyes
of another
into yourself
& yet
how tiresome
it must become
being seen as a doorway
& not as heaven itself

[the doors of heaven] *f*

Her fingers like tendrils flit before her

like a blind woman reading
the sad history of air . . .

how does one become a good human
how can you forgive yourself
for an unhealed wound . . .

i remember her alone in an airport
the bright yellow of Mexico
a crushing loneliness . . .

where are you when you fall apart
who dissolves inside the cup
where you hold beauty . . .

she is more lovely than she imagines
she is closer to god than angels

& the waters sing . . .

even as she hides like a flower—
inside her moon of tears

even as she breaks . . .

[i have known women . . .] *f*

Nine geese winging west
following the river

i
s x
tw
o

one

the space between a commentary
do i need to spell it out

i
s x
tw
o

one
how the wind pushes

the one
harder on the same line

mcmurtry spoke of mountains of buffalo bones
how an old Indian walked & walked for days

stephanie tells me we'll have to find a new word for where we are, or when

[craig doesn't like the word *arc*: or where are we] *f*

A ppend a name

—Huxley, Po, Rossetti, Baraka, Kidd—

a god

—Hermes, Vishnu, Inanna, Corn Maiden, Death—

a city

—Vienna, Xiamen, Perth, Red Deer, Tiruchchirappalli—

a river

—Missouri, Congo, Brahmaputra, Elbe, Styx—

a man
on a bed
with a pen hesitates
while a ghost settles into his nerves—

a flesh it knew as the name of a mountain—

or a rain speaking to a bridge on a quiet night—

we hear ourselves called, even as the waters erase the heat of our arriving—

nameless & amazed

[nameless] *f*

W aiting for the ferry she asks

how did land separate from water
& why isn't the sky a sea & the sea a sky
i smile & say the clouds are a sea wandering in heaven
waiting for a ferry to bring them back home
& she laughs asking why there are more
taxis in New York City than here
& i laugh & offer that perhaps
more people long for a home
in the loneliness of NYC

(& the pelicans on the
harbor posts watch
the dead fish
float on
the gray
water)

if we step on a cloud would we
fall straight down, she presses

would you fall right through
the water if you walked
on it, miss question
well, then why do
dead fish float
& why aren't
the clouds filled
with dead birds

(& why can a man
hear a voice
before it cries)

after a silence
i fall to watching ants
& she says, do ants help each other

if they find one drowning
no, i say, that's not
how ants work

do they just
eat each other
when they die

is that why rain falls
to be eaten by the ocean
eaten by the land that left it

do dreams wait for us
to eat them with our words
& let them float on our memory

(& years from now will she ask
daddy, are you really there
floating in my memory)

[a conversation with Ramona, 11] *f*

The cicadas & mockingbirds trade opinions

like shrill philosophers

long blue stretches of cloud tatter
float between sine waves
like tabled heat

(it is all a music of heaven)

where is this fisheye of consciousness
a silence like a broken window

dead flies peppering a rounded floor
swelled in the ghost wind of

abandoned plains

(the phone rings
but no one is
on either
end)

[what do you hear when you leave] *f*

Sometimes

she pretended
to be blind
& in that
alone
she
exceeded
the beauty
of holy saints

or when the old women laughed
she would laugh loudest
& the children of god
would remember
how much Eve
knew of
sorrow

or an island
in a stranger's dream
where the blue of the ocean
is so pure & the waves so very still
that the light becomes a song
& in that moment she is
emptied of regret

or when the boy
saw a bird
on a lake
& she
was
happy

or how
time
floods us
with ghosts
like clouds
suddenly alive
& we remember
how some corner
of a room

became
everything
we ever
thought of
as beautiful
even as it dissolved
like cloudless tears
like a whisper
in the ear
of she
who will
comfort
us all

[what she wanted in clouds] *f*

She paints a hook

(how the artist/priest takes it
& builds a city of eyes:
the Argos
the seeing
the seen
the hanging god
the meat of Inanna
the crown the diadem
the soft sweet tear of a woman's sex)

or if the bridge where the dream
asks the well: what is your dead father

the wanting mouth on an Egyptian watching the pyramids tower
watching it grind down a ground of ghosts

(which memory
do you capture
in the net of
forgetting
as if it were
leviathan
as if there were
no pity in the world
no pity in this world
for the insatiably hungry)

each stranger on the street

(the streets of Paris Rome
London Paradise Oz)

like a figure of a frieze in an Exodus of light
a child in an empty room switching the magic lamp

on & off
on & off

the two strands
mean memory begins

(a string theory
a rope bridge singing)

a pulse remembers the wave
memory held tightly in the vault of eternity

(nothing is forgotten)

when will i become only (again) a concept
in a filament (o, string)
of thought (too late)

the pleroma is already full
(all debts are paid)

or if you look closely
(a god so immense, so inherent)
& breathe like attar of rose (an essence)
how even the ash
of a bum's
cigarette
(or Powhatan
or Walter Raleigh)
falls as elegant as a mountain
or the last spar of Melville's Pequod
glittering in a setting sun (o, red eagle; o, eye)

or the crested cranes
rising thru the screening
mists of a river's silver morning
the cool wet air a dragonfly kissing
the skin of a pregnant lake

how the ripples of her skirt twirl
or my finger hooked
in the loop of her
nestlike hair

(who paints this moment just for you
trembling beyond existence—a wanting world)

or if a bridge where we wake as a child
or a ghost rustling in the reeds

curling a long blue light

how the brush of Vermeer hung there
waiting waiting

[a painted hook] *f*