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The Descent of Woman

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writing as agonizing
no agony?
agon: to struggle, to compete

agonize: to compete with oneself, to tear against inside

— — — —

dear c.

i rewatch. there are more breaking through tears of you in this version. the audio, as you explained on the phone, stays much the same although of course this means it shifts.

i think of this voice for an 'audience' and i think:

how i imagine myself appearing in the third person with you—they say we form an odd couple, perhaps. i say, one of feminisms' many.

my soft, quasi-flatness as someone who has never watched a pornography as they call the films, and even the stills that appear engender stones in my stomach. but we all know—but of course we all know that the referent extends: i cannot look at magazine newsstands or any public Woman images sometimes. already this. (pornography)

i tell my students in class that the best example of a pornographic image is the glossy surface of a cosmetic cream bottle in the advertisement

they look at me like i'm mad.

and you, from a side of darkness that i cannot name but feel, and do not need to see to feel, you have returned to seeing the scene, and feeling the cut, you are my braveness and courage into what i rage against

and, more really,

what acutely pains me, for not all of it can be shielded off, what makes us wince, what gets in, what makes us curl in the corner to watch our own films from afar, lest we expose ourselves to our the or

les we expose

les the exposure

you go there, as some feminists say. you set stages.

A ASI

as i think i wonder where history enters in, i wonder where—and here penetration language *enters* without me knowing it—

i wonder where history is to make it seem less, where history manifests, where

this of the problem of naming now, of white feminism now, of nonwhite feminisms now, radical feminisms now, third feminisms now, queer feminisms now, or queer theories that always already were feminisms now.

should i credential myself

my anxiety is the bodied incorporation of a threat. a politics asks which do i name: the anxiety or the threat?

a threat dissipates when named; a being dies when named

i unname to elide a violence (to her)

but elision curls inward, as unnamings draws fears of sad invisibility

turning the obsidian, i seek your affective impossibilities.

rather than elimination, risk.

and then the threat dissipates a degree—even as its reality sustains—and we breathe through because you notice my anxiety is rising

two sensitive beings listening undo logics that disavow the possibility of other-incorporating

her body, in its grief, stopped incorporating.

- Suzanne Herrera 2016