

faking an orgasm

by Jerry Ratch

There's an account of roasting inward, holding myself like a rock inflamed, my inward joy rotting my veins. How was I supposed to go on loving anything after you? Like a pigeon hated at home, awaiting your passionate kisses? Knowing how your classical kisses were like 18 simple fractions that the flesh divided into, after your kisses began breaking open pretty mouths all over town, all over the universe.

I could have been the wife of your pleasure, desire, your longing and fancy, anytime. The receiver of your long sex. Vocal sounding from the shores, howling after the occasion, carving out that inscription of yours on my insides. But you left the center of my earth, and I lay rotting, having to fake everything with all the other men instead.

I was the girl who drowned there. Hidden mouths sucked me under, out of my narrow life, the underworld girl they repeatedly swam to as she went to the bottom. Even as they sang sweet songs in my ear, outside of fear, dread, torture, into the open bird of difficult light undersea.

But none come back from that water. None could prophecy the winter that life would become after you left. Seeing less, I turned from the glass and my eyes rolled upward, dull lips murmuring, *God, God, what next?*

