

this self I photograph

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ce moi que je photographie

Il s'agit là de poèmes qui "désirent" (comme disait Barthes) leur lecture, qui convoquent notre imaginaire personnel. Les premiers textes montrent dans les yeux des autres un "moi-mouvant", un moi qui s'ouvre sur le non-dit. Les rapports amour / haine (envers le père, la mère), la présence / absence etc. Comment définir l'essence sous le glacé de l'oeil, de la photographie? Comment réduire la distance entre le corps et son image? La représentation a toujours quelque chose de factice.

i

small girl at the aquarium
caught in a drift of tourists
beluga whale singing
her mouth falls open, hollow sound comes out

I photograph
fish falling through clouded space
the belly's twist
small eye that blinks between white lids
the whale feeding

hope for new shapes
frame after frame
transparent barriers
strangers that swim towards me
through clear glass

the little girl moves on
pale flanks
break through skin of blue water

songs I might recognise
in others' breath, in others' curved laughter

ii

your father, the photographer
how his tense eyes throw back light
behind him you have painted large microbes
as if to let us in beneath his skin
how can this represent distance?

pictures he took of you
sad child scarred by illness
your limbs are hidden by thick olive trees
how can this represent closeness?

my own father, biologist, his photograph of me
my body turned from him, hidden by skirts
as if the space between cancels
the way his fingers reached between my legs

and how I peel from this
as if it were a flat surface

iii

frida
this self I photograph through words

how each detail
pulls off from her like skin

each curve
now levelled out
into paper

small girl I was

woman I have become

dark birds and planes
that beat across the sad distance

black (or white)
'nothing is this colour, really nothing'

(journal of frida kahlo)

it is no use
looking at each wide hole
where the line stops

each flat
emptiness of self
what depth it has

no need to trust in this
how loved one speaks

fine needle
turning round and round
towards centre

scratch pause
scratch pause

it will not help
to just record
curved emptiness

dark gloss or sheen
movements of light
through what we were

never before
afraid of

the word 'open'

I signal back to you
mother, tonight you called
in this dark room
scent of discarded shoes
your voice coiled-up on tape
you want to come visit

I touch the open field of my belly
its curve inwards

your lips pressed to my mouth
our breath identical

I turn the hall light on

flying from you
I found a separation
between earth and sky
sun pushed through clouds ahead

I climbed out from the valley of your mouth
your open legs
your furled womb no parachute

string caught around my neck
I cried, my screams
not slapped from me

I play your message back
caught up against the final beep
I signal back to you

light on the answering machine
hovers, unblinking red

place that will never land