

Mother me

Mother tender, prescribed behavior
Childbearing culture, my fertile nature
What runs?
What runs down?
Down the winding switchbacks
Down the tumbling foothills and past my ancestors' graveyard
They've prayed for me every morning since the day I was born
Down the seaswept shoreline tangled with my salty breath
Down the raging torrent so unheard, unseen, unknown of
Down the plastic gutter where all my unprocessed feelings decompose
Slowly leached of their scratched fantasy
Nothing, yet everything at the same time
Depending on how closely one looks

My uncontained ambition pains me
The sore prospect of having to endure unanswered questions
To forever abide by your orthodox catechism
Under your plastic chains and plastic sheets of policies
I am prescribed longer bed stays to sow his loosened collars frayed
To return to the household, to exploit my fertility, to rear the young
The truth is, cheap fabric quickly frays, so why
Why are the needles and threads laid on my shoulders?
In your plastic pages of prescription, a bitter yet honey-soothed coax
Of me is made a tiring heart steeped in molten steel
Should I be a plastic Chinese woman, I'd be kept under two plastic cups
The plastic you and the plastic He

It doesn't hit, until that one sleepless night
When I wake up to the clapping windows and groaning door
Outside, the wind puffs and growls
Reminding me of my simplified, abbreviated struggle
I clench my fist and kick my legs against my comforters
I stagger to the narrow windows
I thought there'd be tears
But no, there came words
Down by bucketfuls that plashed the old windowsill
From a leaden sky lowly hung, around the farthest clumps of stars
Words, sad words, steering me into the same port of sorrow, Victoria Harbour
Where I've hopefully trodden along but now
Dragging my feet I can only furrow my brows
Why?
Why is it this way?

Is it my flaunting independence that alarms you,
Does it make you insecure, keep you lurching to your feet?
Compel you both to hold the unruly me under your plastic cups
So you can keep a better eye on me
Rejoice in my failed attempts to pry open the locks
Teach me to adhere to all your motherly doctrines and codes
Discipline my allegedly overgrown frivolity like a thorny bush that has to be pruned
If not, tell me, the undefiable you, why
Tell me truthfully

But don't get me wrong
I do believe in people
People like my mother, who still fights so hard for me
With her old spindly hands
People like my plastic sisters whom I share my thread of fate with
Even people like the plastic you and the plastic He
I believe