

Second Beginning

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WOMAN/OGRE and WOMAN/RAG approach a fallen body by a large boulder. The women stand on either side of the body. They glance down, then look up, noticing each other for the first time. They point quizzingly at each other before slowly lowering their hands. They promptly pretend not to see one another; gradually, their gazes meet. They turn their backs to sit on the same large boulder.

WOMAN/OGRE: Which one are you?

WOMAN/RAG: I'm WOMAN/IN/AUTUMN/RAG. You?

WOMAN/OGRE: I'm WOMAN/DRESSED/AS/OGRE.

(Pause.)

I neglected my period blood
somewhere secretly I drink it
under a rock to trick time. Tis
a pleading smell. Scent
of moon-stages, coals.
(Pause.) I don't see well.
(Pause.) Will you tell me
if I misspelled
something vital
like my body
something
like...a living worm
a lily lie upwelling
water, reddening
the algae mucus
of the sea, whatever else
you do besides ragging
yourself making your
imago of a thirsty hole
staging your body
as cartilage, shedding
your angularity as if
a vascular...decree
could repossess you
mutagenic life you
know what I am your
warped
initiation
you
you
see now?

(Pause.)
The brash rumor perhaps
when we were younger
auscultation pumped
open a disease
without center or
terminus, arrives
depletes contends
& whispers. *(Pause.)*
I offer you...
my cupped collected
blood of
groin dropped coa
gulation gelatin
of scrawl made
of veins
pumps
vascularity
or something...like
my body?
The vertical w/
erotic wind
prevailing polar
westerlies
acoustics of fangs
yet who devours?
(inquisitively) Devours?
(Pause.)

WOMAN/RAG: *(yawning)* I believe
we haven't
met. Also,
I believe we
shouldn't. *(Pause.)*
Also, while I can't
understand
where your body
begins in those
clothes you air...

WOMAN/OGRE: You seem *me*. I exist?

WOMAN/RAG: Well...your too body *is*.

(Pause.)

WOMAN/OGRE: Oh. *(Pause.)* I wonder.
Will you exchange

my ogre
for your skin-rag?
(*Pause.*)

WOMAN/RAG: We just happened
to claim the same
rock. I'm not
your friend.

WOMAN/OGRE: This cold one? You want to see it on me?

WOMAN/RAG: What?

(*Pause.*)

Right. Right.

You can't get rid of a state.

WOMAN/OGRE: Says who?

WOMAN/RAG: Says the laws of the universe. Says gravity.

(*Pause.*)

You're an ogre. I can tell. You smell.

WOMAN/OGRE: (*with stony indifference*) I smell?

WOMAN/RAG: Like mud, like dirt,
like rain in dirt in mud,
like something
drying up or shriveling,
like a fried cake, or like
frying and spattered oil,
warm stuffy rooms
windowless without
light, you smell like
a room without light.

(*Pause.*)

Like blood.

(*Pause.*)

(*accusingly*) You smell like becoming.

WOMAN/OGRE *undoes her skin suit and tosses it to the side.*

WOMAN/OGRE: Spit it. “An ogre smells like petrichor.”

WOMAN/OGRE *moves very close to WOMAN/RAG. Their faces are almost touching.*

WOMAN/RAG: (*mockingly*) Like petricolous like petrifact.

WOMAN/OGRE: Petrichor!

WOMAN/RAG: (*confrontationally*) You mean petrified.

WOMAN/OGRE: (*shouting*) You’re putrefied!

At the word “putrefied,” WOMAN/RAG begins shedding leaves. Soon, her body is almost entirely covered. Her head barely sticks out over the leaf mound.

WOMAN/RAG: Ok (*gulping leaves*)...we could
trade
...I could (*struggles to speak*)...

WOMAN/OGRE: Can’t get rid of a state.

WOMAN/RAG: You...become. Your
Becoming.

(Pause. Gulping more leaves.)

Come...clear
the leaves. You can
become. Clearing.

(Pause.)

Hand clearing
leaves.

WOMAN/OGRE: (*suddenly elated*) Ogre becoming.

WOMAN/RAG: (*with difficulty*) Yes.

