

Craig Woods

Three Urban Ladies *A Trilogy of Tawdry Testimony* *by a Terminal Timewaster*

1. Lady of Steel

The plane I'm waiting on has your face painted on the wings... (When it crashes, I'll eat the paint off...)

The jetliner's silhouette, a colossal steel crow, cuts the sky into shards. Air particles throb and weep in the slipstream, which lacerates the blue midnight in a holocaust of shattered cloud.

The glare upon the wing is not the sun but a psychic flare shot out from yr airborne dreams as yr sleeping head trembles upon my shoulder ...

Diamanda Galas continues to howl unheeded from yr muted ear-phones, her apocalyptic chant merging with jet engines in a sonic parade towards that timeless abyss where all skies dissolve ...

Two rows diagonally in front, that dark-haired girl you'd said you'd like to fuck chews on a ragged fingernail. Her eyes stare unblinking at a silent screen where Hollywood, terrified of a psychic mutiny in heaven, plays out the now irrelevant myths of a dislocated planet ...

I squeeze yr limp arm with tight cold fingers. The beat of the blood in yr thin veins ploughs its juggernaut of memory remorselessly through my bones ...

Beyond the window a second plane reflected in the vista of cloud carries my younger self across other oceans to an entirely different continent where you await with a new face, a different name ...

The vacant sadness of airports is this journey's terminal disposition ...

The glazed-eye dull ache dislocation of duty free outlets and cold plastic-seated benches has oozed out of the building to claim the landscape



of Florida ...

This whole state is an enormous airport. In the spiritual home of the Space Age, each building, balcony and balustrade points fatalistically to the open sky ...

The identikit motel where we take shelter vomits the day's diet of engine fuel upon a frameless bathroom mirror where my pale features are so ugly in the morning light ...

You push yr hot young tongue into my mouth, yr face fastened shut by a sleeping dream of betrayal upon the midnight runways ...

An interrogative sun blasts the windows on the flight to Los Angeles, scouring our solar-deprived European faces for the remotest indication of the treachery behind our invasion ...

Its merciless glare is reflected upon yr braces, endowing yr smiling face with the vengeful metaphysical essence of an Aztec goddess -- swooping from the torn sky to reclaim the ancient pillaged landscape of a lost people ...

*Are you a lucky little lady in the City of Light
Or just another lost angel ...*

Our younger selves greet us on the concourse of an alien planet ... In the shadow of predatory palm trees, a malignant blonde shroud annihilates yr auburn tresses and a disingenuous tongue spits perfidy from an antipodean tongue ...

Yr girlish embrace fails to penetrate the ghost of Australia, which boils and itches, lodged like an indestructible parasite in the blood ...

*She held her skin to yours, when they brought you out
You've ruined all that she had left, but ain't that obvious now...*

Cleveland cuts through airports like a knife through butter ...

Concourses and terminals dissolve ineffectually into stale puddles against a timeless backdrop of railyards, neo-classical architecture and the tenacious titans of industry.

Empty skyways cease to exist above the Warehouse District where a young punk girl named Eliza clings to yr lapels: "I fucking love yr hair! I'm so stealing it!"

Ghosts of a malign future scurry from your titian glory; scared witless in the Sixth City landscape when the night trains moan ...

*At night I can see the stars on fire
I can see the world in flames*

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*And it's all because of you
or your thousand other names ...*

C-Town gives way to Montreal with the ease of a gelatine mirror ...
Yr hand is a cool flame of desire, which illuminates our passage to
yr homeland. Yr French tongue could bring the planes crashing from the sky
with a single lash ...

*Packs of helicopters divide
Across a crowded sky
What angels did you ride
As I staggered at your side ...*

The last jet engine whimpers upon the sheets where Eliza mumbles
sleepily in the bitter northern dawn ...

“Flying scares me. If I ever come to Europe, I’m takin’ the bus all
the way. I’ll find a way, you’ll see...”

New York City holds the sky in place with a lattice of concrete and
steel. Supernatural armadas soar through these aerial causeways, touring
relentlessly a universe of perpetual terminals and endless runways ...

Yr face comes unhinged among the faded dreams of Coney Island.
Engine oil soaks yr hair black and the sky threatens to smother me in raven
waves of lovelorn agony ...

Gulls bellow a chorus of desolation around the dead skeleton of the
Thunderbolt. The geometry of the track - its every dip, curve and climb -
reads like a madman’s declaration of love scrawled in a broken language of
rust and woodworm ...

*She comes into my mind
twisting thru my nerves
I don't understand
a word she says
she's on my side
I love her all the time ...*

You mutter something in Yiddish that I cannot hope to understand

...

A single tear rolls from my weary eye, reflecting the peaks of the
dead roller coaster as they rush to touch the lazily drifting aircraft in the de-
solate Atlantic sky ...

The acid glow of Heathrow throbs with a migraine pulse. The
benches spread out in rows like supermarket aisles, each dead-eyed passen-
ger assuming the pre-conceived postures of a billion TV commercials and

magazine ads ...

Here the spectral sheet of the Atlantic is but the barely remembered haze of a morning dream. The only thing real are the anaesthetic seats we sit on here in the terminal and their surrogates in the shells of those steel beasts which prowl the runways. Destinations have become the new waiting zones. Terminals have become the object of all our travels ...

*And I feel like a beetle on its back
And there's no way for me to get up
Love'll get you like a case of anthrax
And that's something I don't want to catch ...*

The question of conformity has no meaning here. The utter vacuity of these surroundings infects even the most wilfully subversive act with an inevitable futility ...

When we fuck in the photo booth, the entire event occurs exclusively in and of itself with no tangible effect but for an encroaching sense of post-orgasm emptiness that numbs the spirit and chills the veins ...

Yr face is that of a contemptuous matron, glowering with directionless vexation behind the damp curtain of yr colourless mane ...

Jet engines roar importunately through the frozen torrents of Glasgow rain. A storm of memory claims the sky in vicious swells of sadness and tragic bursts of acrimony ...

Yr face shimmers in and out of focus beyond the battered terminal windows -- an amorphous phantom whose identity shifts and morphs in accordance with purely arbitrary psychic criteria ...

*The walls breathe, we're locked in tight -
it's a lovely end to an ugly night.
I think I could burst but I'm sure it'll keep.
The strobe in my head keeps me from sleep ...*

Recalling a time and a place where the airways had relinquished their power, I jolt awake and wondering: whatever happened to Eliza and her Magical Bus to Europe...? Where should I bury my face when the sun interrogates the frameless mirror...? Whose embrace might penetrate the parasite upon my tongue...? Whose hair will come to love that desolate sky against the Thunderbolt's skeleton when the night trains moan...?

An acid light breaks the sad city shadows with the lash from a French tongue ... The empty skyways cease to exist above the cascade kisses ... A dead city by the sea resounds with sad songs of infidelity ... Now, we wait ...

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L'avion qui j'attends ... Votre visage est peint sur les ailes.

Quand il se plante, je vais manger au large de la peinture.

(Je voudrais essayer d'écrire davantage en français, mais mon français est limité.)



2. Lady of Sandstone

Electric salt is what the fist of solitude tastes like -- a sweaty oil-stained grease-monkey's fist I force down my own throat with the ink of yr absent shadow. A perfidious paw I regurgitate white and hot with frustration through my cock and on to yr sister's face. Schoolyard ghosts in her wordless sighs -- nursery rhyme voices laced with latent hate, wretched chuckles reverberating around the frayed edges of my pale sagging silhouette. Stale breath of an old gym teacher spits at the outline -- that puny streak of piss couldn't hold on to the girl he loves anymore than he could keep that shabby leather school football from being swept from between his gormlessly shuffling feet on the knee-grazing gravel pitch. Ageless wounds raw and stone-peppered reflecting frozen rage from dead years through the scarlet abyss of yr sister's wide open mouth, lips quivering, tongue lapping at stray graceless drops.

Catcalls and hoots of derision:

“Fancy footwork, polio!”

“Next goal against us, just take a fuckin’ bow why don’t you?”