

Could There be a Man

Could there be a man
Who was soft and warm,
Not trapped behind the reflective face of a burdened woman
Soft by his own merit, warmed by his own light

Could a man come to be
Who felt safer with his legs pressed together
To be a man and flinch at the sight of another
To wear his fears like hand-me-down's

Could a man be a sister
Never a brother, as the two seem so different
When sister draws closer to mother
And brother closer to self

Could a man be a mother
Without the nightly washings in baths of blood and tear
Groomed to fit the role so tidily
The will of his manhood long lost down the drain

But could he be a mother innately
Or even dream himself innate
Tangled up in womanhood like his own mother's necklaces
Obedient hands working at the knots
More delicately even than he had been taught
Fingers guided by a force stronger than any nature

If he could just untie them
Could he then be a man
Or anyone at all
Must he even be rid of them
They did shine so prettily in some photo I once saw of my mother
Taken after she abandoned her dreams of manhood
But a few years before noticing
Any pleas of innate motherhood went unanswered

Perhaps if they did come undone
My entire self would unravel with them
Left standing over the remains
Of a woman who was soft and warm once
But no longer and never again
Still no stronger
Still no harder
Still, could he be a man?

I knew a man who told me
That to be a man one must feel like one,
Die like one
He shrouded himself in his manhood
Buried himself in it
His corpse told me
That man was only a word
Its meaning feeding off feeling
Like the worms off his flesh

From his grave sprouted phallic roots
And blossomed yonic buds
But still, he could tell me with no further clarity
If there could be a man