

Em Rooney

Women in Fiction

December 12, 2020 - January 11, 2021

'I see a ring,' said Bernard, 'hanging above me. It quivers and hangs in a loop of light.'

'I see a slab of pale yellow,' said Susan, 'spreading away until it meets a purple stripe.'

'I hear a sound'

'I see a globe'

'I see a crimson tassel'

'I hear something stamping'

[...]

'The leaves are gathered round the window like pointed ears'

'A shadow falls on the path.' (Virginia Woolf)

The women cease talking...

Cessation

Perhaps to read poetry was to read through a sieve. (Renee Gladman)

Perhaps

Or

just the knuckles continuously being held together, then cupping then spreading

then water falling
through, through,
through, and all down
them, down wrists
and forearms, down
foreskin and the floor.

Color moves and paints, pretty or taints the concave lens with which *we** are always viewing things. I am supposed to write a release on the verge of letting go. Of these objects, releasing the hand, the alginate or other such substance gripping at real life flesh. Touching that real life body that *we** all back step toward and dance behind—backbone's flimsy. Releasing these from the studio, the state, the gallery and possession. Sending these *fictitious** women back out in the world. Those wombs and roses.

Their rosy disposition clutched to a shooting star violence both present and already over.

Already burnt out

A pinprick of light just lingering in yesterday.

These slow profiles blending

a photograph, a projection, a recapture

An incessant clatter of soft pedals performing flower. Performing hard. Performing metal armature and apparatus that maybe those fictions never allowed, with their pulse red cores.

I am supposed to write a release on the verge of letting go.

It is 3:53pm on a Wednesday and the sun hangs low at a six o'clock height. All is brim—something close too;

quiet and slouching across the pavement, which has been a place
of worship this season. Which has been a place of loss this season,
which has kept feet parallel this season

A veil. A harness. A rope. (Bhanu Kapil)

The white panels, then a livid black. (Bhanu Kapil)

The queen of cups and women passing

And you should know *we** doesn't exist

"I have been taking photographs of people on the street" (Em Rooney)

Peering into a urn of things

Not a dream, not necessarily a big to do

Something like an embrace and a shock

A shock, quietly undressing itself

Sable Elyse Smith

November 2020

Em Rooney (b. 1983) lives and works in New York City. Recent exhibitions Bodega, NY; Fons Welters Gallery, Amsterdam; KaviarFactory, Henningsvær, Norway; Francois Ghebaly, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Adams and Ollman, Portland, OR; Crévecoeur, Paris; Foxy Production, New York; Simone Subal, New York. Her work is included in the permanent collection of The Museum of Modern Art.