

ROCHELLE OWENS

SONG FROM OUT OF UR

Speak to a configuration of stains
even a silk shirt of the man from Marrakech
even a configuration of stains will be
made to speak sublime yellow-green
smears of avocado pulp the man from
Marrakech enemies at his feet the son
of a Macedonian his peach porcelain chin
its cleft pierced by a thorn pierced
is the man from Marrakech the son of a
Macedonian he crouches over a vanity sink
dappled with mother-of-pearl bearing
the weight of a nightmare a nightmare
about iron stairs about a long row
of embryos luminous organs fibrous pits
Narcissus purging
jabbing his two-inch pinky nail evil it feels
into the cleft of his chin
a Levantine hook on a rampage
from out of Ur into the hotel his private
quarters red hot mosaic tiles hooks for
every hang-up made by master craftsmen
the man from Marrakech
eyes of pale gray-green pale gray-green eyes
son of a Macedonian
mummified is his code of honor

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In ancient Phoenicia
a woman holds a sublime yellow-green
fabric smeared with avocado pulp
years later her unmarried humpbacked
son will unfold the cloth
Even a configuration of stains
will be made to speak

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An urge for rhythms of Marrakech
gilded the row of upper teeth of the schoolmaster
listening to American jazz smiling at a man
from Sudan an engineer wearing a necklace
and a diamond stud in his ear
The man from Marrakech rises from the
Greek revival chair feeling the rays of the sun
resurrecting the dead

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The false door of lust opens
frustrates and disappoints
famous the false door of lust
slamming the head breaking the nose
cracking the jaw splitting the gums ejecting
the gilded row of upper teeth teeth
of Cavafy Donatello Pasolini Versace
short dark solid men mavericks
with spleens of hot lava
orbiting the Mediterranean sun

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A djellaba is a djellaba is a robe a robe of roses
sings the man from Marrakech
letting fall around his ankles purple roses
the djellaba its distinct parts is like a fluid
a fluid of roses is a chemical analysis—proof
le bien et le mal
drop by drop its sound distinct
le bien et le mal
And he sings to pierced nipples nipples
on the sculptured torso—a man from Sudan
And when he sings the words

the words are pigment cells vegetal to vegetal
cooling the skin the words are hairs
pushing through layers pushing through
layers of skin scalp armpit bones in a sac
words of a song from out of Ur from out of Ur
from out of the throat of the man
from Marrakech

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The children always crawl to golden coins
golden coins draw the children
whispers the man from Marrakech
And he grants wishes to a man from Sudan
and desire breaks its molten outer core
then drawing upon his economic advantage
whispers I am the Alpha and Omega
world without end

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In the picturesque Medina
two old men are trading photos
cruise ships voyaging to America
Inside a galaxy a cloud of dust and gas
gas and dust inside a galaxy
Two old men are smoking water pipes
in the picturesque Medina
two old men are playing cards talking politics
sipping coffee
hearing the call to prayer
the man from Sudan an engineer
wearing a necklace
and a diamond stud in his ear
the man from Marrakech

eyes of pale gray-green pale gray-green eyes
son of a Macedonian
an athlete whose stamina was tested
with javelin hammer and discus
smiling and remembering a silk shirt
smeared with avocado pulp
hammer and discus are thrown
and the weight of the athlete
spirals in as dense as a star

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Come see what has been called
the poignant picture—a father bearing
twin sons in his arms—poignant the chanting
Aramaic words and they were born
from frozen embryos
Forced deeper the weight of a dream
about a gold ostrich egg and shining through
the shell the form that you should put
your money into—a two-headed child
two pairs of pale gray-green eyes
colors and patterns of the iris painted
with a fine sable brush
And dread is a light transparent veil
over the eyes of the man from Marrakech
smoking a water pipe eating sleeping reading
playing computer games
then feeling for his wallet for the accordion-fold
interior credit cards driver's license bills
receipts coins and photos
of the winged cherubim their halos
glittering circling red orange yellow
the young always crawl to golden coins

then chanting in Aramaic a prayer
“And they are the winged cherubim
with the faces of children”

*“Song from Out of Ur” was first published in The New Verse News
(newversenews.blogspot.com) on November 10, 2008.*