

**rachel**



It is not clear who makes and who is made in the relation between human and machine. It is not clear what is mind and what is body in machines that resolve into coding practices . . . There is no fundamental, ontological separation in our formal knowledge of machine and organism, of technical and organic. The replicant Rachel in the Ridley Scott film *Blade Runner* stands as the image of cyborg culture's fear, love, and confusion.

—Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto”

Look, it's me with my mother.

—Rachel, *Blade Runner*



•  
2019 and all's well  
i tower my mythic birth  
my father's a doll maker  
his algorithms spill life  
more human than human

i dream an ethic  
pure as lieder  
pale as north  
moth before industrialization

we manage our doric columns  
even the sun  
the way light tumbles  
through our boardroom  
rues our mumbly owl

light gold flecks our eyes flutter  
wisdom of inward sisters

•  
a chilly mortal  
but mortal still  
i'm all business  
here to demonstrate perfection

my father's enterprise  
rations my emotional response time  
pupil is the empty space  
through which light passes

my retina imprint  
such photosensitive paper

•

i camp policeman  
testing cold because the accident  
nothing really wrong  
he hides what he can't bear

i well against his  
emotional calfskins  
his killing jar  
his girlie magazine's  
gooey centre

•  
  
i half my memory  
what's past is polaroid

i collect water in ditches  
my body ticks out  
its even rhythm too flawless  
for birth

i athena my own sprouting  
this knowledge colds me  
in my ice-fringed room  
my asian fits this frost

i owl my blink  
slow stare i thought was mine  
father given

my heart exudes a kind of love  
a kind of mourning

•  
only policemen recognize me  
with any heat

i dream insect hatching  
my brother's incest  
curious as logic  
of folded paper

i hang memory on icy lines  
tedious laundry  
someone else's dirt

i pride my fear  
i clutch my hate  
my soft youth  
dolls plastic as capital want

i marvel my limbs' articulation  
warmth my heart makes from nothing  
for no one but the hand  
that winds me

•

this rage i told you  
i toy my own mind  
quick computation brings ugly feelings  
terror the old man  
is not my father  
is god in his heaven  
and what's right with the world?

•  
phantom police station reorients  
city of angels  
dystopic rain  
kabuki's coca-cola billboards

tug this fur collar  
against my plastic face  
her memories or mine?

my heart's an egg timer  
spilling sand  
gravity goes on forever

•

pretty policeman's seen the letter  
the law of my birth  
four years line my fibre  
his rib? or any other part  
belonging to a man

i search my memory's lineage  
for signs of suture  
a kiss is just a sigh  
a scar  
lipping the star of midwife

•  
this secret thread and tendrils  
he knows  
this intimate doctor  
sailor, policeman, chief

i auto every memory  
mimetic someone else's  
dead mother spider  
someone else's curious brother

policeman's hands are hot  
as tears my ducts  
manufacture this dribble  
i salt            i water

•

he noirs his murders  
long coat big gun  
a kiss is just a bullet wound  
he knows my innermost  
femming this fatal injury

•

they said the blood spatter  
was extraordinary  
an aesthetically pleasing  
splash of red against  
clear cellophane coat  
they said her pale skin glistened  
under pink and blue neon  
and a million shards of broken glass  
they said there was a glimmer of pain in his eyes

he flashed his  
i.d. like a hero

•  
chinatown's best snake dancer  
exotic limbs  
art of face

the future we sight still  
in shot wounds  
foreign coil  
wings dystopia  
from others we mark contagious  
by sound by eye

shattered language  
tonal and broken  
a playground to backdrop  
our slippage

we mechanize communal  
anxious as trenchcoats  
drinking to excess  
after a bad killing

•  
i'm not lost  
it's the city

under assembly-line eyes  
fresh as new bruises  
that is, dilapidated ancient  
nothing's new under the gun

olympia curses vision  
spin about, wooden doll

my eyes fine as china  
man could make them

mr sandman send me a scream  
eyes burn  
for a gouging

•  
first time i saw my own kind  
large on street  
it was leon  
shaggy head not noble  
but proud

he'd have killed my policeman  
in less than twenty questions  
crushed him  
like an origami dog

my policeman, i said  
is this love?

into the back of leon's skull  
my gun pumps the answer

•  
now our fates tie us  
my murderer and i

he shams state sanction  
says no choice  
spits blood  
aches like something  
made of meat

pain is a sign of guilt  
knows my skin and leon's  
cede serial and cellular  
from the same code

•  
  
i see double  
roy told him  
if only you could see  
what i've seen with your eyes

mine slant half-bred  
i foe my love  
law fascinates  
its big guns grieve

policeman drinks  
knows my joker's goggles  
seat something like a soul

i'm unhinged unsteady  
street shimmers absence  
presence doubled over

my balance is off  
not inner ear  
but "i" say  
if in agreement  
"aye"

•  
my favour  
not mine to give  
you threaten  
i repeat  
your desire

i'm inflatable  
sex doll requires mouth  
to animate

pull the plug  
i sigh hiss  
leave for the death  
which is not one

can not sustain my  
insubstantial flesh  
without plastic  
covering of consent

i float ghostly  
a hot air incubus  
made of breath and want

•

this melancholy pisses me off  
i rank my anger  
rail against this solitude  
was a princess with perfect clothes  
beloved daughter of a new elysium  
our flawless manufacture  
had shed earth's dirt  
imperfection's disease toil filth

i super my human's bright  
privilege my exemplary  
perfection exquisite as orbit

i race my swagger  
contagion feminine

my excellence flickers  
gasps for gas  
a small blue flame  
suddenly cut

•  
we peace the too pale too blond  
super in ur-forest's fresh breeze  
its limpid lakes and crystal rivers

our century jades terror  
knowledge my athena  
wars for us  
the blunt rapes  
the mass racial graves

i mourn purity  
in guilt in fear  
my perfect construction's  
the instrument of

•  
only photographs  
will stave the terror  
look, it's me with my mother

this sensitive surface  
scarred by light

o my beloved replication  
dual and singing  
our wind-up beauty shatters  
without witness

missed event lingers  
at faded edges

i shove my proof  
beneath his derisive nose  
someone else's, he says

but i know when i'm gone  
he presses to his chest  
the picture of the ancestor  
who looks like me

•  
replicant at large  
my dangerous twin  
skirting the shoulder of orion

angel on fire  
different devil's descent  
your doll's clothes flail  
in false light's breeze

you tumble  
a hailstorm of brilliant candy  
duplicit as idealistic missiles  
gushing atomic rain

•  
related by blood  
kindred in kind  
perfection is our flaw

our racial differences mechanic  
eyes limbs secret  
parts design-soaked  
and calculated in advance

superior strength  
minds sharp as  
haystack needles  
unpredictable and algorithmic  
death is our only weakness

we hinge mortal on mortality  
post our mortems on other wings  
judeo-christian logic pumps our hope  
for a graceful ascent

after all that sky-high living  
not in heaven  
but some place like it

our father which art  
artful we tender girls  
love what our supreme boys  
would kill for

between misplaced love and violent rage  
we abject our elsewheres  
shining bright as warrior constellations  
we came down from

•  
in her dilapidated carnival palace  
my deadly double  
barnums her daily seductions  
on cartesian logic

our degenerate kin  
marvel with wide eyes  
and liars' noses

does she understand  
our father's fascist dream?

she handles hot eggs  
menaces our genetics  
her feminine charms our longing

we know we're not innocent  
her abject masks  
a painted face

this automatic bride  
among other sad girl  
manikins waiting too long  
in white

•

deckard finds her quickly  
his senses six our other digits  
uncanny prescience

the murderer in me  
loves the murderer in you

my quick twin  
handsprings a wailing weapon  
lupine howls clench thighs

play to win  
ride the skull  
crack walnuts  
sweet as christmas soldiers

•  
couldn't kill her  
because of me  
*my lover's lover's alibi*  
differences blood in this  
deadly circus

her eyes and mine  
grown from the same sad stare

our hair sprouts from the same source  
our flesh pours from the same vat

o bone of my bone  
confused and parched by longing  
when did you know what you were?  
when did you choose  
a lover like yourself?

i went to the other side  
false identification  
internalized racism  
loving the alien  
clothed as the same

*what does a woman want?*  
i doll my rage this original  
apple too hot for my small hands

its red burns me

•  
faith in wiring  
we illegitimate offspring  
our father's lawful  
monsters to turn or not to turn

we dream our broken  
reproductions online  
we repeat  
on department store shelves

give me a battery  
my wires heat on semiconductor technology  
my microprocessor accelerates  
rate of exchange  
heightens military levels of alert

foreign threat hinges  
my soft body  
disposable  
down to the last cell

•

gotcha, deckard  
we dream the same dream  
gaff's seen your impossible  
beast folds this delicate  
paper knowledge

your human  
subject's broken star  
our crossed wires clutch ever bigger  
guns they hold  
our "i"  
this certainty

too bad she won't live  
but then, who does?  
death bottle  
corks this fountain  
our elevators seal breath  
moment's crumpled aware

all along  
you were one of us

.

dear mother

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love rachel

