

# DAPHNE MARLATT

## an economy of flowers

in full bloom they said seeing me large as a pod, a fruit.  
ripe & already taken. the mother flowers in me. hydran-  
gea.  
blue as a virgin gone to seed.

it was a sort of grace, she felt, that had brought her life to  
such fruition. despite the nausea, the weeks in bed myste-  
riously & anxiously bleeding, hoping the placenta was  
not tearing away, the fragile embryo lost. memories of  
being hit by a truck, an earlier tearing loss that felt like  
giving death. this one was safely delivered by loving  
hands, blue flower squalling with her feet still rooted in  
her mother's body. she felt like a child she said, emotion  
washed clean of doubt, of cynicism. crying with child,  
with her child: with her was the miracle. she wanted to  
bury the placenta that had seen them through. she wanted  
to plant a hydrangea in it.

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the mother spoils: blue as the Virgin's cloak(ed)  
in memoriam habit yes, as if she didn't wear the same  
dowd day in, out (it doesn't matter or who's to see?)  
or its earth colour & we are back to that who takes  
us all in eventually.

beige slippers with tatty fur trim she slops around in the  
colour of last year's blooms turned tan now in the wind  
or fragile-eaten by all manner of weather she keeps  
talking about the Isle of Man she keeps saying some  
place where they bloom the size of a man's head or was it  
dinner plates? she carries the memory around a round the  
growing one her body is. the plates have chips and are  
losing their flowers under overuse. she says the kids are  
at her all the time, that tiny fillet of gold leaf gone.

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she. sheets & the nice entice. like spring she said i  
always thought it happened in orchards of apple blossom.  
three sheets to the wind. (or that was the other story  
getting pregnant if he kissed you.) red blossomed on

my slip on the floor of the ferry's much travelled  
carpet under my head, feet of oblivion walking by on deck.  
that was the fruit of beer drinking she'd have said.  
that was the fruit of initiation. no longer hers &  
spoiled spoiling for womanhood.

sitting in the shopping mall, *fidgi* fidgetting. blue shirt.  
green eye shadow. sitting in the smell of *tabu*. wind flower  
strong. (& nothing like that blue that meets the eye alone.)  
green eye smiling over tan-skinned muscle-fitness tone.  
ready it sings to meet him, any him she is in the market  
for.

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hydrangea. water vessel. from the cuplike  
shape of its pod. mother flowers. the ones  
they put razor blades under to turn them blue.

that one wears tiny zippers in her ear. words a warning,  
labels to be taken, outrageous. *Mad* ma(i)d mad(e) her  
cultural collaboration, in a real that violence co-opts she's  
at the ready. lean as a whip, quick as plastic, incendiary.

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mother is not desire but the registered mark of  
womanhood. initiated in a system of exchange,  
she is the visible mark, the easy drupe. dowd,  
doude (slut). "slit." once picked.  
in the monoculture.

she was dreaming babies sliding out, dreaming inside out.  
the maker & the made, re-maid. dreaming with what was  
bigger than her, larger than labels, had her feet in the  
ground. & on. 'cause she was no flower, she had her like  
nobody *had*. after all, she wasn't al(I)one & the mothers  
those other multiples reaching out their hands their arms &  
minds a network for her coming into doubleness a bloom-  
ing on & on...