

Poème à ma mère

Je ne parlerai ni de cheveux blanchis ni de lèvres palies
Je veux vous parler d'une femme d'aujourd'hui.
Ses cheveux ont perdu leur noir
Ses yeux sont restés très bleus
Son corps est devenu fragile
Son cœur est resté courageux
Son rire quelques fois vingt ans
Et quand le fardeau se fait lourd
Elle ne courbe pas les épaules
Elle marche un peu plus doucement
En disant j'arriverai bien la-haut
J'arriverai bien toujours.
De son pas tranquille
Docile à la vie
Docile à l'amour
Elle a marché le long chemin sans fléchir
Sans désespérer
Cette femme douce et fragile qui semble docile au destin.

— Germaine Cornut



Libby Friedman, from Women See Woman

A Woman I Have Known

She dressed in fleshless
clothes
that hung loose on her
every word
each time she opened her mouth
speechless and keen
I saw her eyes
quite beyond the words
she had meant to say
on some man's no-man's land
where she had laid her
head
claiming squatter's rights
unflailing and strong
like I had always wanted to be

I used to watch her at work
patiently building up
the slender threads
of some edifice . . .

her hair was the colour of dirt soil
and her hands were large and strong
like ripened vines
that had seen too much to care
beyond the calculating prose in which
she blew out certain dreams at
me

contrite and plain
and withered
like an old baby
suffering from her genuis

others might have called it love
but I put it in a box and labelled it
with an expiry date

and laboured in my affliction.

— Simmie Moore