

has there ever been a dawning as long  
birds set around the roof tops  
bright eyes buttoned into their heads  
still  
and quiet  
eyes flat dry  
before/splashing in the rain  
shivering wet  
drilling out the last drops from their feathers

I did not see him coming  
stalking the edge of the roof  
the cat  
he sees/

fat breasted birds straddle the stone  
cornices/across the square

one demented pigeon as grey as smoke  
sits on the statue with one arm  
extended/

an all black cat  
watching/

the pigeon's wings lift  
whirred  
in the cat's mouth  
she is caught  
by the throat/the others have flown

the head hangs limp  
snapped

**to one side**

I knew  
I thought it was over/

when the cat shook the bird  
from its mouth  
like a piece of snarled gristle

three boys playing on the roof  
picked up the bird on a stick  
as if it was a broken toy  
it flung itself from there to the ground/  
the earth turning slowly terra cotta  
all one shade

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I did not see him coming  
no  
neither could I feel

that blind mouth

that mouth  
those teeth that scraped mine

that voice  
stripped my woman's clothes  
reduced me to a child  
a little girl child

**pain violates the mind**

from that chained death bed  
a forest grew  
and in the forest  
I was naked and lost

a three-headed jailor's voice

“wasn’t there something you could have done?”

I went blind

I heard everything  
but  
I went blind

**three/more/times**

mutatis mutandis  
the necessary changes  
having been made

**sleep**

go to sleep  
close your eyes shut your eyes

— Cathy Ford



Marcelina Martin from Women See Woman