

Adeena Karasick

From *SALOMÉ: WOMAN OF VALOR*

In axes of excess succulent access
of wracked tracks, flexed nexus sequestered, vexed lexis

Come
in the thickness of
history mystery mastery matrices

Come *with me*
through borders orders laws flaws codes
of urgent perversion.

Come crowded with fluid runes perfumed
and naked, thirsty as plummy flumes
Come misty vitreous
prodigal and unspeakable in lusty veils
Come holy in shaded legends
of puzzled ardor, martyred

in the curls of coiled cries a chorus of cursed whorls
scorched with countenance
with outlaw fictions, fluid swoons, wounded
in coded collusion

In Hebrew, Salomé IS *Shulamit*, from *Shalom*: peace, fulfillment; *Shlalmut*: completion, perfection.

Thus, in her very name, Salomé embodies all that is perfect imperfect and reaching towards --

AS in *Shir ha Shirim* she is the lover, the bride to G-d's bridegroom, *Kol Israel, K'nesset Israel*

the incarnation of desire

SONG OF SALOMÉ

Drape me with wild
rampage, wrought
mementos, re-chérched embers:
we will be riddled in juicy entrées,
we will remember the aching logos
like fragrant trysts
indices of iffy hysteria

I am a bricolage but cadenced.
Oh yes, a draughter of rused asylum
as the tenets of catered radar
as the torqued courtiers of silly men

*

How fancy
you are, rhizome,
disguised as love

How fickle
like phonemic fairies
of jouissance
woven gatherer

How grand
our bet of levity
our grafters of cinders
our engines of deceit

*

And what shadowed abyss
of taut turns is riddled by the flux
of campy anon

*

And what breathy mambo
of moaning nomads
is frothing in the foolscape of
your wet roulette?

What sluiced verity
What twangy biases
What cooing lurks in the sashay of racy traces

Dear preponderance,
the mounting inertia
of flailing labors
bedside
like chaperoned tenets

*

I have parsed thee, oh my love,
to a symphony of hollers
in the flurry of riot

Come with me
My livre
Come away

For the langue whet with mouthy repasts
terrains of slang blurred slinging
in the penned err of puffy affect
furtive inertia nourishing debris and fine
gowned figura and rendered gaps
gowned and trendy, vagrant

*

Come myth me
my livre
campy m  lee

*

Come, crooked surplus
Succumb, let me harness you

Your viscous lacquer of weighted eros
Your bountiful brooding

like a chimera
of mounting salience
In the curve
of the raucous
In the shadowed fancy
of ranty contretemps

My beloved saunters as a cluster
of confers in the
zippers of giddy engines

*

How phantomatic
you are my livery,
map of perfumed affects

I have coveted / oh my love, a
tympany of hors-text
A paste of wild parses.
Poesis of sweet disorder

As the body bodies
disembodying, embodying
the forbidden body
foreboding
Unbidden as the body, rebodies
unbound

Suffer me to touch thy body. Thy body is historical like the body of a lapsed eloper. Like a festering will of vaporous quills; like a palace of scrawled carousels. It is inhabitable; thy body is humming with harrowed imminence; parsed like the clusters of fractalled gaps wrapped like the cinders of aberrance.

Suffer me to touch thy holy precipice. It is like a crown of torn placards; like a knot of uncertainty coiled in the gardens of eros. Fêted with gilded triggers, your body like a branch of echoic clusters that phishers have found in the twilight of caesurae! scattered in the mines of ebullient looms which lines the brow of clanging puissance tainted with malleable tales. There is nothing in the world so holy as your body.

*la corPSe d'accord encore de la corpse succor d'accord courting ma coeur
la corpse succor ma coeur encore. cri de cœur ma coeur Encore. Encore.
Recur. Encore. Encore. D'accord*

Through the *fercockte* gawk-stalkin' hack stackers
of antiquity trickery lexically-licked sticky flickering

flexed with swishy riffs, pithy spiff grifters

i say hula lily hillbilly, billiard bombast
ho-hum *hum de lilah* bruja hoo-ha slap trap
of schizmatic revisionism

And take your slinky hijinx, pixie
fixity of prurient lure of twirly whirlers
a contretemp tempestuous extempora & lay me down in
an elixir mixer of lexically robust postulates
which say *ce soir bette noir*,
of gnarly parlors
in a coughing scoffed cacophony of
acrostic biscuits

a miscued skew of super cinder *cendre*
slippery ceiling singing
in the flotsam frayed refrain. stay

Out of the darkness sans soleil salomé
Out of the madness leila may
as night drenched with martyred ardor

Drown me in
your silted santos s'aint stained santé
of sap dew spit. spirit
Drown me in the
surfeit waters / of hallowed salve
swiveled misery
fêtted d'èspere, asylum
Waters of ravished labyrinths
scorched screams, smashed orbits, the
Waters of radar
moaning filth; sprout sips sprigs thickets
feverish reveries drowning
in the silk steam curtains corridors moist stone slab fingers fleshy revenance; in the
Waters of roused dawn

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**Throughout Jewish Scripture, there is the archetype
of the Tzaddik and the temptress:
The holy man's "righteousness" is based on his refusal to succumb to the
transgressive seductress**

**Joseph and Potifer
She, an evil temptress
who ultimately had Joseph imprisoned**

**Elijah and Jezebel
She, an idol worshipping priestess**

**Yokhanan and Salomé,
she, a decapitating enchantress**

**in each case,
The Tzaddik must not lose his head**

JuSt dAnCe, DanCe foR Me dAnCe
FOr RHyThM IS a DANcER,

a PRiVaTe DaNcEr, RAin DaNcEr moOnDaNcE,
sALOMé yOu ArE tHE DaNcInG QuEeN
DANcE nOw SALOMÉ COME
dNnCiNg In tHE nIghT oF tHE dAnCiNg fLaMe DaNcinG
oN tHE CeiLiNg, iN tHE DARk, JuSt pUt On YoUr rEd sHoeS aNd dAnCe

'caUsE yOu WerE mAde for DaNcinG, DaNCiNg IN tHE STreEt
iN tHE mOoNlIghT, sALoME dO YOu WaAnNa daNcE NoW

iN a laNd oF a 1000 DaNceS, MUsiC boX DANcER,
dANcE mE tO tHE EnD oF LoVe,

DaNcE oN gLAaS, oN a VoLcaNO daNcE wiTh mE
aNd dON't foRgeT to daNcE, daNcE tHE NiGHt aWay
JuSt DANcE litTLé SiSteR, TiNy DaAnCer aNd SAve tHE LaSt DaNcE foR mE

#And.#i.#am.#screaming.#inside.#of.#your.#head.
#inside.#of,#your.#severed.#merdre!
#inside.#of.#your.#cred.#cradled
#slick.#severed.#fête

#screaming.#in.#skin's.#sin.#[sic]#succoeur.#tread
#embedded.#let.#vetted.#blood.#l'etre --
#in.#the.#spread.#sweat.#/#severed.#whet.#of.#re-set.#debt -
#in.#the.#thrust.#of.#shredded.#regret.#misled
#in.#all.#that's.#unsaid.#rethreaded,#misread
#reframed,#fettered.#duet's.#silhouette.

#Resided.#cite.#sly.#sleight'.#o'
#slidin'#misguided.#feisty.#libid.#ibid.#abetted.#edited.
#fretted #torment
#and.#i'm.#screaming.#inside.#your.#head
#inside.#of.#your.# []

When to cut is to bind,
take me
and as you come
to the tenet of my house. In the bed that is
spread across this lexicon

bind me
in the splendor of our haunting

bind me to your wrists
to your forearms, your fingers

bind me
with your leather strapped
heritage histories rituals traditions

bind me
with your tableaux fabliaux
of ragged madness
aberrance, labyrinths

bind me
in prophecy, sophistry
as i taste you
all palistrophically erotic and
threaded with hysteria

bind me to your doorposts bedposts

For in my death i taste you
with the paradox of worship.

Martyrology

Through portals ornaments fires of permutation
Free me Salomé

Like Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel who was beheaded and whose tongue was made to
lick the dust

Like Rabbi Yishmael ben Elisha, the Kohen Gadol who had his skin peeled from his
face

Like Rabbi Akiva who had his skin raked off with iron combs

Like Rabbi Haninah ben Tradyon who was wrapped in a Torah scroll and burned in
the blazing letters.

Like Rabbi Hutzpit the Interpreter incinerated from the fires of his learning

Like Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua *executed as he uttered "Elokim."*

Like Rabbi Hanina ben Hakinai as he *chanted "VaYeKadesh – and He made holy."*

Like Rabbi Yesheivav haSofer, executed at 90 while praying and fasting and then fed
to rabid dogs

Like Rabbi Eleazar ben Dama who was tied to the tail of a horse and dragged around
the city and then sliced into tiny pieces

Like Rabbi Judah ben Baba who was pierced by 300 spears

And through 7 veils chariots, heavens and throne rooms
7 palaces, seals and ascents;
through the 7 waters of high walls and the halls
of the unseen
you will find me along the path of the letters
ripe with the conspiratorial architecture of moist reverence

oh silly may, *solo me oh*,
salo salo me no sweat, no
way no slough sallow may laced with liaised
no shidduch shadow shakes aching
pal mal! salomé swirl no slam dunk oh sally swing low
n ride sally ride like a resale sale oh sally sally mae be my girl sally
mustang sally headlong agon so langue tall sally
salient alias wholesale sally down wind done gone
done rot her s[ou]lamé slayin lass, salomé so lay me down sally
don't slow me with your tally sally hey dolly dolly psalm soullier what sally say salomé
slalom mal *Allez!* andelez salomé
holy olé salomé me softly

tallying the cadences
of aphoristic rings

Johnny tu n'es pas un ange
like a re-genred genre engine John boy Jean jejeûne
John I'm only Dancing. Not yet Johnny, on the sloop don't sleep
Johnny jaunty joue ingénue kick a hole in the sky. Johnny.
Handsome Johnny Thunder Johnny Guitar Feelgood B. good. Oh Johnny!
who's Johnny gens johnboy when Johnny dies. Dear John.
john jamais bon journée, nobody knows where my Johnny goes
Big Bad Getaway St. John Johnny Angel, come home, come back come-lately
jejeune jean regênte.
Dippin in, 'n it might be a sin. Just drive it in
drive it home drive it deep into Johnny go Johnny go, go; look at Johnny
Run Johnny run. Don't Do it, Look twice
a langue genre raison blazon / Heeeeere's Johnny
en jou jewy gentille just John --

as i synch back into the oh John

And as shadows scream masked
in the fury of decay
yes I will yes say yes i **will** dance
an au courant bon vivant vampy-amped
nymphy symphony
an uproarious emporium
of morbid dysphoria

i **will** dance

7 words in the first verse of the Torah
7 days, weeks of counting of the Omer. Sitting *Shiva*
7 days shaking
7 species
7 directions in the world. Visited by
7 guests in the *Sukkah*, 7 by 7 handbreadths. And dance
7 circles on *Simchas Torah*
7 holidays, branches and blessings as the bride circles the groom
7 times. called to the Torah.
7 Noachide Laws, notes and seas
7 days of preparation for the construction of the Mishkan in the desert. And wind the
Tefillin 7 times binding yourself to the Law
7 days of plagues. Of prayers
7 cows and stalks of grain.
7 levels of heaven, continents, sefirot
7 sparks of light,
7 gates of entry for
7 female prophets

And, on *Yom Kippur*, the High Priest
sprinkled the blood in the Temple
7 times.

Salomé, I have purloined riddles like rooms riffing with revery wrested screams of gilded debt, torqued like the ballyhoo of fluid numena, billowing singes sensors, the solace of shawled myth, Salomé I will bestow it upon you shower you with the carousel of saucy insouciance strewn elixir; and I will give it all to you excess upon excess angles of undulance, kinships of crystal caverns quarries of fluted treasure, measures menageries fashioned from the luxurious garments of stretched letters

What do you desire more than this, Salomé?
Salomé, all that you ask, I will give you --
But do not ask the un-askable
taxed axioms of masked axing --
Salomé do not ask me

Separated from the body, *this* head is not an artifact, an accessory, a fetish, a trophy, but a physical medium of invocation and auto-appropriation. A range of dissonance, dissidence, difference.

Separated from the body, this head foregrounds itself as a site of multi-disciplinarity, multiplicity, dialogues.

Separated from the body, this head, a symbol of the thinking body, the life of the mind, attachment, of being between the object in the absence of the object; the head like an apostrophe standing in for the absent present a lost

referent like the letters divorced from their source, the words separated from their meaning; a reminder that according to the Zohar, what is holy (*Kadosh*) is that which is separated - from all that is above, below; all that is unformed, re-formed, performed, visible, invisible, *lisible*.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

Just use your head or turn your head, but

Give me head.

To cut the head from the body, is to make a separation - and pays homage to how within Jewish mystical tradition, the letters were originally formed as a single hidden light and contained within it all the shapes of the letters, all of the combinations of the alphabet and all of the numerological calculations which arise from them!

And i will kiss thy myth, lokhanan. i will kiss it now. i will bite it with my teeth as one bites rapt truth. Look at me lokhanan with your eyes of ragged aggregates, all heretically erotic, despotic of oscillate postulates impossibly flawed, There was nothing as luxurious as your eros, as real as your myth. Feverish with fettered whispers, scattered prayers. How I love you! still lokhanan; athirst for your lips, fingers, tongue and neither wandering silence nor rippled absence can shadow these ravenous apertures. Neither the fluid lumen ominous numena can assuage the throbbing of volleyed values, verity, veils veins of fire. Look at me, I have kissed your mouth, lokhanan, I have kissed your myth. And on your lips, the taste of bold lobbying the taste of love; love they say, like scattered lace. I have kissed your myth.

From The *Eleh Ezkerah* service of Yom Kippur:
The Emperor's daughter loved Ishmael ben Elisha

one of the 10 martyrs sentenced to die
by the hand of the Romans.

The desirous daughter asked her father to save him and when he forbade it she
asked for the skin of his face.

She cut off the skin of this face and used it for a mirror

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Adeena Karasick (Ph.D) is a New York based Canadian poet, performer, cultural theorist and media artist and the author of eight books of poetry and poetics. Her Kabbalistically inflected, urban, Jewish feminist mashups have been described as “electricity in language” (Nicole Brossard), “proto-ecstatic jet-propulsive word torsion” (George Quasha), noted for their “cross-fertilization of punning and knowing, theatre and theory” (Charles Bernstein) “a twined virtuosity of mind and ear which leaves the reader deliciously lost in Karasick's signature ‘syllabic labyrinth’” (Craig Dworkin). Most recently is *Salomé: Woman of Valor* (University of Padova Press, Italy, 2017 and *Checking In*, Talonbooks, Vancouver, 2018). She teaches Literature and Critical Theory for the Humanities and Media Studies Dept. at Pratt Institute, and at The Bowery Poetry Club; is co-founding Artistic Director of the KlezKanada Poetry Festival and Retreat, Poetry Editor for *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 2017 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Award recipient and winner of the 2016 Voce Donna Italia award for her contributions to feminist thinking. The “Adeena Karasick Archive” has been established at Special Collections, Simon Fraser University.