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Twa: A Masque

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TWA: A MASQUE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts

in

The Department of English

by
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ABSTRACT

Twa: A Masque is a collection of poems arranged in five impossible plays, subsumed under one general dramatic architecture. The work plays with the tradition of balladic variation, locating in the violence and strangeness of murder ballads and other aspects of the folk base an opportunity to explore themes of gender, identity, and trauma, and to expand the performative potential for non-linear narrative voices inside narrative poetry. This project re-versions archetypal characters and storylines and synthesizes multiple registers of language against the backdrop of a necropastoral fantasyland. Twa: A Masque doubles and mis-takes poetry for theater, archaism for neologism, and blood for song, reviving the antiquated form of the masque to accommodate its formal and generic innovations, the domains of which include lyric and narrative poetics, song, soliloquy, stage direction, and dialogue.

SECTION
1 SORe cORAL LOVE

Dramatis Personae

Aginny	<i>big sister</i>
Ginny	<i>little sister</i>
Prince	<i>first love, worst love</i>
Ouija Board	<i>a confidante</i>

Ouija Board

A game of chess. Ginny and Aginny play the board.

Aginny

My name is ~~Ginny~~ Aginny STOP I'm contacting you from the underwhirl
STOP We are double-tongued and our hearts yearn twoly THIS ISN'T
FUNNY ISN'T FAIR, MAID I stood on the edge of the letter I carved out
an A in my chest and the blood stuck SHUT UP on the knife broke in my
sad bathtub scum WASH ME PLEASE ME LAY ME DOWN PRETTY He
held my head under, hardpalmed my downy: I bobbed and blew nursery
bubbles into his thighs, and when our tongues broke, hearts fell out.

Flashback

The pool feels wicked cool, moonwatch ticks slowing everything in silver
drips YOU CALLED ME, LOVE shadows crawl the walls the black trees
menace pastoral happy fucking SPLISH SPLASH dreamy darker slips into
my creepy closes. Stars wrinkle placid night, alight above aglow beneath
but in the middle darkness enters and exits and sun, that corner watcher,
focuses a stare: Oh here she comes, the white queen, the sister blood: the
dried blood scab I picked I ate

Ginny (a shiny faux-marble queen zigzags across the tiles)

HELLO Apollo, your horses clatter my teeth as Dawn rises PLASTICINE
on my freshly manicured astroturf lashes. Father loved me better, water can
always lingered longer at my petals. Now Prince in luxury velvet and short
mincing steps raises his slight brow to me, in my goodness CHUBBY
CHECKED CHERUB Locker back slams spit into my neck, canines
nipping JUST A TASTE o my blood-red ruby lisp: I am played to wait. All
ladies know suitors TOSS THE TRASHY but my fingernail beds are never
rumpled. A bevy of posies plucked from the levee: He loves me—

Aginny

NOT I'm angled for the most flatter, my bosom heaving its siren. Men are
pied by its flesh song, promise lands a veil drop. My heady hips swirl
around him my eyes darken to kohl and DUMBTHING he's MINE Shall I
draw you a bubble? *Ginny tosses her mane and snorts; Planchette steps on
sister's large feet and waltzes the room* P R I N C E C H O S E H E R She's
glowing and I'm falling, room collapsing, drained of color, rinsing white,
falling through layers of earth to molten core GINNY glowing as the sun as
mine slows to concrete. My hurt weighs so heavy. The nonchalant smile,
her flashbulbs are blinding and I hate her GOODBYE HER I'll rip her
cheap pageant crown and paint myself in her sunfunk TEAR THE SASH of
her innocence, Mephisto, take her for yours but give him me, bid him love
me HELL LOVE YOU KILL ER You'll eat her heart out. Signed, my
Stigmata

Twa Sisters

Flowered bonie, exactly alike and without any difference. How did he choose her? Answer—No dew fell upon her.

Nocturne

What a sweet tart he'd murmur. And she was. And for the sailors. And in the water. And on the land. Where the bead of her black eyes became her, where his fingers trailed into her downy dark. No pretends. In the nighttime, in the water. While little sister slept nestled in bed, he'd take her, Aginny, plucked from the bevy, away from watches, the deceit the fall the flight the spring to the water. He'd hold her under, helpless vague bobbing, lovely long neck near broken, and she'd face him quivering, long slender and *deliciously*ate, and she'd see herself in his eyes, in the water:

In the water where the fishes swim. Around her knees, skirt of sea green tucked up as her lustrous hair. Grown from the see, long and fair downy. Lone eyes locked in the gaze. A thought stirs her tender foot in the water, a tremble at her breast double rose aye the redder. Worship in his soft light : *Hither and thither, what I wood for your eyes.*

And she'd drink up milk from the water. And she'd eat up his pearls. But his pearls, only words, became air, empty air : drove the wedge in. And she landed so ashy where she'd wade, wanting, in the water.

Aginny

Cool and louche. Sugaring off one day hurting toward the next. Dissipated spoon, slotted in absentia, bubbles up milky over the rinse, flute songs piped in milky sheets. The telephone peals through the clouds; she jiggers off the ring. Drops it in feathery tulips blooming open her legs.

(she sighs)

Aginny's Song

He was my man, but he was doin' me wrong

Ginny's Song

(fetching water from the well)

Wash me and comb me
Lay me down softly
On the drear bank
That I may look prettily
As someone pass on

Tender my buttons: Breeches or trousers, whatever you please, sir. Bring me a pocket of your own disease, sir. Tease me a tether or loose me foreverie wind sweat'ring the hawthorn trees, leaves downy southing the very last floor. *Or* tied to the rag tree. Ground cover creeping in from the fringe. You dashed out the kitten's thoughts with a stone. Wash me and comb me; I'll never alone. I bleached out the smell of seaweed in the bedpan; I washed your sheets with vinegar tears. I know not whence from nothing came.

Prince's Song

knives and rings and lawds and things
slide up to you real, nice
sticky-like

I have no time for papers, give it to me straight. I AM SO IN
LOVE WITH THIS. Woman? O, it makes me wanna. She.
Corrals my floating particles. We as a unit move through the
glosses and straps to knives and ringing. This is my song.

Got a light?
To cathect your dark parts, my little swimmer's ear. Got a
wayward icky bod needs licking. Click yr boots together.
Kick the runoff. Drunk the moonlight, in glasses, already?
Tickle me sully! Tessellate my tonguing desire, insecurity.
Smoke a buncha. Topple the zip, breathing in hurdles. This is
haply now.

My heart cup fulfilled me
up! I'm a little around
the edges. A little blown
back from your hawking. WRITTEN IN YR MOUTH
,blood chop,
is less, bears little.

Aginny on the Ouija Board

*Each night I ask W H E N why must I be a SHE
why must she be a brighter SHI N ES even the
sun sees her and weeps S H E LL hide in the sea
and the dirt when it sees me SNUF F I'll eat her
light OUT I'll swallow her hole YOU R L
IGH T I know I am*

Prince + Ginny + Aginny

Prince: I love you so rarely, but how do you love me? Wait, let me.
Count. Let me, count the waist. The twenty odd rings.

Aginny: *As the moon love the star; as the salt love the ground; as the
wound love the fly; as the thorn love the flesh; as the bubble
love the blood.*

Prince: I love you so rarely, but how do you love me?

Ginny: As a mite upon the land, my love

Prince: And if an earthquake swallowed you?

Ginny: In a doorway I'd withstand, my love

Prince: And if I throw you in the sea?

Ginny: With my love I'd build a boat of cream and paddle us
Away, my love

Prince: The bottom'd break, I'd wish it so—

Ginny: We'd both drown in excess of love

—my Love!

Skipping Song

(Jumping rope; fuming)

Say, say, my play-
Mate, say, say, my enemy
My little angry bangry
Fiddlehead

My name is nickel
I pomp and poodle, you

Work your hoodoo
Do what? You do,
Bubblegum bubble blown
In a dish, how many
Pieces smell like f—

Ginny + Aginny Play the Board

Ouija t'witcha turn the dee: board cries foully
outside the shaded landscape. *Who we want?* Her
itching hand. **PRIN** *a devil?* **C** *I don't think, I*
don't think you never—just play something **E**
CHO *dumbthing thisn't funny* **SE H** *something,*
here let me **ER** *stutterer, spell it out*

PRINCECHOSEHER

—I think I one

—Did not

*—Did two
(is me)*

Aubade (Prince's Song)

(Prince smoking a cigarette and Aginny underycovers. The sun glares in the windowpanes.)

Oh no
I warnmed you 'bout this:

(In the ceiling, mirror
Of our doubled horizon)

What moonlight's tricky fingers bathed,
Sunlight cauterizes

It's all I can do to drag you dry
from me here.

O/ur exit, sans dénouement,
No longer bon
-ded in shadow lines

SECTION
2 S'NUFF

Dramatis Personae

Aginny	<i>a familiar magick</i>
Ginny	<i>alighting death's candling flame</i>
Earth	<i>a-cravin' a daughter</i>
Ravens	<i>magick familiars</i>
Ouija Board	<i>a glass for the looking</i> <i>a textual healing</i>

Ravens 123

Ravens circle above a well. Ginny's body stench wafts up. Ravens gather in the shards of a sparkling mirror-tree.

Sister cray-cray craven plunged you downer, downy dearie! Steep in yr own 17ozenge17. We'll stir the waters to descry your nowhereafter. *Ravens drop carrion feathers black plastic garbage bags in the water. Albumen & yolk splatter the well walls. They cut out a dragonfly's tongue and add water hemlock. They circle the well, flapping and yawping and baring their claws, zinc sky streaked with bloody contrails.* SISTERS TWA AND TREACH'RY DOUBLE LANGUAGE LOST IN MORTEM RUBBLE LECHE RE-BOUND IN THE NETHER BODY LOST IN CHANTY AETHER DEVIL FIND YOU, HELL DEVOUR LET THE SANG & EAU DE FLOWER *Ravens cackle.* What shall we weird her? Little one, hell give you stagefright; WELL GIVE YOU ICE-BLOOD. The devil bid to win u mount the platform & strip u: WELL BATHE YOU IN A DIZZY CHANT AND CLOTHE YOU IN A FAIR CUT OF THE JIBBERISH TONGUE. WELL RÊVE YOU UP ATHIRST FOR ICHOR. US, WELL DRINK THE REST. WELL GIVE YOU TEETH TO BITE OUT WORDS; WELL STEEP YR SONG IN BRINY BONES AND KEEP IT LIVE IN MARROW HOLES. *Storm of Ravens clutter the well-hole, flapping their wings and cawing* LET THESE SINK IN YOUR WATERY GRAVE & TELL YOUR HOLE TALE *Ravens fly into the 17ozen and drop on the perimeter of the other side.*

Aginny's Dream

A house erected on, faces, the earth, a welt—on the skin patched whole. Hole in the flore, board a gape o' well, pool for the tears torn from the dirt. A thousand mouths. Even the rocks cry out *lonely*: Mother, earth demands a daughter, a pretty fledgling fille. It is a large house, emptied of daytime, enclosed by lush, always just. Rained. Keeping you inside. Where every the other one else? Find a grand père shriveling in the basement: he is dead and you know but friendly. Death comes to collect him again. A' night, filled people: silly girl, afraidest of your own shadow!

A house dissevered, cracks disclose and grow a sinkhole burped and swallowed gulp the house and all the wood. Tears in the satiny puckers and starched linen drawers, pulled to the dirty as culled to core. Greedy earth open her jaws wider to swallows, whiter & tunnels the caverns, plumbed rank on boys and girls twisting inside their praises protracting a recoil disgusting. On the terror. Opens wider to devour her choicest daughter. A flail song sung, earth humming pulls closer in a sweetly, a malison lullaby:

Oh come home to me, dear Aginny
Oh stay at home with me,
And the very best cock in all the roost
For your own supper shall be.

(Awake, Aginny! Peer into the well and see her drowning)

A house trap for all the skittering fingers. A run in stalking feet won't lose your trail ever, downward. Always sink. Kitchen floor distends its tile jaws, bath laugh glistens its fillings overbrimming its porcelain teeth and in the bed, room edges felled away in heavy, sudden strokes. The holeway dematerializing its paper walls into nothing then the hole house shuddering closed, the ground collecting its jowls and pursing its lips around a final greedy gulp and, holy satisfied, belches smooth silky wisps of grass and velvet moss over the mounds of its face, a body interred unwillingly stifled and buried so quietly, decomposed forgotten in the backyard.

(Aginny awakens for/to the really)

Libido/Destrudo

Mother, Earth take this, my blood, and that, my unwilling vassal, from all other ordinary. Let her blood/ enliven your dusty cheeks & take her springtime for your wintry. Arms. Blunt her maiden head on your craggy & I'll nestle a body small into your flesh. Feast on her moldering corps and drink her up alimantal & I'll spread thick the night with odorous love.

Permit me this—take her for me—and in our switching hour, I'll lead him to my pitchy bed, enseamed with sister flesh, and praise you in our honeying. Take her from me: Bless this my fallen body—Arise!

Aginny on the Ouija Board

*1 if I land for 2 sea FOR I saw my death, a body
inearthed Y OU I am my body, my body my HE
R we shall not dissever in death, for S HE ...is a
body, a SONG but a body, any body as offering
to earth CRY PT I'll bury and bind her, but how
CO N I'll lure her with songs and S C RIPT a
new end*

A Recipe for {to Prolong Life}

(Aginny, high prescience refracting through stacks of teetering glass bottles, thaws an icy heart and folds in dark, a hissing and glistering chef-d'oeuvre. When the hex is complete, she overturns her pot and scalds the ground. The earth groans as the Ravens caw overhead.)

u sure u rite from skeleton
limbs occlude and darken'd on
21ozen trim in candling light
shorn and reaped with fleshy knife

till in dirt with devilish horn
salt the earth with peppercorn

velvet drowned in silver spoon
darkness thrashed from raven's feather
eglantine rip in grainy moon
swallow, bleach and lace together

water earth and fire-bind
tongue song burn and devil blind (cauterize)
slip'ry mouth cut and 21ozeng
sacrifice for me conscripted

Aginny's Song

(Holding tightly handed and skipping down a rocky path)

Down to the well, Ginny
Down the well, Ginny
Down so well, Ginny
Oopsie down you go

Whistle bird o'clock, chimes the walls. *Bend over, I can't see the sun.* She wobbles as. Ginny, let your hair roll down. I can't see the stars hang down and cry. And they cry, *don't you feel like?*

Comin' round
the back/bend_own, *I can't seethes_undressing.* Down to skin, chase langues, smooth and newed, tipple over bony protrusions.

Paddle in the water, Ginny
Piddly in the water, Ginny
Puddle in the water, Ginny
Oopsie drown you go

(Moonlight)

The sun slid lower in the dirt.
So hot and red it seemed to me.
Her eyes kissed mine
in the double silence
of the water and the darkening.

I closed my eyes
her face bobbed
I pushed it down, her
hot blue fat body fought
in the ink

She sang to me:

Sister, reach your hand! I'll make you arrow half my land

I sang to her:

Sister, dearest, with my hands, I'll rain arrows o'er all the land

She sang to me:

Sister, take my gown and quicken dredge me to the ground

I sang to her:

Kisser, bye the soggy ground, hold fast the bottom raucous kisses drowned

She sang to me:

Sister, twin'd me o' the make! If I die then you'll kill you two

She sang to me:

Sister, reach me but a glove and take yourself the Prince's love

I sang to her:

Sinker, hope for hand nor glove, the Prince'd better be my love. I'll take you and I'll take him, too.

I sang:

It was moonlight, moonlight, in the water. Moonlight shown my face on hers (in the water). Moonlight melt my body to his (in the water). Her body 'come mine (in the water)

Aye you swittert, sink and swim
Put out and put out
The light!

(Ginny sinks)

Hard to see and canna tell. Hush. Clutch hard on
moonlight's fingers, what might be. Sullen
swimmer in the gravel, eyes and nose and buttocks
cut and weeping blood. Washed well in the dirty.
Flies in the buttermilk sing, *I'll get another one
prettier* then you can tell me where.

Ask a way:

On the Ouija Board

*Who's there ART Who are you I FIX I break IF
ICE BREAKS I break WHATS REAL
I'm real NOT I am NOT REAL Who am I*

GONNY

Blessing of Ravens

(crowding from above, flock of ravens circling well)

Conspiracy of Ravens, Unkindness of Ravens, Constable of Ravens: What shall we weird her?

Unkindness of Ravens: Tender is the fast and sultry!

Constable of Ravens: Well give her a selfsong sharp as glace

Conspiracy of Ravens: Well give her a heroine 27ozenge27 et pur ring

Unkindness of Ravens: Well give her ahead ful singing

Constable of Ravens: Well give her a glassbone full-throated et hollow

Conspiracy of Ravens: Well give her a fair cut of the jibberish tongue

Constable of Ravens: She's gone to graveland now to meet its devilish yeoman. She'll nary make it out, as no one do.

Unkindness of Ravens: Such a young blood with so much song in her

Conspiracy of Ravens: Couldn't or shouldn't we rescinderella?

Constable of Ravens: Timestamped and labeled? Or expiration dated?

Unkindness of Ravens: Hardly, sprinkly—more ingredients!

Conspiracy of Ravens: Well give her stagefright, immobilizer

Unkindness of Ravens: Well give her a lip, sticky sweetie, a wee bird bonnie

Constable of Ravens: Well give her twisted tongue and saucy sassships

Unkindness of Ravens: Thus begins the haply hereafter

Aginny on the Ouija Board

*He loves me AYE He loves me not AR He loves
me YEA He loves me RAG That old Vitruvian
rag, he loves me O How does he love me ONE
love Y me EARL p-earl ATE pearls, I did I'm
a good R a good HEL a good her LEATHER
a good SON no a good girl G but I'm A—*

SECTION
3 GINNY + THE FAUSE KNIGHT

Dramatis Personae

(in Graveland)

Ginny	<i>dead</i>
The Fause Knight	<i>the devil</i>

Graveland

Who's owed a ship/ ate the ship

Ginny

Enter the Faustus Knight, my devilish captain WHERE ARE YOU GONE, LITTLE BIRD your cloven foot stamps me RIDDLING sizzling and froze up the spine INNOCENT I am become the lambs all for slaughter, white fleece lined up mutantly WHITER THEN Your face scrunches and cream flows out JIZZLE Snow covers the landscape, frozen unfrozen, gaze and eyes turned stony. I look out deadly now. WET IS Dearest, she's afiring squadron smiles: then Aginny, you took my hands and binded me faster HIGHER THAN TREES my sister Icarus, marrying up & up, climed high on waxen wings. We waited till flesh dropped from me, and well burrowed DEEPER and I, thrust into this hell hole, wax sealing Fate's eyelids shut DRIP DRIP Awash in gravel, the boatman pecks my eyes SHARPER Even the birds sing my sister's treason. The crows eat my flesh rot, my seems fray and the golden thread of my life pulls taut: on its tightrope we meet and lock in the infernal embrace DISTANCTLY The Prince's wet diaper sobs from beyond sound LOUDER I know it, faintly I hear my sands expiring HISSSSS Your warm hand slips inslide the mountains SWEET CREAM HONEY CREAM Through the rivers through woods and the weeds and the dogs and the fur, clouds of fur, piles and piles of woolly field cotton I CAN'T RUN fast enough I CAN'T RUN at all, your coal-hot tongue locked to my netherworld HOT CROSS FERVOR we fall through the silks and the satins the dressings and gauzes we land in THIS BROKEN NECK ROMANCE for you, Smyrna, my sin agog, my remnant scrap, untouched by the second death

Why are ye gaun, my darling young one? breathed on
a whimper. Frozen dared not-breath. *I'm gone to the scule* and she
stood and she stood and 'twas
well, that. Alone then, flinty.

Wintry thick as tails fingers snaked shoulders. The sack releases with a pull. –*See what's inside?*

f

a

u

s

Sssprung from the sack. Pages flutter atremble o' the unzip. *Pages in there*. Cut from the same cloth indifferent cloth cut in the fabric. Shiver drops on the ink.

Lest the da-
ring darling
da-Rest/
at first blush
SHE
w/STANDS.

What's that? On your back on your side in your arms Only lonely. Loam fertile, blank brimming with darkneses. Snags of it under bones not unraveled. Plucked through by bones. Mires be,hold the rot. Still life in her arms her legs and between. He plucks a feel, her 'tit mort nature more still. Shakes a little life in.

and she stood and she stood and she stood

*Who's owed a
ship*

ate the ship

in linen cambric unstichèd wool worsted as velvet
ears worsted then manila velveteen tulle the trigger
twilled, voided, 36ozeng, puckered, poured into a
cire, a rayon fill to the touch. Piles plush liquid
36 oze; mountainous organza minkies a mesh;
ripstop. He pulls the zip of the white cotton lawn.
Teeth split: *I got it from my mama.* 36ozenge3636ad
like under oath in the white shadow, of the gutter.

The shot, a' monie
A' the blue ones
Stedfaster ones placid lak of
 of the nothing-much
A dieu

I wiss you under the paper tree bent
down among the shades battened own, hard rubris
& golden 38ozeng thorne salved inside *and a good
lad under* me, You, in, I outside **YES** You in, I
outside, yes, Heaven in You for the lad too break in
the brine *in your apple-bodied fall*

I wiss you

sea you

Paper tail, sea legs wrapped around a middle
so **small of** the road. Middaylaway in the
journey in the middle midtime in upon the
midway just halfway amid the. Just half over.
Glassy eyes on the ice-road yonder well off
your head. *Go to tell.*

SECTION
4 REGINASIS

Dramatis Personae

Ginny	corpse
Aginny	murderesse
Miller	enterprising manufacturie
Oublietta	lavinian
Barber	barbarous
Prince	love-object
Ravens	antidoting, eyewitnesses
Ouija Board	juste porte ende

The Mill

Workshop, strewn with flesh ribbons.

Oublietta

Glorious putrefaction! We the lucky maggots hum praises to your commissary flesh. You, my witching Christabel, elected to die, already dead become bloodless sacrifice: His knife was poised above me, my back wriggling against the stone CUT TO YOU horns caught in the mucky briar, my whipping body, my green lamb. The stub of my filed melon tongue hisses your hymns and we your ladies flicker candlelighting about you, your odorous incense, your yellow canker flower. We unswaddle your bones of their fleshcloth.

Miller

Enter Miller. DAUGHTER O DAUGHTER SO LOWELY I hear your *sang* throb for me. Oublietta, my forgetting hole, my sweet Philomela, quails from me. LET YOUR BLOOD SONG SING my still little one *The knife flashes. Oublietta's lips part and darkness pours out. A stream of dirty light shines down on Ginny's corpse, laid out on silver.* Miraculous demesne! ACRE OF PLEASURES for my thirsty fingers! *A choke of powdered latex* DEAREST ANIMAL I scalpel your sweetest incision and peel back your layers: the velvet, the white fat, and flesh marble, to quartz skeleton. I crack apart your vertebra and suck out AMBROSIA YOU TASTE LIKE the pickled dawn. I am coated in your juices YOU GIVE UP SO WILLINGLY I am anointed in blood and your waters. Your joints release from their sockets, bent to my will, AND IT IS GOOD I hammer your fingers, unspool your hair AND IT IS GOOD your ribcage splinters and I clutch at your heart squelches blood out GOOD I take your rib and spit on the dirt floor. I lie down with you. Your 43ozeng body become instrument in my fiddling hands: I press my lips to your f—holes and you come ALIVE AND I SAW IT WAS GOOD

Ginny (a fiddle)

I AM REBORN A NIGHTINGALE/ I AM REBORN A VIOLINCE SONG
The water could not swallow me, nor devil slake me; the Miller cannot
consume me. MY SONG CANNOT DIE My weak flesh tore apart as
regenesis: a barbarous instrument of my lumber bones screeches my catgut
songs. His breath quickened my—pulse? My heart was carved out from a
drone metronome. MY SONG BECOME DEADLY IN MY HOLLOWÈD
BODY I sing out from the void that yawns in my chest-hole. *Ginny shrieks
in f-sharp M. Fireworks of glass shattering. Feathers explode as birds burst.
The Miller's goggles shatter, then his eyeballs, then his erect cock.*

Oublietta

*Emerging from her forgetting hole, Oublietta spits and hums and dances
Inanna, the warrior: brazen lady, fair and bonie! Let your razor song restitch
my amputee langue to praise, praise your terribility. Let my broke body
carry yours beyond pleasure: let me ring out the death call. The wedding
bells toll Oublietta dips her fingers in her father's blood and writes on the
wall GIRLS SAY GIRLS SAY*

VENGEANCE!

The Miller's Song + The Miller's Daughter

Ground split: *Who will help me plant my seed?* Not a chance,
dog breath, she purred. Strewn so sadly in a hand sad well.
And the seed grew sickly. Onan, off with their heads! *And
who will help me grind my wheat?* NO takers : tied up so
neatly. Finger racks through the threshing. *And I will* Miller
mouthed. Through the firry cornered woodlands to the mill
who will who's an easy bake? No BODY. Dragged home
like a sack of potash, what hour was, left with a long and
listless boy in lazy mood : but not a boy and hardly lazy. A
half-sly man and his freshly flowered daughter sent her
tripping down to well : fetching pall of water & *I'll help you
eat it* You would, and would not, little one!

Too too young spoke large of brittle flowers
To t/ouch a neck so warm and whit
In the creased rosy folded hours
Hardly swallowed in the bit

Who will help me? Light/ly echoed off the walls,
well. *Not I* the naughty snorting daughter. Miller
cocked his head said *stick a finger in* drop a bucket
down. Twitch my witching stick. To the sullen pool
below. Sometimes she sank sometimes she switched.
Whatsit? Dizzy backwards glimpse fore(to)tell the
depths *Something fishy*

Plop!

(a vortex of wingsound)

Hex of Ravens

Conspiracy, Constable, Unkindness of Ravens: (*Watch the body bounce in water. Watch from bird-eye view. Watch, the ravens, on the tree. Watcha wanting, waiting lover?*)

Conspiracy of Ravens: (*Take the body/ and the blood*) Gathering, rounder. Basin darkens bloody. Body expands—w/ air? Puff. *y u leftover? y u lookin/ so tasty?*

Constable of Ravens:

A Little bloated: Little tender. Little sad. A
Little littled up for the take. Poor Little!
Swimming in your own 47ozenge47, dirty
Little! Tunnel stank. Sniff a rotten well-
bottomed Little

Unkindness, Conspiracy of Ravens: (*peck and slobber drips on soaking body*)

Ginny: (*Fallow dead doe-eyes:*

open)

(canna see)

Conspiracy of Ravens: (*Whistles in the wind: Miller coming o'er the hill*) Does it hert? Is it beatin? What a beauty! Beady boated body, bored the skin plank—we no who. Is he coming, now? She'll come, to.

Unkindness of Ravens:

So turn the wind'n clutch
the knife. Take her clothes
off & she'll heel.

If she don't

Well et her up
It's only a gull
It's only a gull-sick swan

Ravens:

Look the skin slit
Look the deadeyez
Look the blood up
Look the cream slip
Look the gowd'en
CAW

Ravens: *(licky lips & flies away)*

Ginny on the Ouija Board

WHAT *is there* CA *birds on the tree* CAN
they saw NA *they see me* BE *not-be* C *well*
HANGED *well-drowned* MUN *must I live*
BE T *better, must I sing* OLD *that song*

O

Ginny: *(floating facedownassup in the water/ chambered music)*

o
O
o
who can tell you lo ave me
rip ple o if e
as s you ave me
e are
coming down dripping
cats&dogs hard ly
g rain trick sickle
les soleil's O pen
or snowflakes hell
50ozen up
f catch twinned birth
A l né from life
one at t o a fails ing
catch son g

Aginny on the Ouija Board

[Merrily, merrily] (back on land) (skipping home)

gone away, furre away, hi ho! (*joyously*) who
lacks to swim?*(planchette budgeless)* who's a
something fishy? (*rien*) who's a-flirting with the
mermaids? Oh, whose the fair rest? **THE**
SON a son!? A son! A two for one! **G LIV**
she'll never birth it now **ES I N** easy, 'twas,
though hardly pleasurable, for I'm a-dripping
HE yes, he's mine now. Not the son but the
father **R BOD** he'll never know, I'll never tell,
how she went tripsy down the well **Y** because
now all the power as mine

(planchette twitches furiously)

ELLE SE DÉ PENSE

she's spent or worse

unthinkable

A Bridle Aginny

- Ravens: She gone down well, Ginny!
Thus gelds the lily
Thus gilds the Lilith
- Aginny: If I have my bedding bower Eros and my string
We'll climb a tower gilded gold with steps of ivory
- Ravens: We'll settle neither gold nor bane
Bets just to watch the bodies play
out
- Aginny: *(smoothing her hair, smoothing her gown)*
- Prince: *(entering stage left)* What happens? Who noise? A Ginny?
- Aginny: *(slipping icy fingers around his arms)* Just the prattling pussy
birds, never no mind, deariest
- Ravens: *(preening)*
- Aginny: Why, have you seen her? *(fingering the penknife in her
pocket, leant herself against a fence, puckering)*
- Prince: Girls I love in the merry, best of all. Sueurly there's time for
a quixodixie dip?
- Aginny: Prince, I'd love to in the marry. Shall we? I wanna.
- Prince: Soeurly!

Wood, She Winna

(he wood her butt; he wood her ben; he wood her in the ha)

Lights off, lights off. Pull off, pull off. Pull off, pull off. *Deliver unto me your middle small your cavernous jewels strip down catch hold you'll be my seventh.* Wide in, wide in. Lie there, lie there, I shanna, I winna.

The Miller + the Barber Butcher

Dead lovely, lady lips silvry and Fished out of water: a mouth 32 *idées* wide. *Wanna et fisheyes you*. Her lips are glossy. Like real metallic. She was last scene of the catching act. Left gaping, words foaming in the stroke of her throat. Last scene of an ivory seizure. Last scene a livery, and she is *dumb*. Eyes blanking open. She's dead; She's alive. She's dead, done, dead it, she died, Jesus! she's this. This isis.

Put to ground in water, Body cold and sopping: boiled till flesh drops rosy topsy, hung up on hymz, upsy daisies. Ankles dangled from a hook, flayed and meaty. Set her mind below. Carved a heart out. Opened a tear and let out the water.

Miller:

SO RENT THE LIMBS FROM HER

SEXY BABY BODY

& HOLD_{HER}STILL

!

Miller: *to the Barber*

Disarticulate her, and she'll sing

(Ginny: at the Barbershop)

Pole barbered bloody stitched up white. Let
blood runnels. How much gets cut? Off with her.
Occam divides the simplest, multiplicities with a
red swish. He takes out the tincture. She takes it
phlegmatically. She takes it.

Miller:

She'll be back. And I'll snap. And I'll take down those digits. And I'll

and laugh!

WATCH HER DIDDLE HER FIDDLE

WHEN I'M DONE WITH HER

Work Song

Toe bone disconnected from heel bone disconnected from foot bone
disconnected from ankle bone disconnected from foot bone disconnected from
leg bone disconnected from knee bone disconnected from leg bone
disconnected from hip bone disconnected from spine bone disconnected from
breastbone disconnected from collarbone disconnected from shoulder bone
disconnected from arm bone disconnected from wrist bone disconnected from
hand bone disconnected from finger bone disconnected from hand bone
disconnected from wrist bone disconnected from arm bone disconnected from
shoulder bone disconnected from neck bone disconnected from chin bone
disconnected from nose bone disconnected from head bone

(Key change)

Dumb bones, dumb bones gonna sing a song
Disconnect them bones, them dry bones
Now hear the word

Split down the middle. Set down in the valley, and behold, there were very many, and lo, they were very. Stewed till flesh fell, brokebones brined from brittle. With her eye glasses, he viewed the body: a breastbone clamped; cut finger bones fret; stand her legs and bowed her arms. He fingered veins of her roughcut neck so blew, picked her severed tongue so rough (unto the miller it spake enough). Her shins kept time as he fiddled out a rhyme:

Treble string: *The prince I love's become the king*
Second string: *My sister's now his bloody queen*
Strings all three: *Bitch killed me-ee*

Play it aginny, Ginny!

SECTION
5 BABYLON

Dramatis Personae

Ginny	always a fiddling
Aginny	blushing bridal
Cann, Ibal	blood brothers
Prince	so well groomed
Miller	an uninvited guest
Wedding guests	spectators
Ravens	spectators

Wedding Hall

Coronation. Aginny, veiled, begins her long walk. Her white sleeves trail behind and buckles gleam up her back. The Prince waits in a gimp suit. Violin plays uneasily.

Aginny

It is very nearly here. I see the glitter, far off, in my rhinestone crown—the future lit up a glittering bijouterie where I lay down my velveteen flesh for fat emerald babies uncut and precocious, open my diamanté knees for you so diamonds pour out; where I'll be burned completely up to my radiation beauty, borne out of plastic and crystal and become luxuriant dear, preciously darling. *Ginny squawks.* YOU MAY NOW LICK MY SUGAR SKULL Your flesh is become alchemy in my mouth. *Aginny unzips the Prince's mask. Teeth and feathers fall out.*

Ginny (Shrieking. Bone rattle.)

FLESH BECOME ASH IN MINE You! Milky chrysoberyl, pyrite tinsel, my gritty silica: the moon belies your 61ozeng charm but sun exposes your flimsy melted heart. The earth knows your treacheries, and your sepsis pours out my flowering gums, disease that twinned the fruit of its flesh. I am no body, mouth only SANG FOR SONG AND CREAM FOR GALL, I AM THUS UNSEXED —Cut the blood. My ghost stains your twisted sheets, your white negligée, your useless fingers. I am the stain you cannot wash out. The one the earth spat out. Even the woods uncloset your treasons, Cain, and the Earth bares its teeth for you: STRIP HER BARE AND SALT HER BONES; LET THE FLAMES LICK HER CLEAN *Enter the Fause Knight, who binds Aginny.* Yes, Virginia, there is a Satan, claws and teeth and it is my nightmare. He wants not what's between your legs but between your lips. He'll suck out your song and leave you nothing but a leaden receiver. Go, little parrot, carry a sterile song and birth its stillborn pallor eternally, for hell is deep and filled with the horrors of which YOU'LL NEVER GET TO SPEAK

Fause knight grabs Aginny's tongue and devours, pierces her body and siphons her sang. Earthquake. Fire.

TWA SISTERS FLOW RED EXACTLY ALIKE & WITHOUT ANY DIFFERENCE. HOW DID HE CHOOSE HER? ANSWER—

Rain.

The Wedding

Tumblerfuls of green champagne punch and a sandal dangles languid from her toe tips. Cigarette filters sunlight plucks the sweetest daisy from the lawn. He loves me n—sweat rolls down her inner arm sanctuary, wingless. Fingers print on glass lipstick bitten into wondrous sweet breath fog. A rumpiled cavalcade processes on the lawn.

(Enter Miller)

Miller: Present! A present! I present—

Prince: What now? You who?—a formally uninvited stink of fish.

Miller: —not me! I present a fiddling song for this blessé union!
Snatched from slumber's younger brother, a sister song to evening's
lusty serenade, a mourning song—

Prince: I command you to shut up

Aginny: *(rolls eyes)* Let him bloody, speak. Spill it, imp.

Miller: Bonie lady! Your beauty rivaled only by your solicitude!
Nay, your solitudinous solemnity! Your sanguinary divinity—
(guards flank his elbows) 'Tis an enchanted evening song. A song
from curvèd body wrought from elemental desire, engendered on
Hymen's tongue! *(Miller jerks)*

Aginny: *(chewing cuticles)* Just drop it anywhere.

Miller: 'Tis naught the vessel, but the gift of its song, a wedding
song to prime the well-spring of your night love—

Aginny: Naught! Then pipe it so we may piston mechanical.

Prince: *(sighing)* one, two, one two, one two, three four

(Ginny fiddle begins playsing):

Epithalamium: The Twa Brothers

Wrassle my lasso! I'LL CUT YOU Just try. You make like so deadly. What a hassle. We f/all, posie's pocketbookie full. And now you're bloody bleeding like a mother/ earth, accept this my bother. Listen to that wobble EACH AS NEEDED. Take it off! You're burning up. I'll take you up, my burden, watch the blood. Wash the blood. This is anew. Oh, brother. Take me away, slip me something a little more comfortable. Draw me a grave bath and put me to sea. Well and what can I say? Gone round the bender, full of blank, new duds, gone to beddy-bye, he'll ring. Hitched his wagon to the second star this morning, sweetheart.

Twa brothers naughty bitey. A dizzle dazzle screenfight: one-two, one-two! muscles flexed glisten in sebaceous light. Waxy teens bent sideways, inspiteways. Sweatwhipped in raindrops, bloody lashes. Cut to lineoleum & crawl in the hole. A scrum diddly: fluid swell, crotchety tangle, limbs knobby in the rough cork dermis. The delicate flowering nipplebuds, rosehead caught in briars of hair. A sticky desire l64ozenged his throat and he swallowed it, gulped down all stars and dark and honey. A salt lik seawater stream crystalline, wept down on him.

In a tussle then beat with his branches. Spangled with limbs and split down the crotch. He pulled out the knife wet and held it limplike. A grisly cream scene. Over the blink of la mort & l'amour, cut and weeping from the eyes of their raggedy head boughs. More it tended, more bled. More the gape augured; more the waters spilled and mixed with the dirt, wasteful, wasteful. Lacking. More the animals snorted. More the father disdained and mother wept. More the pretty girl drowned. Brother twisted twice the knife and said, "Empty."

(still fiddling)

Too too pretty boys. Prettiest boy say rare. One to the other, worse laid up. Went down and worselaid. On the ground, slippery knife sprung out: pocketa pocketa, little death. *Pinmetothewalletshit*, he said. *Andle*, he said. *O my rich honie, blow this, land broad, and I'll killya*, he said. *Or willie diddlie by my penknife?* Buried in the backyard, hawk a hole a little larger laid his body barer. Therer. In the hole. *Stanes at my head, stanes at me feet. Stanes again upon me breast the better I'm asleep.* What dreams may come. *Wet blood, isn't it?*

*Tis. The blood of my grey
Hounds, me bloody grey
Honds, it wouldn't run
For me, then Die! bloody hounds.*

Never red thusly: Not near so red!

*OuiOui, the black bloody horse
It would not hunt for me I hit
From it I hid I said it's all in
The faminely It ran redily away.*

What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me, so nearly red & loud

Blood of brother Ibal better Canna be. Foot aship sing I'm gane our to the sea. Nevermorebidadieu. Return eclipsed, a day you'll never see a home-coming.

The Ravens' Intervention

Con/stable of Ravens: (*above on launder grassy tree*)

A downy, downy, dare a down
Hey, ho! Ibal's shade
Canna be tholed like so

Constable of Ravens: (*plucking atta string*) Like that?

Ginny: (*out of tune, quiver o' strings makes a mane*)

Like yes
Now kittle me quick

Constable of Ravens:

Oyez oyez oyez
This telling &
& chanted
wobble!

Unkindness of Ravens:

From a spindly broken
& a styxie reforged—

Conspiracy of Ravens:

A bony sewer shatter'd her chromatic *sang*
Imprisoned in her now,
Skinned and bonie—

Ravens: & what a song itties!

(On stage a ship rolls in. The spring tide loads a fricative weight pushed up from the tongue. Air heavy, the teeth change directions. One already against the other.)

Our Lady of the Dead

Ginny: ()

*My name is Ginny Aginny
I come from the bottom of a well
For 9 long years my heart pined
A pain I never could tell*

Unkindness of Ravens: (*chummily*)

Her teeth I could not jaw
Her tongue I could not sand
I sent her fast by watery way
Straight down to Graveland

Ginny:

*Through death and drown and misery
To shanties I'd remand
But I never knew what misery was
Till I went to Graveland*

(*Ceremonious*)

Rite as citizen, unctuous ceded
Rite as woman, forcibly bled
Rite to lief, blushinglly sacrificed

I take thee now fro'

OUR LADY OF THE DEAD

Mister ichor, farewell you
Walking skeletons (No lief
But in things) Cleaved as Saxifrage
Left yours and cleaved mine

You may now lick my sugar skull

And hang her, high, ho!

Aginny's Revenge

Flowers fall, all fingers pointing toward, mouths
agape love a chattering. Fiddles with her. Judge,
judge: *Please, mister*. Send me electric; burn me,
'cause me, I don' care. To the tune o' ninety-nine
and ninety? Send me to the ElectriCity.

(Aginny threw back her gown) Oh lordy

Black wings flutter in the eaves: Oh lordy, how they
did love a roost. *Ain't gonna tell you no stories,*
aye—

(She threw back that old .45)

opened, *Dear Crime—* cut the blood. Cut to blood.
Shot 'em all and every till all the sundry *sang*
poured out.

Aginny: *Il pleut dans mon coeur comme ils pleurent dans la ville.*

(She shot Miller once, she shot daughter, too, she shot the Prince, shot him through and through. The angels laid them to waste. A single tear emerges in Aginny's cheek.)

Aginny: *(to Ginny, pointing the gun)*
Well, it's will you be a copse's wife
Or medley into a nether life?

Ginny: Don't you know it's your *sang*, too?

Aginny: *(cocking the gun)*
You got no *sang* left in you.

Ginny: All I got left is the blues.

Aginny: Babble on! *(turns the gun and shoots herself in the hurt)*

(Sun dapples red in the trees. Ginny rubs against a pine for the pitch. Lets out a dark holler.)

(Ravens fly up and up, into the blue yawn. Ginny slumps in a corner, out of tune. Gathers dusty. Years pass.)

Fin

If the key does/ but f/it... no doubt, precious. Turned her 'round he searched no keyhole t/ here at last noon visible. S/now lay deep. Where/ ever the key is the lock/ must be also. Discovery so small, hardly: wait until s/he's quiet, unlocked and unopened, what wonder/ ful discoveries to be lying therein/side.

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