

dramatis personae

chorus

the community

amy martin

emma martin

mother

father

The women of mythology regularly lose their form in monstrosity.
~Anne Carson, *Men in the Off Hours*

1.

symptoms show small signs of smoothing
on the twenty-fifth day the doctors
send amy home

a one-day trial just

to see

3.

why don't i plunge

like emma

the tips of my fingers trail in the deep end
sun warms my shoulders and limbs

the rhythm of my sister's strokes

peace for the first
time in months

4.

this

not for the
first time

need to tell fights through years

lines rigidly stratified

*my daughter left my daughter
falsely accused her father*

not for the first time they've
told

my daughter false

the story to mute

my daughter broke her mother

's heart

i was i was
i was i was i was i was

my sister left

i was

my sister lies

and i could do nothing to stop it

{the weight of testimony

mother + father + sister >

amy the false

amy the mad

5.

plunge of telling differs from plunge of doing differs from plunge of bearing
witness

(i must///// must not

we all must plunge

arching back into our roles

8.

the scene re-forms in the basement

his cave

damp and
cold

the scene contains three people
mother father amy

amy come get your bike

let's go to mimi's

they'll be glad -----

no

and emma ----- don't tell anyone she's

home

the words
a spell mom casts

not for the first time

9.

not for the first time

the sun recedes
a pin point

the scene contains three people
mother amy father

concrete cold on my bare back

(pinprick of sunshine over

dad's left

shoulder

the scene contains

mother [REDACTED]

amy frozen

father [REDACTED]

cold concrete

wrists pinned

prick of sun

10.

the scene contains

*The bashful Goddess turn'd her eyes away
Nor durst such bold impunity survey;
But on the ravish'd virgin vengeance takes
Her shining hair is chang'd to hissing snakes.¹*

mother

*you'll learn to stop
telling lies
if it's the last thing*

amy

another spell another
name caught in my throat

father

his word's punch the air from my lungs

i'll

show you

[REDACTED]

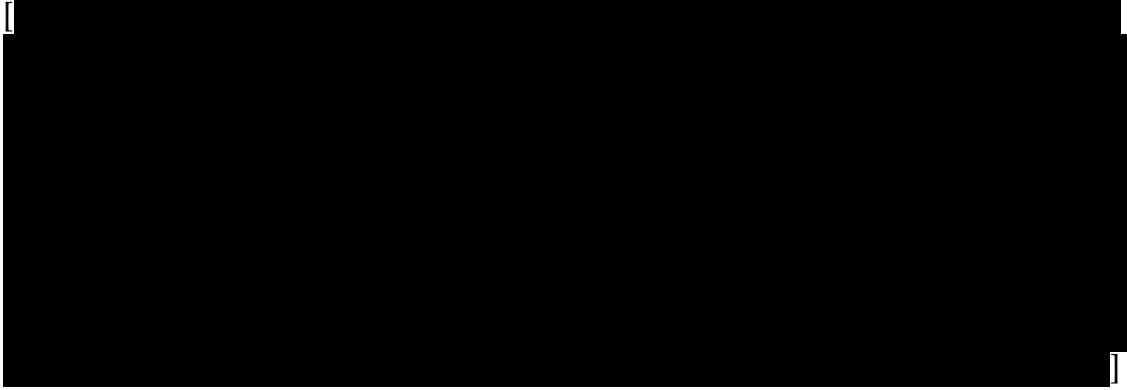
*La fille de Jupiter alors s'est détournée de l'égide
a caché son visage pur. Il ne fallait pas laisser le viol impuni:
elle a changé les cheveux de Gorgone en hydres de la honte.²*

three people and one gun

¹ Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. John Dryden et al. Book IV, Lines 1189-1192.

² Ovid. *Les Métamorphoses*. Trans. Marie Cosnay. Book IV, Lines 798-800.

11.



12.

pretend you don't know what happened then

not for the first time

pretend you know what happens next

13.

spent

not for the first time

left in the dark

not for the first time

i pull myself

up the stairs

gather chaos of limbs and snot

stifle the rasp/////sob
my sister's name
before it leaves my throat

spent

for the first time i breathe
never return

for the first time

i turn my blood

basalt

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