

DENISE DUHAMEL

Castrati of the Eighteenth Century

Their voices—part lark, part angel, part ghost—
haunted the Sistine Chapel Choir
where parishioners became engrossed,

ecstatic as they swallowed the host.
Castrated men best mimicked desire,
their voices—part lark, part angel, part ghost.

Their scrotums smashed or snipped as children, most
boys bled to death, never to acquire
grueling voice lessons or become engrossed

in church politics or opera. Toasts
of the town, “lucky” castrati inspired
androgyny—part lark, part angel, part ghost.

Long live the little knife! Women would boast
of trysts with men who wore women’s attire.
Titillated opera buffs were engrossed.

The church killed one hundred thousand poster
boys for pain. Those who lived couldn’t sire
children, part lark, part angel, part ghost.
And centuries later we’re still engrossed.

Canna

“The Barbie,” a vaginal rejuvenation surgery,
promises to make the recipient smooth as plastic,
enticing as a waxed porn star
who, most probably a Deer Woman,

promises her viewers won't know she's faking it.
A Deer Woman's vulva has the daintiest lips,
naturally. Or via operation. Dear women,
are you Mares, Sheep, or Elephants?

Buffalo Women have the biggest, most luscious lips
like Georgia O'Keeffe's “Red Canna.”
Mare Women, Sheep Women and Elephants
are better represented in her Series 1—Nos. 1-3.

Georgia O'Keeffe's “Red Canna”
suggests the rumbles of an earthquake orgasm
most evident in her Jack-in-the-Pulpits—Nos. 3-5.
Experienced by Raven Women and Crows,

slow-building earthquake orgasms
shake the whole body, wobble the bed.
Experienced by Fox Women and Wolves,
greased lightning orgasms come quickly then roll

to shake the whole body, wobble the bed.
Antelope Women and Cats have even reported
nipplegasms that come sporadically then roll
down their stomachs and legs.

All women have reported
they need their labia to feel pleasure spread
down their stomach and legs, but surgeons say
Shamed women will go under the knife.

Women need their labia to feel pleasure
but can also be humiliated, one body part at a time.
If you shame them, women will go under the knife.
First breast implants, now facelifts for the vulva.

Woman can be humiliated, one body part at a time—
porn went from big screen, to VCR, to computer.
First breast implants, now facelifts for the vulva
and waxing so viewers can see everything up close.

When porn went from big screen to computer
naked women shrank and so did their body parts.
Then came wax so viewers could see up close
what is naturally covered with hair.

Naked women shrink and so did their body parts
through dieting, treadmills, and lipo.
What is naturally covered with hair?
A woman's head, armpits, and legs.

Through dieting, treadmills, and lipo,
she might forget who she actually is.
A woman's head, armpits, legs,
and mons pubis become an emotional jungle.

She might forget who she actually is—
convinced her body needs to be tamed,
her mons pubis a jungle. Surgery
leaves her nipples and clitoris numb.

But accepting her body as wild
makes a woman feel enticing as a pulsar,
her nipples and clitoris become
celestial, exploding stars. Nothing like a doll's.