

1970

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Thirteen faces waiting to be born
and nothing to say on this Monday morning
in school, rain, the new wars,
what crickets hear when I lie down
in the grass. My hands are disappearing,
I'd go to Jesus Christ like Arina, the woman
from the Hotel Madrid in Babel's story who was knocked-up
and beaten across the belly with a belt
by Seryoga the janitor, I'd talk to God
like she did and hear Him say "You cannot kiss
your own ear . . ." and be turned into an angel
with wings made from the sighs of babies,
I'd fuck the father of my child until he smothered
and Christ cursed me for killing one of His angels,
I'd make Christ weep for me, like she did,
because who else does this kind of thing?
who else needs to be forgiven?
This morning we decided to list our bad dreams
in a letter to Nixon, beginning "Dear Mother,
we don't like these dreams, we can't stand them,
we know you caused them, we want you to take them back . . .
Signed thirteen students without wings
who have arms that won't lift,
feet that lie flat on the ground and sleep,
hands that tremble and go nowhere,
lips as tender as the passages of birth,
anger in the snapping of wings."
I'd put my mouth against theirs but they won't speak,
and it goes on like this,
I'd lift up skirt after skirt and let myself slide back in
like disciples who worship revelation in the Mother,
hearing "Is this the wound, is this . . . ?"