

Two Poems

Karen Head

Sagittarius

Leave behind the old myth of centaur
ready to launch his arrows,
and sing yourself back to childhood:

*I'm a little teapot,
short and stout,
here is my handle...*

Keep your eyes heavenward.
You can see the Milky Way,
steaming from the spout.

The English serve a cuppa
in response anything, even war.
This constellation is about peace.

Crowning Glory

The small chapel, once
a private family retreat
where the household women
could remain hidden from view,
is alive with artists today.

On the altar, two seamstresses
are arranging wigs, feathered masks,
and Marie Antoinette style gowns
alongside reworked party fashions.

The featured mannequin, midriff bare,
black damask cocktail dress and fishnets,
is all the more striking because of
the Renee Russo *Thomas Crowne Affair* style wig.

Hair is a precious thing.

In the military, recruits had
their heads shaved to eliminate
any sense of individuality.

When women joined the ranks,
the barbers stepped aside.

Some orthodox women
shave their heads after marriage
or cover their hair in public
or never cut their hair,
in line with whatever version of
proper womanhood they adhere.

I've had friends, cancer attacking
breasts and uteruses and ovaries,
lose all their hair,
the chemotherapy erasing
more than mutated cells.

A transvestite friend worries
most about his hair,
the wigs key to any convincing
version of womanhood.

Every six weeks, I visit the salon,
have the stylist reset the hair clock
to younger, auburn days.

Marie Antoinette was separated
from her head and from her hair:
the Revolution demanded
two deaths at once.

Karen Head is the author five books of poetry (*Lost on Purpose*, *Sassing*, *My Paris Year*, *Shadow Boxes* and *On Occasion: Four Poets, One Year*) and has exhibited several acclaimed digital poetry projects. She is Editor of the international poetry journal *Atlanta Review*. She is Associate Chair and an Associate Professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication at the Georgia Institute of Technology, where she also serves as the Executive Director of the Naugle Communication Center.