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Song of Victor(ia), and: Andromeda

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African American Review

Johns Hopkins University Press

Volume 45, Number 4, Winter 2012

pp. 650-651

ARTICLE

[View Citation](#)

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

Song of Victor(ia), and: Andromeda

Natasha Andreil (bio)

Song of Victor(ia)

He emulates a woman
but he doesn't know

the pangs of silence endured like
a dog wearing a muzzle;
he lets his hips sway and dip when he walks
but he doesn't know
how my own mother for years would say
"keep your legs closed; I am *not* raising a slut;"
he lets his tongue linger over S's
but he doesn't know
the days when i want to eradicate
the possibility of bearing child;
he flits his eyes coyly
but he doesn't know
how i was raised to "never look a man in the eye,"
my neck made to bend perpetually,
swan-like, so my gaze grazes the floor;
he says to me "it's okay to cry" but
even he wouldn't say that to another man;
and he dreams of being
the way the sepals of an orchid open
revealing the petals, invisible inking spots
on the lips, bright colors
encouraged by the sun
but he doesn't know how hard it is
to live the rest of the time
without blooming.

Andromeda

I found her, standing against the tide, waves plashing
at her sandaled feet. I knelt, my hands shaking with
restraint not to touch, for she knew naught of me.
She was diminutive in stature with feet
like a dancer, high arches and delicate ankles,
slim calves, dimpled knees, thighs
that rounded into wide hips that sloped

into a nipped-in waist, her breasts heavy
and soft, her shoulders round, her arms long
tied above her head, her neck swan-like,
her head oval with a visage of plump lips,
she awakened from slumber. As the sun
lathed her in its dying glow, her eyes
dark, devoid of stars pierced into mine.
drew me in to her dusk, the edge of her night. **[End Page 650]**

Then I saw her hair matted and webbed
with mist from the sea. Her purple robes dirtied
with filth and dried blood, were ripped and torn.
She began to yank against the chains haphazardly,
her body flailing against the rocks.
When she could not free herself her struggles died
and she began to sway side to side.

There were faint bruises about her throat,
about her arms, her legs, her torso.
I could see ropes and chains bound about her.
Manacles had long since dug into her
wrists and ankles, rivulets of blood
beaded and dried on her arms. And she smelled
of the salty sea, stale sweat and spew.

But why must such beauty fade now?
Why should she be chained to these very rocks?
When she began to shiver, to weep, and to groan,
I took my fiery sword from its scabbard
and burned through the shackles. Yet
she begged me to leave her here for fear
the people may find her outside the belly of the beast.
I promised to return once more,
left my cloak and sought out
the Gorgon. Of her I would drink
to the dying day of my youth. **[End Page 651]**

Natasha Andreil

Natasha Andreil earned her baccalaureate degree in English from Webster University. She lives in Longmont, Colorado, where she manages Stasia Press, an electronic press devoted to poetry chapbooks.

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Song of Victor(ja)

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Andromeda

I found her, standing against the tide, waves pushing
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