

SLEEP/WAKE - SIDE 1 - MIRIAM

9

Outside of time and space.

START

MIRIAM

Yes, woman is architecture.

Yes, woman is artifact.

Her measurements start at thirty.

You may tie anything around her neck that you would like.

Think posture.

Think rapture.

Think—

A projected image of Titian's "Venus of Urbino" appears. MIRIAM flicks on a red laser pointer, the kind they use in Important Lectures. She traces the face of Venus.

Reschignier. Verb, Old French. To grimace while baring the teeth.

Turning the pointer to her own mouth, she reschigniers, hisses, smiles. Turns the light off.

Woman is curtains. Woman is made up of several panels of varying opacities. Woman may be unlocked with a key, or a beverage. You may balance a glass of water on a woman's stomach if you ask her politely not to breathe. Woman has not blood, but milk. When you cut her, she is sweet, and rich in calcium.

Coy, isn't she?
With her fingers.
With her hair.
With her—

Wait. *(She flicks on the red dot and points it at an audience member.)* You, there — nononodon'tmoveholdstill. Just like that. Yes — careful. Perfect. *(Tracing the outline of the person's neck)* The neck is...ancient. We have always had necks, us women. They give the chin something to look at. *(She flips the laser pointer at her own neck.)* It's a juncture, really — that bridge between head and chest, that kiss between eyes and breasts. You nearly forget the neck until someone else points it out, and

you say “huh.” “Perhaps I was not anything at all before you looked at me.” Necks we have always had. Throats; throats are entirely different.

Word. Noun. *L'appel du vide*. New French. This is to say “the call of the void.” That inexplicable urge to jump from high altitudes when peering one’s head over the edge.

And we turn back to the woman. And we ask her, *why this?*

What is this moment for you?

How can you sit still for so very long without falling asleep?

She inhales, long; exhales, longer. She reschigniers, sweetly. She turns the pointer back to Venus.

And we listen when she tells us,
It is no crime to paint woman as you found her:

Supine.

END

Lights out. The red dot of the laser pointer remains on the back wall, slowly and abstractly tracing the form of a woman. Blackout.