

LUCIA LOTEPIPIO

**Menstuate; Want for Theo***Paris le 3 Mai 1890*

The smell, the smell, I forgot to mention the smell. The choke back of water you almost mouthful-drop onto your lap. A lover grasping hold of your breasts when you need them to let you answer the ringing phone. The crack of a match in half, splinters pointing from sandpaper to your fingers.

I should have been thinking about the brother of the thing. (Knowing no fold, no lick of envelope, would make his brother touch back in any evenhanded way—then over and again, the smooth hope of pen on stacked paper) Theo, oh you poor sap—I too have had this brief understanding of desire and know that it begins and ends with the quiet failure of blood.

You cruel ghost ova: I want what you could, then want a method to not. If I am enough for myself, satisfaction is at my own muscle and fat. What use is talk of pregnancy if I can't even satiate a yawn with sleep? As soon as possible: want gets heavy with each new paper, every piece wet with separation. Be of good heart and of good handshake, but that never makes difference with these matters: every opening just widens.

When my mother first menstruates she thinks that she has shit herself in the night. No one told her blood could be so un-red, dry, laced with membrane. Every month I see the blood and think I am dying for almost a second, think shit, shit this is it. Pinch the chunks from the drain, flush them with all that hair. Once after fucking, those blackened bulbs stuck to my inner thigh, on his cock. My lover asked me if it was okay for him to be touched by them.

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**The House***Paris le 22 juillet 1890*

Theo walks with him by the quarry: remembers its slow carve open; its warm dew mouth.  
 His brother, so forceful in his unyield,  
 like an overstuffed bag of rice; like a wick that smolders  
 without wax—Theo pleads: *I want to lick my fingers and un-red the smoke of you.*

How can I un-want this scene—it's hard labor I assure you  
 I am a house that fills and fills no thing will not be pushed underwater;  
 nothing my lover can do will empty me:  
 ghost ovum occupies too much to have much  
 time to think about letters: fill with shed lining,  
 fill with water from faucet, fill with cock, fill with cotton.

Theo, I know how you warmed hands at his slow implode:  
 I already see much better than I used to;  
 laugh at the smell of failure in stockings, leave  
 trash bins with wrapped tissue a day too long—  
*mon cher, mon cher*—I cannot stop, weather will not settle here.

Then again, it's always the domestic that gets us  
to forget what fullness can do to a person. I am tired of an ice-emptying uterus:  
it's not like that at all. (Theo, all sun, on his wife  
and new child: thrilled at the house and the how of its empty)

Still, with heat and anticipation,  
I press into my lover like an unbroken flare.