



La germana, l'estrangera

Maria-Mercè Marçal

«Who dictates the words when I am speaking to you?»

Who dictates the words when I am speaking to you?

Who is imbedding me with gestures and grimaces?

Who speaks and does for me? It is the Impostor.

She inhabited me without me Knowing it

until you came along. Then she sprang

out of I don't know what attic, like a ghost,

and possessed me like a despotic lover

moving me like a puppet in a sideshow.

In the mirror I often get a glimpse of her

Salvaged from I don't know what heap of ashes.

Pay no attention to her when She speaks to you,

even though She usurps my voice and face.

And when you leave, if she blocks the door

with her loving and ruthless body

you must slay her with no regret whatsoever.

Do it for me as well and in my name:

She's too deep down inside me and I wouldn't

be able to hold myself back from the threshold of suicide.

Translated by D. Sam Abrams