

FLESH AND OTHER FRAGMENTS OF LOVE

Evelyn de la Cheneliere, translated by Linda Gaboriau

PIERRE: I was walking on the beach.
At first I saw
a dark tangled mass
that I mistook for a pile of seaweed.
I've always been drawn to
those long strands of black algae.
I find the minute details of marine vegetation
as fascinating
as the fine line where the sky meets the sea.
Simone told me,
Go explore while I finish arranging everything.
She knows I like to go for a walk alone, sometimes.
Get the lay of the land.
I thought, that was nice, very considerate of Simone.
She had guessed, once again, what I wanted
and she was trying to accommodate me.
I felt a wave of affection for her.
I picked up my shoes in one hand,
a walking stick in the other.
I felt a bit old.
I thought this vacation in Ireland was going to be good for
Simone.
Good for both of us.
And I was happy.
But before long I was annoyed when I thought about the scene.
Irritated, actually.
Go explore while I finish arranging everything.
Behind this offer of freedom was a desire to control that I hated.
Once again, Simone is telling me what I should do,
meting out my freedom.
Go explore while I finish arranging everything.
In other words:
I consent to your being free from me, as long as I agree on when and how you'll be
free, for instance, free to take a walk on the beach in Ireland where I have decided
we'll spend our vacation, and by the way, let me remind you that I will arrange
everything while you go exploring.
Simone arranges everything, and wants to arrange me too.
Lock me into her tomb.
Something will have to happen
during this vacation in Ireland,

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something...
Then I started.
The seaweed was actually long, tangled hair.