

the absolute pearl of existence

by Jerry Ratch

I see it now. This is like the blind flash of the mind going off inside, where memory begins to make up its own stories. And the women are often drawn, painted, sung about, while the men are not, so often. What is it about us that they cannot resist looking at our flesh, the ripe flower of it, the full-throated, bird-like fluttering caused inside the heart when the draperies fall away? When the silken frail things float down like subliminal blossoms, and you gloat, flushed at the face, caught off-guard in the moment?

I think I know. You wanted to be like us. You wanted to take something whole inside you and give birth to the future, didn't you? And that is why you wrote. You wanted something to be complete within you. You wanted, like us, to give yourself over to your face and your smell and the muscle in the river. And you wanted to be able to produce the pearl, the absolute pearl of existence inside you, like a whole little world.

I know you so well, now. I wish I did then. Nothing but the truth here, if you want to know.

