

LIANE STRAUSS

Variations on a Theme by Lady Suwō

*Pillowed on your arm
only for the dream of a spring night,
I have become the subject of gossip,
although nothing happened.*

*

Pillowed on your dream,
I come and go all spring,
taking pleasure in gossip
as if nothing happened.

*

Pillowed on my arm,
I confide only in myself
the dream of your arm,
my endless dream of your arm.

*

Pillowed on my dream,
I no longer drift out into the spring night,
but make plans before sunset, flouting gossip,
as if something happened.

*

Pilloried by love
I sip the dram of gods
from the spring of night—
Where's the harm in that?

*

Pillowed on the dream of your arm,
a mute owl on a bare bough
in a starless barn
shrouded in snow.

*

Disarmed by a spring night,
powerless against dreams,
assailed by gossip,
I throw the windows open.

*

Who is pillowed on your arm?
Where is the dream of a spring night?
Am I the subject of gossip?
What do I mean, nothing?

*

Pillowed on the spring night
of your arm—
was I only dreaming?

*

Pillowed on the dream of a spring night—
I can't sleep.

*

Pillowed on the gossip of your arm
I have become an object of ridicule
in my own eyes.

*

Pillowed on your *nothing*,
only for the dream of a spring *nothing*,
I have become the subject of *nothing*,
although *nothing*.

*

Pillowed on *his* arm
all night, all spring,
that the gossip will reach even to your dreams.

*

In my dream I am pillowed on your arm
and the clouds of a spring day
keep changing faster than gossip
or an emu running backwards.

*

Although nothing happened
nothing happened that hasn't already
happened again.

*

Also noting happenstance.
Alto notes sing half steps.
Altered knots have ends.
All through knowing happiness.

*

Like the subject of gossip
as it begins to spread
I keep your pillow
between my legs.

*

If nothing happened,
why has my pillow become
harder than your arm?

*

You and your pillow

and your arm
and your dream
and your spring night
and your gossip.
As if.

*

*L'oreiller de ton nez
que pour une belle nuit d'été
je suis devenue sujet
de ce rien qui n'est passé.*

*

A Pillow, a Dream and an Arm
walk into a bar . . .

*

It wasn't your arm.
It wasn't spring.
It wasn't night.
It wasn't a dream.
It isn't gossip.
Nothing never happens.

*

On your arm,
only gossip-pillowed night
for the become spring
of a happened dream
the I have nothing subject,
although . . .

*

Although nothing happened
I have become the subject of gossip
only for the dream of a spring night
pillowed on your arm.