DAPHNE MARLATT
an economy of flowers

in full bloom they said seeing me large as a pod, a fruit.
ripe & already taken, the mother flowers in me. hydrangea.
blue as a virgin gone to seed.

it was a sort of grace, she felt, that had brought her life to
such fruition. despite the nausea, the weeks in bed mysteriously & anxiously bleeding, hoping the placenta was
not tearing away, the fragile embryo lost memories of
being hit by a truck, an earlier tearing loss that felt like
giving death. this one was safely delivered by loving
hands, blue flower squalling with her feet still rooted in
her mother’s body. she felt like a child she said, emotion
washed clean of doubt, of cynicism, crying with child,
with her child: with her was the miracle. she wanted to
bury the placenta that had seen them through. she wanted to
plant a hydrangea in it.

my slip on the floor of the ferry’s much travelled
carpet under my head, feet of oblivion walking by on deck.
that was the fruit of beer drinking she’d have said.
that was the fruit of initiation. no longer hers &
spoiled spoiling for womanhood.

sitting in the shopping mall, fidget fidgeting. blue shirt,
green eye shadow. sitting in the smell of tabu, wind flower
strong. (& nothing like that blue that meets the eye alone.)
green eye smiling over tan-skinned muscle-fitness tone.
ready it sings to meet him, any him she is in the market
for.

hydrangea. water vessel. from the cuplike
shape of its pod. mother flowers: the ones
they put razor blades under to turn them blue.

the mother spoils: blue as the Virgin’s cloak(ed)
in memoriam habit yes, as if she didn’t wear the same
dowd day in, out (it doesn’t matter or who’s to see?)
or its earth colour & we are back to that who takes
us all in eventually.

that one wears tiny zippers in her ear, words a warning,
labels to be taken, outrageous. Mad ma(1)d mad(e) her
cultural collaboration, in a real that violence co-opts she’s
at the ready. lean as a whip, quick as plastic, incendiary.

beige slippers with tatty fur trim she slopes around in the
colour of last year’s blooms turned tan now in the wind
or fragile-eaten by all manner of weather she keeps
talking about the Isle of Man she keeps saying some
place where they bloom the size of a man’s head or was it
dinner plates? she carries the memory around a round the
growing one her body is. the plates have chips and are
losing their flowers under overuse. she says the kids are
at her all the time, that tiny fillet of gold leaf gone.

mother is not desire but the registered mark of
womanhood. initiated in a system of exchange,
she is the visible mark, the easy drupe. dowd,
doude (slut). “slit.” once picked.
in the monoculture.

she was dreaming babies sliding out, dreaming inside out.
the maker & the made, re-maid. dreaming with what was
bigger than her, larger than labels, had her feet in the
ground. & on. ‘cause she was no flower, she had her like
nobody ha’d. after all, she wasn’t all(l)one & the mothers
those other multiples reaching out their hands their arms &
minds a network for her coming into doubleness a bloom-
ing on & on...