

Sheila Nicholls, Medusa

Medusa woke up one day and shaved her head
well maybe now you'll let me a little closer she said
but she just sacrificed her identity instead

be careful how you trend
be careful how you tread

medusa went home again and watched TV
a commercial for deoderant, tampons, so now we won't smell see
said the sister with the plastic smile, excitement, and glee
buy your shame for free
buy your shame for free

and all the smiles that we spill
because it's part of the drill
the shame that we bear
for the floors that aren't there
the unfulfilled will be dismissed
for a savior, a kiss
the memories we repress ... when we undress

she went channel surfing
and all that was seen
were decorative women arrive on the screen
conventional images of adolescent male dreams
when men aren't around they fall apart at the seams
passive exposed
peaches and cream
survive like an object to blow off your steam
interchangeable fragments
and outlines and shapes
they say no they mean yes to little girl rapes

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the rage trapped inside
smothered and dried
the words that we use
they divide and abuse
the wound between women keeps the war-mongers grinning
the war between women stops recovery beginning

medusa grew her hair back
around her face
she'd been looking for alignment in the wrong place
so she called up her friends
malcom x and collie
and they go on a plane
cocked off too ...
falling