

Cécile Mainardi

from *Superliquid Water*

translations by cj nizard & léon pradeau

superliquid rainwater falls at night, or in the afternoon. In the morning, you can't see it: you're sleeping; or you dream of it, graphically, and it's in short grey segments—not droplets—in thin lines, fine tipless darts, in such slow motion that your gaze can isolate one and follow its trajectory/to the ground, its rectilinear ink streams striating a landscape of buildings opposite, passing immaterial between the railed balconies, or penetrating them if applicable, without increasing their white mass/making them less uniformly white. And regarding those people you see outside running outside/you see running and gesticulating for shelter, their clothes are only wet in the places exposed by the act of running: shoulders, thighs, forearms/ephemeral sewing pattern for rain costume—they too are traversed, like the railings, pierced by arrows, Saint Sebastian holograms running more abstractly in the summer

unless you progressively instill more and more narrative, how can you measure the levels of superliquid rainfall after a night's work? its precipitation rate in the book? doesn't the book shrink as I write it/fill it with water/sublimating the sweat, tears, discontent, a dissolving kiss, love's dissolvement, the continuous current of forgetfulness, the local and microscopic aqualescence of everything, i.e. the pinnacle of delight? My modern-powered levitation/it takes place in water/it happens there/I gather it/most successfully/obscuring it/to obscure it. Just remember t/here are some who die before having learned to swim, and it can be from drowning or also not

I bathe in the pool of extreme possibility, stepping sentence by sentence into superliquid water. My heart rate impossibly slow as I descend, my pace impeded tenfold, with a ponderous grace I frankly didn't think I had. I descend with the shutter speed that allows a photo to appear as welcoming as possible for you to bathe inside it/entering it with your smooth and flexible body, with one single release/pretending to faint, to make people say *it's so nice*, or by entering progressively, kneeling at a certain point/where you decide to stop moving. And soon you can't tell us apart on this photo we shape, me/my movement and the water, being set in contact with each other, and if the photo starts moving, don't be fooled, it isn't because it's a video, it's a kind of ambient photo (just like you'd think of ambient light), it's real everywhere: it's developed everywhere at once, with no point of view, and just as pearly

s           uperliquid water drops down one degree at a time toward colder temperatures, not to cool, but to become water of/in the past. Unlike other hot vending machine drinks in particular, time is not the cause of its cooling, but the/its temperature change which progressively brings it back to a past state, from which it can only be remembered or be forgotten, or yet a third solution, be written. It's hard to picture prose being colder or warmer. Finishing/understanding a sentence puts it in the past tense: you remember you can swim: you swim: you remember you're swimming