

3

CHORUS

they will ask her to lay back

part her legs and

genital examination takes place behind a curtain

everything careful correct completely consensual.

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CHORUS

she's stuck.

wedged between rock and stone

breezeblocks

marble

concrete

difficult-to-negotiate things

like high-security detention centres.

RUTH

You were detained for 3 months?

AGATA

I don't know.

maybe

CHORUS

the safeguards collapse
time slips out of sharp definition

RUTH

were you asked –

CHORUS

listen

RUTH

– about your history?

CHORUS

I hear the sound of a mechanism jam

AGATA

the doctor wrote down a lot of things about me

CHORUS

things like

“yes”

“no”

“yes”

AGATA

he ticked a lot of boxes

CHORUS

“torture”

for example

it's a yes or no question but

think, Agata

AGATA

I

CHORUS

yes?

AGATA

could you repeat the question?

CHORUS

she is lost in the too-narrow passage of meaning

AGATA

What is the definition of torture?

CHORUS

“google it”

says the doctor

his eye upon the clock

his daughter will appear on the school stage this afternoon

she will sing with a voice that is clear

she will make a natural sound

(by which we mean *authentic*)

her throat untouched by Rohypnol

stomach acid

or

(for example)

crystal meth

with her good diction

her flawless delivery

the doctor's daughter will imagine reality more clearly than reality ever imagined itself

RUTH

no obvious signs of force

CHORUS

the doctor's daughter will move her audience

and he

(the father)

will admire the enormity of her emotion

he –

(the father)

will marvel at the curve of her lips

her unspoiled mouth

his flesh

his blood

he mustn't for a moment avert his gaze

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