

HAROLD SKULSKY

Postcard

I may be dazzled into liking these things;
But I can't abandon the prejudices of a lifetime, can I?
I've taken an ancient vow of opposition to him over
A flask of Amontillado;
honour forbids me to give in.

Still, as you say, the thing provokes thoughts, or the hallucination
Of thoughts.

As follows.

Marie-Thérèse is done up
Like a self-duplicating figure in a playing card. Her yellow hair
Is tied back ingenuously, but really
She is far from artless.

She is perhaps enceinte,
With melon fruitful breasts and abdomen,
All three festively dangling objects
(Surmounted by an emerald brooch)
Distended either by gestation or by
Lust.

The impassive frontal eye in her profile,
In the comfotingly familiar mystical Egyptian manner,
Gazes at us almost as much as it gazes at herself.

In the mirror she has on a nun's dark blue habit;
But the contemplative material peels back subversively to reveal
Once again her breasts and belly,
And the mirror face is partly covered by
A satanic scarlet ball mask,
With a scar of satanic scarlet down her cheek.
The satin lining of the habit is folded up to reveal the same ardent
Colour, an enticement and perhaps a threat.

She is a flaxen-haired queen of diamonds
(As we are told by her timelessly repetitious Byzantine background),
A theatrical creature of dominoes and impersonations.

That twisted heel of a dauber loves her.

We might well be alarmed for her, but to all appearances
She can take care of herself.

Dear giver of mischievous gifts,
I wish we were together,
Seeing many things
Together.