

Thoughts on How *Wild* Chicago Was Last Sunday

Her robe slid down her
back loosely piling
on the floor.

And the camera slid down
with it, catching her
curled black hair
tied up, dangling
above the shoulder
scapular blades cutting
subtle angles outward,
and the gradual inward
curving of her spine.

The camera staggers and
stops with the hint of rounding
hips—teasing with images of her
lower back on screen and
the very top of her ass
at the bottom edge.

Exaggerated, the camera wheels and
zig-zags wildly,
vertiginous like spinning
a bottle,
coming
to a rest on a bearded guy
with his hands in
a 5 gallon plastic bucket
squeezing,
watering,
and stirring a powder
mix of collagen and some form of non-green
seaweed into soupy white gelatin.

Under a time limit,
the sculptor rushes,
(gel sets in five minutes)
back to the model on her platform.
She rests on one hip
with her left stiff-

arm, elbow locked
propping her up.

An innocent glimpse
of the underside of her
breast hangs out in front of her
between left arm and torso.

He begins to rub her
shoulders and neck (you've got to lube them
or you'll pull out every hair
when you remove the cast) and finishes
greasing her
down to her ass and upper thigh

From the bucket, white flows
thicker than milk,
thicker than paint,
but falls in the same pat-
tern, sticking rubbery as
it trickles down her back.

The camera pans back. They can show
a full view now that her butt's
covered with a thin layer of gel.

Before the gel sets,
he runs his hands across her,
smoothing the surface, not tentative
or shy of any part of her, almost
oblivious of her (he is married you know).

He leaves her still
letting her set
and mixes some more,
plaster of Paris this
time, to cast her.

Turning back, the sculptor
presses on cotton and follows
caressing her again with
the thick batter (she says
she can't feel a thing,

through it all).

He heads to the sink, peeling hardened
plaster from the tips of his fingers, and
pointing off around the room at pertinent
trophies of grayish-white busts
of women on the walls,
(men don't like being modeled
the sculptor adds with a "go figure" shrug).

Erect nipples and stone crotches
hang in full view (he says she modeled for
those). The camera lingers on
as they're somehow more
beautiful,
artistic,
or acceptable,
maybe less harmless than her.

She smiles over her shoulder, as
the cast is pulled off her
back, and stretches her arms out, naked
still, the camera behind her always.

And I wonder why
he chooses to do this—or
doesn't he realize that
what he does will always be less
than her.